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(subject to editorial corrections)

IN THE CROWN COURT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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THE QUEEN

-v-

JASON KING

_____

GILLEN J

Publicity

[1] These proceedings are governed by Section 1 of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992 as amended by Schedule 2 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999. This provision applies to all complainants in sexual cases regardless of whether they are children or adults. Accordingly no matter relating to any complainant in this case shall during that person's life time be included in any publication if it is likely to lead members of the public to identify that person as the person against whom the offences are alleged to have been committed. The matters relating to the persons in relation to which these restrictions are imposed include in particular –

(a) The person's name;
(b) The person's address;
(c) The identity of any school or other educational establishment attended by the person;
(d) The identity of any place of work; and
(e) Any still or moving picture of the person.

[2] Moreover under Article 22 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, provision is made in cases where a child is concerned (ie proceedings by or against or in which the child is a witness) in any criminal proceedings so that the court may direct that no report shall be published which reveals the name, address or school of the child or particulars likely to lead to the child's identification, and neither shall any picture of the child be published, except by direction of the court. In the exercise of my discretion I determine that in addition to the provisions of Section 1 of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992, I invoke the powers under Article 22 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 to rule that no such

report shall be published in the case of any child who has given evidence as a witness in this matter.

Introduction

[3] Jason King you have been convicted over the course of two trials between 10 September 2007 and 22 November 2007 on a total of 59 counts involving nine complainants. In the first trial, after contesting the charges, you were found guilty by a jury of 58 counts of a variety of offences including rape, unlawful carnal knowledge, buggery (all of these offences carrying a maximum sentence of life imprisonment), indecent assault which carries a maximum of ten years imprisonment, gross indecency which carries a maximum of two years imprisonment, assault occasioning actual bodily harm which carries a maximum of five years imprisonment, making indecent photographs which carries a maximum of three years imprisonment and assault which carries a maximum of one year imprisonment. In a second trial you pleaded guilty to one sample account of indecent assault. In order to protect the anonymity of the victims in these cases where you have been convicted in most instances I shall refer only to them by way of a single letter together with the counts on the indictment relevant to them.

[4]With one exception these offences were committed by you over a period of about six years between 1996 and 2002 with female children aged between 12 and 17 when you were aged between 28 and 34.

[5] It is now my depressing task to briefly outline the factual background to the convictions in the case of each individual victim. I shall deal first with the eight complainants in the first trial:

N

[6] This child was the complainant in Counts 1-8. Counts 1-4 are sample offences of unlawful carnal knowledge. These are alleged to have occurred between 1 January 1997 and 23 February 1998. You therefore had sexual intercourse with her when she was aged 13 and you were 28. Her evidence was that these offences occurred between 15 and 20 times commencing within about 6 weeks of meeting you and stopped when she was just short of 14. Characteristically you met her outside the school where she was a pupil and where your car was parked on the main road. As in other instances, you met her with her other school friends all of whom were dressed in school uniforms. You befriended her and eventually introduced her to your flat. She started having oral sex with you within 2-3 weeks. Counts 5 and 6 were sample counts of indecent assault ie. oral sex with you. Counts 7 and 8 were sample counts of gross indecency where you prevailed upon her to masturbate you. You paid her money, cigarettes and alcohol to perform these

shameful sexual activities. This young woman clearly found the ordeal of giving evidence to be deeply embarrassing and painful to bear. As with several others, she broke down in tears during the course of her evidence.

[7] I have read the victim impact report prepared by Dr Loughrey on this young woman in which he says:

> "The abuse by King was a significant factor, of uncertain weight, in the development of problems which plagued this girl from her early teens through to a period of time 4 or 5 years ago when she took matters in hand. She still has certain problems in respect of low self esteem, anxiety in response to reminders had low grade depressive symptoms but there is evidence of recovery as time has gone by."

R

[8] This young woman was the oldest of the victims in this case. She was 27 years of age when she gave evidence. You had met her when she was about 17 years of age and you were 29. On Counts 9-12 you were convicted of rape and on Count 16 a count of assault occasioning actual bodily harm. These counts of rape occurred between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 2000 when she would have been aged between 17 and 21. These are sample counts based on her allegations that you regularly forced yourself on her to have sexual intercourse at a time when she was suffering from a condition known as endometriosis. Her evidence was that she suffered this condition for about two years with constant pain in the abdomen and pelvic floor. Her stomach was distended and painful to touch. Her evidence to the jury was that during this period she had no interest in sexual relations. At this time she was living with you in her parent's home, having been engaged to you for some time from her 18th birthday. You demanded to have sexual relations with her and if she refused you simply removed her underclothing held her down and forced her to have sexual intercourse with you. She said she was too afraid to resist you as it would lead to physical violence. Count 16 was a sample count of assault occasioning actual bodily harm which was a sample instance of violence towards her in the relationship which included pushing her, pulling her hair, slapping her with a closed hand and punching her often if she spoke to anyone for example male colleagues in work of whom you did not approve.

[9] I have read the victim impact report on this young woman prepared by Dr Loughrey. In it she describes how the experience of the trial was "horrendous". Her experience with you led to a depressive syndrome for which she is now receiving treatment. The depression was probably at its worst was when she was with you. Thereafter it settled but became exacerbated by the experience of the trial including her discovery of the range

of your offending behaviour. Dr Loughrey concludes that "owing to her experiences with King there will be certain sensitivities arising from her years of victimisation which will settle only slowly as the years develop."

K

[10] This young woman told the jury that she had just turned 14 when she met you at a time when you were 29. The relationship lasted just over three years. You committed sexual offences with her throughout the entirety of the relationship. Following the pattern of your other offences, you got to know her when she was a pupil at school, meeting her initially in a car park and then at school, thereafter taking her for drives, taking her back to your flat and plying her with alcohol. Over the years of the relationship you had regular sexual intercourse with her, often consensual particularly in the earlier part, never using contraceptives in the early period and allaying her fears on the basis that you told her that you had a very low sperm count and could not impregnate her. I readily accept the evidence of this complainant that as a child she was completely brainwashed and controlled by you into doing precisely what you wanted sexually. You turned her against her own family.

[11] During the course of the relationship you frequently punched her or struck her and the jury convicted you of a sample charge of assault designed to reflect this type of behaviour.

[12] This child became pregnant and underwent an abortion paid for by you in August 2000. Thereafter, at your behest, she sought contraceptive advice. The relationship continued for a further 16 months during which you became engaged to her. Finally she summoned up the courage to leave.

[13] I bear in mind in this case that the jury did not convict you on two counts of rape in the earlier stages of the relationship which she had described as "okay" but "boring". You were convicted however on two sample counts of rape designed to cover the later periods of the relationship when you secured sexual relations on demand without the slightest concern as to whether she was consenting or not and she simply submitted to you. She describes one occasion when you forced her to have sexual relations ten times in one day.

[14] Similarly you demanded anal sexual relations with her throughout the three or more years of the relationship giving rise to the four sample counts of buggery upon which you were convicted. You also performed oral sex upon her and she upon you. You were convicted of eight sample counts of indecent assault to cover these activities throughout the relationship.

[15] To complete the catalogue of sexual abuse of this child you also video taped yourself having sexual intercourse with her in the bedroom of the flat and kept an album of photographs of various girls including one of this child naked in the shower. Hence you were convicted of two offences of making indecent photographs of a child.

C

[16] This child was the sister of K. In many ways this was one of the most chilling of all of the cases before me. This girl was only 12 years of age when you got to know her through her sister. The familiar pattern of befriending and grooming her began almost immediately. She was particularly vulnerable having had no contact with her father since she was an infant and her mother died in 2001 from a terminal illness. As Dr Loughrey has described, "there is little doubt that she was psychologically vulnerable before the abuse commenced".

[17] I am satisfied that you knew what age this child was when you started to abuse her sexually. You gradually introduced her to abuse initially kissing her, then digitally penetrating her, moving on to oral sex which you taught her to perform on you and which you carried out on her and ultimately progressing to sexual intercourse and buggery. You have been convicted of three sample counts of indecent assault. Even more seriously you have been convicted of four sample counts of unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of 14 which represent examples of the many occasions that sexual intercourse took place, some times several times a week up to the stage of her 14th birthday. This took place at your flat, in your car and at various locations on the Ards Peninsula. There were no limits to how you abused this child and hence you also committed two acts of buggery on her.

[18] I accept the evidence that you used your position to effectively blackmail her to continue in the relationship telling her that her family would disown her if they found out what had been happening and making reference to the video evidence which you had taken of the abuse.

[19] I have read the victim impact report on this child prepared by Dr Loughrey consultant psychiatrist. He described how this young woman is now subject to an array of problems, the two most salient issues being a significant depressive order which has been completed by overdose and also alcoholism. These problems are a blight on the quality of her life. He describes her considerable problems as largely being due to the abuse by you even though other factors may have had a minor impact on her difficulties.

S

[20] The familiar pattern of grooming of children emerged again with this child. She met you when she was about 14 or 15 years of age at a car park. You would have been about 30 years of age at this time. You groomed her initially by way of text and telephone calls, taking her for drives. Eventually you took her back to your flat and then other locations where sexual intercourse took place. Because of the passage of time no charges arise out of this behaviour but you have been convicted of two sample counts of indecent assault arising out of incidents of oral sex which you requested her to perform upon you when she was only 15 years of age.

N2

[21] This child, aged 15 at the time, came to know you through K. You met during school hours at lunchtimes. Adopting your customary ploys, you befriended this child telling her that if you were not going out with K you would like to go out with her. She was flattered that, as she described it, this "cool guy" with the "cool car" should be interested in her. Thereafter you obtained her mobile telephone number, began sending her text messages and then took her for drives in your car. True to form, thereafter you took her back to your flat and became intimate with her, touching her pubic area. You then proceeded to undress her and have intercourse with her. At this time you were about 32 years of age and the victim 15. The relationship resumed shortly thereafter and she had consensual intercourse with you on a number of occasions. No prosecution can arise out of these matters because of the time that has passed since their occurrence. However in addition to this you did perform oral sex upon her and persuaded her to perform such activity on you as well as digitally penetrating her and touching her breasts. Apart from one specific count of indecent assault, the four other counts of which you were convicted of indecent assault were all sample charges arising out of these activities.

[22] The victim impact report from Dr Loughrey consultant psychiatrist indicates that following this abuse, she has been subject to a relapsing course of depression with the typical triad of low self esteem, low mood and feelings of hopelessness about the future which at one point led her to take an overdose. There is also a marked degree of sensitivity to reminders and there are significant problems in her marital relationship. Dr Loughery concluded that she is likely to have long term psychiatric problems arising from the abuse in two respects. First there will be a long term tendency to depression and a heightened susceptibility to depressive episodes persisting into later life especially if she is reminded of this type of thing. Secondly there will be significant and enduring problems in terms of her marital relationship. There is however a certain prospect of successful treatment of both aspects.

I

[23] This child was 16 when she came into contact with you when both worked at the same hospital. You sought to gain her sympathy with false claims that you had lost a son in a road traffic accident and tried to persuade her to get into your car. You were convicted of one charge of indecent assault relating to an incident when you slapped her left buttock as you passed her in the corridor.

R2

[24] This child was a 16 year old school girl when she met you in your car at a local car park. The relationship followed the same depressing pattern. You obtained her mobile number, contacted her by text, arranged further meetings and took her to your flat along with some of her friends. You plied her with alcohol on one early occasion, took her to your bedroom, pressed your penis against her vagina and after removing your trousers and pants placed her hand upon your erect penis. About one week later you again brought her to the flat where you digitally penetrated her and then persuaded her to masturbate you. These offences formed the basis of the four convictions for indecent assault.

[25] These activities led to you having full sexual intercourse with her which thereafter occurred regularly each week. Initially you told her that you were 22 years of age though over a period of three months or so you amended your age incrementally before finally confessing to being 32 years of age. You imposed your will on her as you had done with these other children, convincing her that her parents didn't care for her and having intercourse with her without appropriate contraceptive precautions. In August 2002 she became pregnant .You persuaded her to leave her parents and move in with you.

[26] Shortly after she moved in you began to subject her to assaults, including an incident when you pushed her down the stairs causing her to hit her head on the wall. As you passed by on that occasion you spat on her while she lay on the floor. Days later she had a miscarriage. Other examples of your violence during this period included slapping her face, grabbing and pulling her hair. You were convicted on one count of assault occasioning actual bodily harm arising out of these matters.

[27] Although you had been engaged in a consensual sexual relationship for approximately one year or thereabouts before she lost her baby in October 2002, thereafter you acted with increased violence and subjected her to rape. Shortly after the miscarriage, on three occasions in just over a 24 hour period you raped her when she was still bleeding heavily from the aftermath of the miscarriage despite her making it clear that she did not want to have sex with you. This happened on several other occasions thereafter. The three counts

of rape of which you have been convicted represent sample counts of rape during these periods.

[28] As with some other children, you carried out acts of buggery on R, the first example of this behaviour being shortly after she had suffered her miscarriage. On this occasion you forced her down onto the bed and committed an act of buggery. This behaviour was repeated and you were therefore convicted of two counts of buggery.

[29] This girl found the trial a very stressful experience. She was a vulnerable depression prone young woman and there is little doubt according to Dr Loughrey in the victim impact report that in the course of the relationship you further depleted her self esteem and her sense of autonomy. She has still not recovered from this. He considers that she has been continuously depressed since her relationship with you. Dr Loughrey concludes that the influence on her of the relationship with you will be long term with only a very slight tendency to diminution as the years go by.

JA

[30] In this case this child met you when she was 14 years of age in 1995 and still at school. She initially met you at a bar and thereafter on several occasions in the company of friends. Several months later, she took time off school and made her way to your flat. Ingratiating yourself with her according to the usual pattern, you told her of being abused as a child once she had told you that she had suffered a similar fate. You told her that sex would be different with you .She described how you touched her breasts and vagina over her school uniform and placed her hand on your erect penis over his trousers. Similar activity occurred on several occasions when this child was aged between 15 and 17 years of age. You pleaded guilty to one sample count of indecent assault.

Medical evidence in relation to the accused

[31] Dr Browne consultant forensic psychiatrist interviewed the accused on 7 February 2008. He concluded that there were many factors that indicate a high risk of further offending. These included the lengthy duration of his offending behaviours, the frequency of offending, the number of victims, the use of violence and coercion, the range of sexual behaviours and the severity and seriousness of the offences. In addition he recorded that the accused has displayed minimisation and denial of his offending behaviour with lack of empathy for his victims. He demonstrated a pattern of offering superficially plausible rationalisations for his behaviour, a marked tendency to blame others and efforts to cast himself in a favourable light. Dr Brown concluded

that there are indications of a high risk of further offending by the accused. He recorded that in the absence of major mental illness and considering his denial of any problems, the accused is not really amenable to any form of psychiatric intervention and a probation order with a condition of psychiatric treatment was not appropriate in his case.

[32] Professor Davidson, consultant clinical psychologist, interviewed the accused on behalf of his solicitor. He also concluded that the long term nature of his offending and the number of victims as well as the apparent stereotyped pattern of his interactions with the victims would suggest that this is a behaviour that would not be particularly responsive to any treatment intervention. The fact that he maintains these external, stable attributions in spite of evidence to the contrary would also indicate that he may be treatment resistant. Whilst he thought it unlikely that this man's behaviour would escalate beyond what has already been seen, given his modus operandi and his cognitive distortions he is unlikely to alter his behaviour patterns in the future.

[33] These reports in my view chimed with the report from Nicola Phillips the probation officer who also considered you to be at high risk of offending. She recorded that several factors in her view supported this assessment including your current distorted thinking process and lack of victim awareness.

The accused's circumstances

[34] Mr Cinnamond QC, who appeared on your behalf with Mr Blackburn, drew my attention to the fact that you had no relevant criminal record. You do have previous convictions for common assault, disorderly behaviour, resisting the police and attempted criminal damage for which you were convicted on 5 November 2003 arising out of an altercation with the recent boyfriend of R. However I do recognise that insofar as the sexual offences are concerned you have no previous convictions of this type.

[35] Mr Cinnamond also drew my attention to the fact that there were no convictions for any offences for the period of approximately two years prior to your arrest.

[36] He submitted that none of the offences had amounted to a breach of trust and that this distinguished this case from a number of other guideline cases of that ilk. I pause to observe however that this point is somewhat diluted by the grave age disparity between the accused and these children coupled with the clear pattern of grooming of the victims over a lengthy period of time.

[37] Counsel further relied on the fact that a number of these offences involving K, R and R2 had occurred within a relationship and he submitted that this reduced the seriousness somewhat. Given that with one exception these were all relationships with children I do not find that a very convincing matter.

[38] Finally Mr Cinnamond urged that with some exceptions, the victim impact reports did not reveal any damaging sequelae long term arising out of this abuse.

Sentencing guidelines governing this case

[39] Attorney General's Reference (No. 2 of 2004) (2005) NIJB 185 is authority from the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland that sentencers in this jurisdiction should now apply the guidelines proposed by the Sentencing Advisory Panel in England and Wales. Those comments were made in the context of offences of rape.

[40] The Sentencing Advisory Panel suggested that the following approach should be adopted in considering such offences:

> "The Panel suggests that there are, broadly, three dimensions to consider in assessing the gravity of an individual offence of rape. The first is the *degree of harm to the victim*; the second is the *level of culpability of the offender*; and the third is the *level of risk posed by the offender to society* … Three more general features … might be considered relevant: the gender of the victim, the relationship (if any) between the victim and offender, and the nature of the rape itself (whether vaginal or anal)."

[41] You were convicted on nine counts of rape most of which were sample counts and which were committed on three children. You were also convicted of eight counts of buggery, several of which were sample counts, and were also committed on three children. You were convicted of eight counts of unlawful carnal knowledge all of which were sample counts against two children. This means that you were convicted of 25 counts which were so serious that they carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment in each case. Applying the approach of the Sentencing Advisory Panel the accused must be considered as at the very grave end of all three dimensions. Potentially long lasting harm has been occasioned to some of the victims as outlined in my earlier comments on the victim impact reports. The level of culpability is of the highest order. There was an enormous age gap between you and all of the children that you abused, the children ranging from 12 to

17 years of age at the start of the abuse. These offences were committed over a lengthy period, occurring frequently with a number of victims and associated with a range of sexual behaviours. You demonstrated an ability to actively target and groom your victims over this period, manifesting a distorted and perverted thinking process with an inability to accept responsibility for your behaviour. You preyed on children who you must have known were young, impressionable and very vulnerable. I share the view of Dr Brown that these factors all indicate a high risk of further offending. I regard the level of risk that you pose to children as being high and that children require protection from you wherever you are to be found.

[42] The Sentencing Advisory Panel suggested a starting point of eight years, after a contested trial, for a case with features which include the rape of a child. It goes on to indicate that factors reflecting a high level risk to society, in particular evidence of repeat offending, should attract a substantially longer sentence. The Panel endorsed the 15 year starting point in Billam (1986) 8 Cr. App. R. (S) 48 for a campaign of rape. It should apply to cases where the offender had repeatedly raped the same victim over a course of time as well as to those involving multiple victims. In my view there is a strong case to be made that this starting point applies to you in all of the instances of rape, buggery and unlawful carnal knowledge where you have repeatedly abused your victims over a course of time after grooming them. The wide variety of additional offences, amounting to 59 convictions in total, all serve to underline the danger you represent to children.

[43] There is ample authority for the proposition that where offences are committed over a period of several months or years, the judge can make the sentences consecutive (see M (Indecency with a Child) (2003) NIJB 119 (2002) NICA 49, and People v McKenna No. 2 (2002) 2 IR 345 (CCA). Consecutive sentences were handed down by the judge, and approved by the Court of Appeal, in R v D O (2006) NICA 7 where an accused had pleaded guilty to 47 counts of sexual abuse involving four young girls. I therefore have no doubt that the court in your case should impose consecutive sentences in certain instances.

[44] I recognise of course that in coming to this conclusion the court should ensure that the totality of the time imposed is not excessive. The court must consider whether the total sentence passed is commensurate with the gravity of the cases as a whole. I have to stand back, look at these offences as a whole and impose a sentence which is appropriate having regard to all the circumstances ensuring that sufficient weight is given to the victims' proper interest and the interest of the public at large whilst ensuring that the sentences accord with proper sentencing practice.

[45] This case lacks the mitigation of a guilty plea. You have lost the entitlement to the substantial credit (save in one case) which you would have

undoubtedly received had you pleaded guilty at an early stage and spared these young victims the humiliating and in some instances damaging ordeal of the prospect of the trial, going into the witness box and reliving their dreadful experiences. Of course the fact that you contested the trial does not aggravate your position but it illustrates your utter lack of any element of remorse.

[46] I have given anxious consideration as to whether this case merited a discretionary life sentence in circumstances where 25 of the convictions were for offences that carried a potential life sentence. Counsel helpfully drew my attention to a number of authorities including R v Hodgson (1967) 52 Cr. App. R. 113 at 114, Attorney-General's Reference (No. 32 of 1996) (Whittaker) (1997) 1 Cr. App. R. (S) 261, R v McCandless and Others (2004) NI 269 ("McCandless's case") and Gallagher (2004) NICA 11 (2004) 4 B.N.I.L. 122.

[47] McCandless's case is authority for the proposition (at page 296 paragraph 50) that in considering the criteria for imposing a sentence of indeterminate length there are two essentials. First, a crime of sufficient seriousness. Secondly, that there are good grounds for believing that the offender may remain a serious danger to the public for a period of time which cannot be estimated at the time of sentencing. In the ordinary way a court will look for specific medical evidence to support the latter proposition, but it may be inferred from the evidence before the court. I regard this as a matter of fine judgment in your case. I consider that different judges might decide the matter in a different way from me. However, despite their researches, counsel were unable to point me to a precedent for a discretionary life sentence in other cases of multiple victim sexual abuse of children in the absence of a severe degree of violence, greater than in the instant cases , being carried out on the victims. Although I consider your case probably to be the worst instance of multiple child abuse that I have come across and, as my sentence shall reflect , worse in degree than the three cases that I am now about to discuss , in R v D O (2006) NICA 7("D O") (where there were 47 counts of sexual abuse of four young girls aged between 9 and 14), R v King (1999) 2 Cr. App. S. 376 (where over 19 years an accused committed sexual offences against a total of seven children) and R v Hinds (2003) Cr. App. R. (S) (eight children between 11 and 14 sexually abused over a period of six years) the courts dealt with the offences by way of lengthy determinate sentences. In D O's case at paragraph 30 the court said:

> "A sentence of 20 years would not have been out of keeping with conviction after a contest but we consider that it strays beyond what can be justified on a plea of guilty."

Accordingly these cases may fall just marginally short of the degree of seriousness necessary for a life sentence.

[48] Moreover I consider that the availability of probation supervision under Art. 26 of the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 is an important potential safeguard which reduces the need for an indeterminate sentence. This will cater for future risks by permitting your eventual release after a custodial element has been completed only on licence which will effectively restrict your lifestyle and expose you to the risk of further imprisonment if you breach the terms of the licence.

[49] Finally, before passing the commensurate sentence in this case, I make it clear that I have considered Articles 19-21 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 1996. I have obtained pre-sentence reports pursuant to Article 21. I consider that these offences are so serious that only a custodial sentence is justified. My reasons for so concluding are that crimes of this kind are extremely serious particularly when perpetrated on young children. Pursuant to Article 24(1) and having formed the opinion that a custodial sentence of more than 12 months is necessary, I have considered whether it would be appropriate to make a custody probation order. In light of the indications from Dr Brown and Professor Davison and your continuing denial of the offences, I consider that you would not be responsive to any treatment or probation order.

The sentence of the court

[50] I turn now to consider the sentence that is appropriate in your case. I commence by reminding myself that the threat of sexual abuse to children in modern society has become so grave and the duty resting on the courts to deter those who may be tempted to harm children sexually has become so important that very severe sentences must be passed on those who commit rape and other sexual offences against children, even if before the offence they have had good records (see Attorney-General's Reference (No. 1) of 1989 (1989) NI 245, JSB 2.21).

[51] You have been found guilty of a prolonged and appalling catalogue of sexual abuse against children over a long period, carried out deliberately and in a planned manner. You actively groomed children who were in many instances vulnerable and of limited education. The pattern of predatory sexual behaviour on your part was clear throughout. You hung about outside various schools, car parks and other places in North Down which these children frequented. Initially befriending and flattering them, exchanging phone numbers and personal details, taking them for drives in your car, this calculated and deliberate grooming of these children led almost invariably to them being brought back to your flat. Using a variety of ploys including alcohol, sexualised conversations and gifts you prevailed on them to engage in a variety of sexual activity. I am satisfied that you developed controlling relationships with many of these girls, in some instances lasting for several years, calculated solely to satisfy your sexual interest in female children.

There were many and varied sexual acts of abuse. Your voracious sexual appetite seemed insatiable with these children.

[52] Not content with having defiled them, you have shown not a shred of remorse throughout this trial. With one exception, you did not spare these young victims the humiliating ordeal of going into the witness box and reliving their dreadful experiences. On your instructions counsel rigorously cross examined them accusing them all of lying and conspiring together to manufacture their stories for a number of reasons including a desire to obtain compensation and pure spite.

[53] I have had the considerable advantage of seeing both the victims in this case and also you the accused. I have heard the details from the witnesses own mouths as to what happened and the impact of these offences upon them. I have also had the opportunity to observe you in the witness box. I have no doubt that you represent a real danger to young and vulnerable female children. You personify every parent's worst nightmare. It is the primary duty of this court to protect such children from you and to reflect the clear intention of Parliament that offences of this kind are to be met with greater severity than may have been the case in former years when the position of the victims may not have been so clearly focused in the public eye.

[54] Accordingly you must receive a very severe sentence for a number of reasons. First to mark the gravity of these offences, secondly to emphasise public disapproval, thirdly to serve as a warning to others tempted to behave as you have done, fourthly to punish you, fifthly because perhaps only the passing of the years may dull your current voracious sexual appetite thus reducing your threat to children and finally to protect other children from you.

[55] Whilst I consider that consecutive sentences for each of these victims would have been merited to reflect the lengthy and continuing nature of your predatory behaviour, I must stand back and consider the appropriate global sentence in order to meet the totality principle. I consider that the appropriate figure of imprisonment in your case is 24 years and that is the effective sentence that I will impose. The sentence will run from when you were first held in prison on remand on these charges. Had I considered that such a sentence was out of keeping with the appropriate tariff or the guideline cases for multiple child victim offences of this seriousness I would undoubtedly have invoked Article 20 (2)(b) of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 1996 to pass an extended sentence of this length in order to protect the public, and female children in particular , from serious harm from you in light of my belief ,and the medical evidence of Dr Brown ,that there is a high risk of you re-offending.

[56] In order to respect the principle of totality, I have made only two sets of cases consecutive and the rest concurrent. Moreover for the same reason I have reduced the sentences for rape, buggery and unlawful carnal knowledge cases below the 15 years that I consider these offences merited individually in order to reflect the campaign of serious sexual abuse that you have carried out over these years.

[57] I shall commence by dealing with those cases where the most serious offences were committed. First, counts 36-45 which dealt with probably the youngest child involved namely C. On Counts 36, 37, 38 of indecent assault I sentence you in each instance to 7 years. On Counts 39, 40, 41 and 42, offences of unlawful carnal knowledge, I sentence you to 12 years in each case. On Counts 43 and 44, counts of buggery, I sentence you to 12 years in each instance. On Count 45, making an indecent photograph of a child, I sentence you to 18 months imprisonment. All of those sentences will run concurrently.

[58] Turning then to cases involving R2, Counts 55-64, I sentence you as follows. On Counts 55, 56 and 57, of indecent assault I sentence you to 7 years imprisonment on each count. On Count 58, an offence of gross indecency with a child, I sentence you to 18 months imprisonment. On Count 59, assault occasioning actual bodily harm, a sentence of 2 years imprisonment. On Counts 60, 61 and 62, offences of rape, I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment. On Counts 63 and 64 offences of buggery, I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment. All of the sentences on these counts in the case of R will be concurrent with each other making a total of 12 years. However the total of 12 years will be consecutive to the 12 years that you will serve in the case of C making a global total of 24 years.

[59] I make it clear that all the other sentences that I now intend to pass will be concurrent one with the other and also concurrent with the sentences I have passed in the case of C. I emphasise again that the only reason that they are not being made consecutive is because of the totality principle.

[60] Dealing with N, I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment on Counts 1, 2, 3, and 4 for unlawful carnal knowledge, 7 years on Counts 5 and 6 for indecent assault and 18 months imprisonment on Counts 7 and 8 of gross indecency with a child.

[61] In relation to R, on Counts 9, 10, 11 and 12 of rape, I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment on each count. On Count 16, assault occasioning actual bodily harm I sentence you to 18 months imprisonment.

[62] In the case of K, I sentence you to 7 years imprisonment on the offences of indecent assault at Counts 17,18,21,22,25,26,29 and 30. On Counts 27 and 31 of rape, I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment. On Counts 20, 24, 28 and

32 of buggery I sentence you to 12 years imprisonment. On Counts 33 and 34, making an indecent photograph of a child, I sentence you to 18 months imprisonment. On Count 35, assault, I sentence you to six months imprisonment.

[63] On Counts 46 and 47, counts of indecent assault involving the victim S, I sentence you to 7 years imprisonment on each count.

[64] On Counts 48,50,51,52 and 53 of indecent assault in relation to N2, I sentence you to 7 years imprisonment on each count.

[65] On Count 54, in relation to J, a count of indecent assault, I sentence you to 3 months imprisonment.

[66] Turning to the second trial and the count of indecent assault with reference to JA, I make a substantial reduction in that case of indecent assault because you pleaded guilty and saved her the indignity of having you in the witness box. Accordingly I sentence you to 3 years imprisonment for that offence.

[67] I have already indicated that I do not consider it appropriate to make a custody probation order under Article 24 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 1996. However I have concluded that an order under Article 26 of that legislation should be made. Article 26 applies where an offender has been sentenced to imprisonment and the whole or any part of the sentence was imposed for a sexual offence. I am satisfied that there is a need to protect the public from serious harm from you for the reasons I have already set out and it is desirable to prevent the commission by you of further offences and to secure your rehabilitation upon your release. Accordingly when you are eventually released on licence under this Article you shall be under the supervision of a probation officer appointed for or assigned to the Petty Sessions District within which you reside until the date on which you would, but for your release, have served the whole of the sentence. When you are released on licence under this Article you shall comply with such conditions to be determined by the Secretary of State as may be specified in the licence. Consequently, instead of being granted remission of your sentence, you shall on the day on which you might have been discharged if permission had been granted, be released on licence under the provisions of Article 26 of this order and subject to the obligation to comply with such conditions as shall be determined by the Secretary of State specified on the licence.

[68] I am obliged to advise you that under the terms of the Criminal Justice Act 2004 you shall be registered as a sex offender for the rest of your life. That means that on your release from prison you will be required to register with the police, giving your full name, your address and your date of birth. Should you change your address or indeed your name you are obliged to

register with the police giving the various changes. The clerk will prepare a document which will be handed to you in relation to your requirements. I am also obliged to advise that under the terms of the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 a disqualification order will automatically come into operation against you which disqualifies you from working with children for the rest of your life.

[69] Finally I shall now deal with the further application for a Sexual Offences Prevention Order under Section 104(1) (b) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 once I have been addressed by counsel on that matter.