**Transcript, one-to-one Duncan 18/02/21**

ANDREW: …type it all up later. It just saves me taking loads and loads of notes, you know, as you’re talking and then I’ve got to try and read them later and my writing is absolutely atrocious as well [laughing] so that helps me… and, erm, you’ll remember from the last time that we talked about confidentiality and consent as well? That you’ve got the right to give consent, withdraw consent at any point – no problem. Call a halt to the interview if you don’t, you know, want to continue it. You don’t have to explain yourself. All of that kinda stuff is just to put you in the driving seat in terms of how much you want to be involved with the research project… but I’m really delighted that you said you’d be up for this chat today. I’ll keep it short cause you’re really busy as well.

DUNCAN: Aye, no bother

ANDREW: So, the last time we were talking, we were talking generally about the shift and the kinds of tasks that happen on the shift but these one-to-one’s, I wanted to move the conversation a wee bit more to you personally as an individual, as a worker and stuff like that and so, I wondered if we could go back and you could tell me how was it, when was it, that you came to work at [org]? What were you doing before? Why did you apply to come? That kind of, the beginning if you like?

DUNCAN: Ok, ok. I started at [org]… erm… October 2019. Previous to that I was at [another residential] school in [city] for five years and the reason I move to [org] was – and I’m going to be quite honest here – management at [another residential] school… erm… well I didn’t think that they were very good at man management. Put it that way, and I’m one of these people, Andrew, that speak up? And there was quite a few times where I was pulled in and spoken to… Erm, I’d just had enough of it. Applied for [org]. Got the post here. Yeah, it’s further to travel but it’ been a really good move for me eh? Cause I’m an older, I mean I’m nearly 56. So, to move, even at 55, to move here – quite a big thing to actually move at that stage in life. But I’ve been made *more* than welcome here – absolutely love it here. I don’t mind the 45-minute drive each way – I don’t mind it. Gives you a chance to unwind. Yeah, some of the shifts can be a bit, a bit… long – 14 ½ hour shifts are a bit long. Usually by the time you get to about 8 o’clock, it’s… you’re not functioning properly. I don’t think you function properly anyway because you’ve been on for all of that time. As I say, a great move for me moving here. Staff are fantastic. Management a lot better… erm… my own manager Monty – fantastic man management stuff… cause I went through quite a difficult when I started. I lost my dad through COVID and I was off with COVID as well, I was in the hospital with COVID and the [org] were absolutely fantastic to me Andrew. I would never, ever, ever would have got that from [the other school]. Never, ever. So, all good, all good.

ANDREW: that’s good… and before [the other school] then, have you had a whole career in working in residential childcare-type places, or is that, was that a career change in life or?

DUNCAN: Yep, I’ll go back… when I left the school, right… Andrew, it’s hard to believe, right, but I used to be a semi-pro footballer. I was a fitness fanatic – an absolute fitness fanatic… and erm, I just stopped going to the gym one day and that was it. I become a wee chubby, right? Quite happy, quite happy. I used to work with [a] city council leisure and parks department – worked for a sports centre. I was the chargehand in there. I was there for *14* years and I thought ‘I’ve had enough of this, I want to do something else’ and at that time, I was a volunteer for a basketball coach with [another organisation] for an [international event] that was held in [a city] at a [sport venue] and I thought ‘hmm… I’m doing it as a volunteer – let’s try and get into this field for work’. And that’s what happened. I left my 14-year job and went and work with [a local authority] council on a 5-month temporary contract. I took a gamble. I’ve now been working in care for 21 years.

ANDREW: right, right

DUNCAN: and I’ve covered everything. I’ve covered physical disabilities, home care, learning difficulties was my first post – I absolutely loved it. I worked in [another local authority] in a care service for kids. Left there to go to an assistant manager’s post, which was nearer home – [area] – and it didn’t work out because all of my team were family members. It was family run – the son was the senior, the niece worked for us part-time, her cousin worked for us and, to be honest, it was an absolute disaster. It was one of the worst moves I’ve ever done. [inaudible] split up. A week’s notice each way, split up. So as I say, I’ve done it all - I’ve been in home care, learning disabilities, childcare erm… yeah, done the lot! [laughs]

ANDREW: So a mixed experience there, going back… and I wonder then, if you remember, if we move it on to [org] then, do you remember your first day at [org]? I wonder if you could tell me about your first day?

DUNCAN: You want my actual first working day?

ANDREW: Yeah?

DUNCAN: Right, cause my first working day was actually my… erm… my, induction… but, part of the induction was up actually at the cottages as well as down at the school. So, you were able to see the kids and I stayed on a wee bit later too just to introduce myself to the kids for an hour or so before going home. So, that was a really good thing. Really good thing cause, instead of being stuck in a wee induction room, we were able to get on the campus and see the kids. The actual first shift I ever done was – they were shadow shifts… erm, when it comes to shadow shifts, you feel a bit lost because you’re just following people… you want to help out and do different things don’t you? And I just wasn’t able to do half of the stuff that I knew I was capable of? That was quite frustrating at times erm… even holds, especially because I’ve done through so many different types of training with different holds – I had to wait for the MAPPA training with [org]. That wasn’t in the induction, that was later on. So, you kinda felt helpless - although, you did help out, you did help the staff that were there – it wasn’t always a MAPPA move, it was some moves from previous places. But the actual first day, going down the road [on the way to work] in the car – 45 minutes, all singing, all dancing, happy as Larry. Away home, knew I was going to come in again the next day, it was great. I loved it. I absolutely loved it.

ANDREW: Good… and, so, so there’s a couple of things to ask you there. What does MAPPA stand for? Can you tell me? I’ve not…

DUNCAN: [Looking around desk space] I knew you were going to ask me! [laughs]

ANDREW: It’s just cause I genuinely don’t know… I’m sure there is a name for the kinda therapeutic approach to…

DUNCAN: It’s similar, I can’t remember the whole thing, MAPPA, I can’t remember the whole thing so, it’s ‘prevention of physical’… I’ll find it for you!

ANDREW: Ok, no worries. And the other thing that you said that caught my attention there was, when you were talking about being in the induction room “we got a chance to” – did you start alongside other people? Were you doing an induction…

DUNCAN: Yeah, I started alongside one other female [name]. [She] went, we got on really well, she’s a lot younger than me – everybody’s a lot younger than me Andrew! [both laughing]. It was, she went and worked in [Bungalow 2] and I came here but our actual two-week induction was really good because we were the only two in there… along with a couple of teachers now and again because they’d missed out on some of the training when they started. So, it was good, yeah.

ANDREW: So, could you tell me a bit more detail about the induction then? What did that look like? What kinda stuff were you doing?

DUNCAN: I’m going to say one thing, right? It’s one of the best inductions I’ve been to. Very, very structured – your whole timetable for the two weeks was there. They didn’t deviate that much from it… erm… sometimes you got a wee bit too long maybe, for a couple of the items that were on the induction. So, I felt it dragged a wee bit but, on the whole, yeah, I was really impressed with the induction. Apart from, I thought we should have had our MAPPA before we actually started.

ANDREW: Right… and do you remember any of the other things that you covered and stuff like that? So, it was a two-week, did you say it was a two-week induction, is that right?

DUNCAN: Yeah, it was a two-week induction. Obviously, you go through all the HR questions, their bit and pieces, pensions, the whole works… we talked about medicine, medication, how that worked *at* [org] cause obviously places work differently. What else did we speak about… we spoke about some of the log books, went through the daily obs and what’s expected to be put in there, went through the children’s plans, the files, we got to see what was going on, and, obviously, the paperwork, which, as I say, we get three times a month… erm, what else… obviously, the first day, you get introduced to all the staff as well because you can’t remember half of them from the interview.

ANDREW: Too many names, too many names to remember!

DUNCAN: Absolutely but, as I say, it was well structured. You had your timetable with you. You knew what you were going in to, you knew what meetings you had, you knew if you had to stay on campus or go to school. It was really good, really constructive.

ANDREW: Good… and you, are you in [bungalow 3] is that right? And, so, did you get put in there when you first started and that’s kinda where you’ve been since you started?

DUNCAN: Yes, I’ve been there from day one in [bungalow 3]… although we do do [laughing] we do do one shift a months, which I find bizarre, one shift a month you go to one of the other bungalows. Right? Being honest, I’ve only done that once in the whole time I’ve been here because I tend to just come here.

ANDREW: right, ok

DUNCAN: People tend to stick to their own bungalows if it’s, to make it *one day*, one day out of a whole month it just, it doesn’t mean nothing. They say it’s to familiarise yourself with the kids but you do that when you’re on overtime and that anyway.

ANDREW: Yeah, and if you’re outdoors or there’s different playdates and, you know, crossover I guess?

DUNCAN: Yeah

ANDREW: And so, see if you were thinking back to that first day, when you started that you were describing there, and then thinking about when you come into work, today for example, what’s the difference between then and now?

DUNCAN: I think, the difference between then and now is I’ve gained a lot more knowledge – obviously with the kids that I work with *and* the staff. It’s a big thing on your first day to meet all of these people, youngsters as well, and it’s really hard to get their trust and now I’ve got more trust with the kids and the staff, as I say the staff have been absolutely fantastic, same as management, they’ve been really, really good. We’re slightly older in this house age-wise [meaning staff ages], and that works well, it works well for us up here with the kids, it really does. I would say knowing the kids more now, I’ve got more knowledge of them going through their files etc. and obviously they know me as well now, which is a *big* bonus… although, you still get the same as what you got on day one, as you got on day 21, as you got on day 90 – that you’re an F-ing B and you’re a fat B from [city] and all this stuff but, listen, you expect that. It’s just part and parcel of the job.

ANDREW: Yeah, and so that, it sounds like a lot of the changes then in terms of, I mean do you feel, do you still feel, do you feel like you’re a [org] person now? Or do you still come in kinda, you know, do you still feel like you’ve a way to go since you started? You know, in terms of becoming a…

DUNCAN: You know something Andrew? You can learn something new every day in this job. Learn something new every day, paperwork will change, some of the kids attitudes and that will change but, if, I class myself as [org]-er. I’m going to, hopefully – hopefully, when I retire, it will be from [org]. I’ve had two or three moves and it’s time to just settle down now but, again, I’m coming up for 56, never say never!

ANDREW: Yeah… and so, when you were describing that difference between then and now, certainly you mentioned building up this knowledge of different things, of how things work, how to work with the kids and things like that, but you talked a lot about *relationships* within that I guess. So is that… do you think that… sorry, I’m putting words in your mouth there… the things that make a difference, is that relationships, is that a thing? It seemed to be something that was coming through in what you were saying, about relationships there, is that…

DUNCAN: I think relationships with your colleagues, your work colleagues, *and* your children that you’re looking after – I think that’s a really important thing. I’m not saying every kid loves me. I’m not saying that at all. There’s one wee lad just now, Serge – Serge doesn’t like me settling him at night-time because he says I’m boring [laughs]… because I don’t do X-box or anything like that and that’s all they want to talk about and I’m not interested in that. When I was a laddie, I didn’t have an X-box so I’m not interested [laughing]. But it’s, yeah, relationships are really important – really important and, to be honest Andrew, I’m a really open person right? And I say things as they are and it did get me into trouble. When I first started, I will not lie. I was in Monty’s office, and this the first six months during your probation period, I was in his office on seven occasions.

ANDREW: right, ok

DUNCAN: Seven occasions because I’ll say it as it is. I don’t want to talk behind anybody’s back – it’s the way I’ve been brought up – say it as it is and see what happens and that’s what I’ve done so, I’m quite open that way.

ANDREW: and is that just being quite frank with your colleagues or with the kids or with everybody?

DUNCAN: It’s being more frank with colleagues to be honest. I mean, kids will say things and then a staff member, for example, will say ‘oh you went and said that and that about me in front of a kid’. Well, ‘no I never’ and ‘I didn’t have that kid that day’… so we kinda backtracked to see what it was but, instead of listening to what I was saying they went to management. So Monty had to intervene. I’d rather just sort it out myself eh?

ANDREW: Just deal with it in the moment kinda thing?

DUNCAN: Absolutely, absolutely. It does get you into trouble though cause a lot of people don’t like you doing that but that’s the way I’ve always been.

ANDREW: Uhuh, ok… and what about the other… cause we’ve spoken a bit about induction, what about other training? So, obviously they’ve got the therapeutic model at [org] is DDP. Is that something you were familiar with?

DUNCAN: I’d done a couple of things on DDP. Not into as much depth as we did. I’ve just completed the training there at the end of January. So, it took 15 months before we actually got on the course. A lot of that could have been down to the COVID and that as well but it ended up a Zoom meeting anyway, it ended up online. Very good – very informative, very well put over and I learned a lot. I’ve actually used it a couple of times in practice with wee Simone. It’s not going to work *every* time but, the couple of times I’ve used it, it’s been very effective.

ANDREW: Ok. How did you use it? Could you give me an example?

DUNCAN: I’ll give you an example right. Simone was really, really unsettled. She was kicking staff, punching staff etc. Not wanting to go to her bed, this that and the next things. So, we decided to take her – she’d been in a hold and everything – and we decided to take her into the dining room. Sat on, well, three chairs – staff member on one side, I was on the other side. Holding her because she was going for it and after about 10-15 minutes just started talking to her and then she became more relaxed. You could tell by, you know, the tension, the hands and that were just kinda going and then I got the other staff member to leave and I sat in there at the table with her. I said ‘would you like a wee drink of juice’ and that, ‘yep’, go her a wee drink of juice, she wanted a wee bit of toast, got that… and we just started having a conversation, just generalising things and then we were, she was wanting to play Xs and Os. So, that’s fine, we’ll play Xs and Os, ‘that’s a great game’. Obviously, I didn’t win, I didn’t win Andrew, I did not win [laughing]. But I thought ‘yeah, that’s good, we’ll do Xs and Os’. We did that and then she was chatting away some more and I was getting more into the conversation – play stuff, play stuff with her – and then she says ‘I’m not tired Duncan’. I says ‘but you’re yawning, your eyes are going together, so you are tired’. ‘No, I’m not tired. I’m not’. I says ‘come on we’ll take you through to your room and we’ll get you settled for tonight’ and she says ‘ok then’. So, we ended up going away through and tucked her in, tuck her all over with the covers so she couldn’t move and that was her, she was nice and settled and sleeping in about 10 minutes. It was just the DDP and the… playfulness and the way they come out of it and it was really, really good and it did work. It did work.

ANDREW: Yeah, good… so you found the training, was it ok online? Was that tough for you?

DUNCAN: No, it was really good online. The only thing is I would like, they do a lot of interaction. So you’re put into wee break rooms and you do bits and pieces. So, I would like to have done that in a more formal manner – like person-to-person in a room somewhere, see how we go. But it worked. I mean, to go into a break off room and then do your scenarios and all the rest of it in your team of three – it did work – but more hands-on stuff would have been better eh?

ANDREW: I suppose there’s a lot of communication that goes on that’s non-verbal. You know, your body language and stuff that you use your body don’t you when you’re doing that kinda work I suppose? That’s interesting then, some of that stuff you’ve found *immediately* useful in terms of how you think about things and how you approach things then yeah?

DUNCAN: I was a wee bit sceptical at first Andrew to be honest, because I’ve seen some staff use it and it’s worked and I’ve seen some staff use it where it’s not worked at all, and they’ve tried to persevere and it’s not working. It would be interesting to see some of the things that it has worked with and some of the things it hasn’t worked with. But, on that occasion, it worked for me and Simone and it was great.

ANDREW: So, that sounds… the way that you’re describing that Duncan, it sounds like you are very clear about when you are and when you’re not using DDP. Is that… how do you know when somebody, how could you look at something and know that it’s DDP compared to something that’s not?

DUNCAN: Right. A lot goes down to the body language as well and, see if they’re laughing and giggling about things, we go ‘there we go, a wee bit of DDP’. Try and take it away from the issue that they’ve maybe had and then, as I says, go on to the playfulness and then the acceptance, your curiosity – you ask wee questions and things like that – and then, obviously, you finish off with your empathy. There’s other times where I’ve seen them, I’ve seen staff doing it, and I’ve thought ‘oh, right’, young kid’s in total crisis and they’ve turned round and said, excuse my language, ‘get to fuck ya fucking fat cow’ and all this sort of stuff and I thought DDP is not going to work unless you keep going? They’re getting so heightened and they’re starting to throw stuff, so DDP didn’t work in that situation but, in saying that, see when you’re finished and you go back after they’re in crisis, see when you go back and you talk about things – I class a bit of that as DDP as well because you are putting a bit of that into it cause you’re curious on… on why they reacted like that, what started it, you’re always asking questions. So, although it maybe doesn’t happen in an actual crisis situation, you can use your DDP when they’re nice and calm and you can have a chat about it. So it is, it’s quite good, it’s quite good.

ANDREW: good… and so, would you potentially, you know, is it a crisis situation that you would think of using DDP or would you be using it at other times as well?

DUNCAN: You know, I’ve got to be honest right. I’m a great believer in verbal communication… erm… if I can de-escalate a kid using verbal communication because hands-on is a last resort. We don’t like, I don’t like doing hands-on, a kid doesn’t like hands-on but, for their own safety, sometimes it’s got to be done. I prefer to do the verbal de-escalation stuff if I can. I’ve said this before as well Andrew, see when… the staff in here as well, they’re absolutely brilliant, see when they do their… like, they do a thing if there’s a child in crisis and they’ve had an incident – it goes to the Care Commission straight away, yeah? It goes to all these people. I’m a great believer – if you actually tallied up how many times the staff verbally de-escalate a situation, it would far outweigh the holding f a young person and things like that. It really, really would. But it’s a last resort – it’s a horrible thing – who wants to be held by a wee chubby boy like me, it’s not nice.

ANDREW: but occasionally is necessary as you say for safety?

DUNCAN: For their safety as well as our safety.

ANDREW: uhuh, yeah…

DUNCAN: I’m also… Andrew, I’m very wary of – and I’ll tell you why – when I worked in a children’s residential unit in [a local authority area], I was quite badly assaulted. I was stamped on the head. I was in the hospital – I had to get metal plates put into my neck. So, I’m very wary when it comes to holding kids cause I don’t want to damage myself as well as them.

ANDREW: ah, ok

DUNCAN: it’s always a last resort for me. Always.

ANDREW: so that past experience, that traumatic experience actually, has affected you in terms of holds. Would you say it has affected you in terms of other ways practice-wise – are there certain situations where you’re triggered or you feel like that past experience comes back?

DUNCAN: Yeah, there’s a couple of times where some of the kids are trying to – they do this play fighting, which I really, I can’t stand they toy fighting, that’s a no-no with me because it ends up into a bigger fight. People will maybe jump on you and grab round my neck? I’m very, very fearful of that because, if my metal plates move, right, there’s two choices: I go in and get them put back right? Or I could end up, I could end up in a wheelchair. So, I’m very, very wary when it comes to that – very wary.

ANDREW: and do you then have to let the kids know that then so that they know that there’s that limit for you – that that’s not a thing that they can do with you or…?

DUNCAN: I’ve told *every* kid that’s in here – ‘don’t go near my neck. If you go near my neck, I’m really sorry, but I’ll have to ask you to leave or I’ll move your hands’ and all the rest of it because I’ve just got this fear thing about being back in the hospital or getting whatever done. It was a big operation and, no, we wouldn’t want to go through that again.

ANDREW: Yeah, yeah, I can understand that. I wondered then, if there was anything, since you’ve been there that you would pick out as something that you would pick out as something that you are particularly proud of in terms of practice? Something that would stand out for you that you would reflect on really positively?

DUNCAN: You know what, I think just in general, just in general the care of the kids. I’ve got a duty of care to the kids and that’s what I do. I come in here to give them the best possible… possible life that they can have. I know that, cause they’ve had such *horrific* starts to their life. It’s very, I look at that every day, I work, I’m proud that I work in a residential unit for kids erm… to help them on to be honest because, I was one of these old boys Andrew I went to the BB. I had a bit of discipline, did all that sort of stuff. I’m also the Chairman of an organisation called the [Scotland-wide organisation]. It’s a youth organisation 30,000 members. Basically, we do a lot for different kids – social inclusion, the whole works and I bring some of that here as well. So, I’m not proud of just one thing if you like. I’m proud of *the fact* that I work in a residential setting and I would like to do my best for the kids. Not every single kid is going to go on and do wonders – one out of 20 if you’re lucky kind of thing but, as long as we can show them a bit of respect and a bit of knowledge and… how life is etc etc and pass it on. I’m just, overall, every day, every day is proud. I’m proud to go to work. I love getting in the car and travelling that wee bit and say ‘oh, I’m going to work today’ – it’s great!

ANDREW: Hmm… and are those the kinds of then, if I was to ask you, you know, what do you think makes a difference for kids on a day-to-day basis? Would it be those things that you just mentioned – respect and…

DUNCAN: Yeah, I think so yeah… and listen, you’ve got to come to work happy as well. I never, I’m really lucky right? I don’t bring things in from home and I don’t *take* things home. When I’m in the car that’s me, I’m finished until I’m on my next shift.

ANDREW: and is your commute then, cause you mentioned that earlier on in our conversation, is that your ‘getting your head into work’ mode, ‘getting your head out of work’ mode time then? Do you think that commute actually is something that works for you?

DUNCAN: absolutely. As soon as I go in the car, the radio is on. Listen to TalkSport, Ally McCoist, Ally Brazil, the whole works. It really chills me out, it really does chill me out. Go into work with a great frame of mind. I don’t come into it ‘aw, it’s another one of these days’ and I don’t listen – I’m really good at this – I don’t listen to the mums and groans from the shift from the night before. Because it’s their shift and they’ve dealt with it. So, it’s a new day, it’s a new day.

ANDREW: yip. So you’ve just got to leave that stuff behind, move on, yeah? Every day is new?

DUNCAN: absolutely. If you keep going back on a child being in crisis, you’d be there all day!

ANDREW: Yeah, of course, of course… listen, we’re nearly at the end time. That’s been really, really useful. Is there anything that you want to ask me or check-out with me?

DUNCAN: No, I don’t think so…. See some of the things that goes back from your report Andrew like, see for the MAPPA training, it that goes back… cause see, obviously, if you need to put hands on as a last resort and you want to help your colleagues – I think it should be incorporated into the actual induction not maybe say 6 weeks after it or 10 weeks after it because we’ve got enough people. I think it needs to be in the induction just to help the staff as well eh?

ANDREW: Yeah, so, it might be something that we could mention going back but I mean, certainly for this project, it’s very much focussed on the everyday stuff for staff and the everyday stuff for kids and what might… rather than an evaluation of the project, you know? So, I suppose it’s just to let you know that, so that everybody’s clear about what I’m doing. So, it’s not my job to come in and say ‘oh [org] is doing this or doing that’ but, actually, here’s what staff and children think actually makes a difference to them on a day-to-day basis if that, so it’s that slightly different focus… but yeah, I take the point, yeah, to have certain things that might need to be frontloaded in terms of the training and the induction so that you are able to *be* therapeutic in your day-to-day work.

DUNCAN: absolutely. From the start, yeah.

ANDREW: Ok, well I am hopeful that I will be able to get up there soon enough. The vaccination programme seems to be going well enough and I’m desperate to get out of my house but, erm, so, I’ll hopefully be there but I might, I might send out another wee call – I’ll maybe speak to you again possibly online Duncan if you’re up for it but I’ll hopefully see you in person actually. Soon enough, that’s what I’m really hoping.

DUNCAN: anytime Andrew, I’m up for it. No problem.

ANDREW: Brilliant. Ok, listen, thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate that Duncan.

DUNCAN: No bother. I’m going away to have some lunch now.

ANDREW: Yeah, get a wee break before you get on with the rest of your work for your early shift!

DUNCAN: Andrew, thanks very much.

ANDREW: Ok, take care then Duncan, ok cheerio.