

Erdington teacher Matthew Fludgate says life has been destroyed by rape claims

Jun 22, 2011 10:01 By **Birmingham Mail**

A BIRMINGHAM PE teacher cleared of raping a girl following a party has spoken of how the allegations have destroyed his life.



Matthew Fludgate

Matthew Fludgate, who taught at St Edmund Campion School, in Erdington, was found not guilty of charges of rape, sexual assault and another serious sexual offence by a jury at the city's Crown Court yesterday. The 34-year-old from Stourport-on-Severn put his head in his hands and wept after the jury returned its verdicts.

And afterwards he said: "The allegations were made just over a year ago and it has been absolutely horrendous.

"I have contemplated taking my own life on at least three occasions. The only thing that kept me alive was the fact that I knew I was innocent.

"It is the failings of the justice system that need to be corrected. On the word of one young woman another person's life can be destroyed."

Asked about his plans for his future he said: "That is not something I have considered. I am going to go away and spend some time rebuilding my life that has been destroyed by these lies."

His solicitor Mr Dilaor Miah said: "It has been a very difficult case to defend. It could have gone quite easily either way.

"The number of witnesses they called was unheard of in a rape case.

"Mr Fludgate is a teacher amongst hundreds of teachers against whom false accusations are made. Livelihoods and careers are ruined because of false allegations. There is no comeback for her. There is no sort of recompense for that."

Earlier the court heard that Mr Fludgate, along with other teachers and pupils from the school, had gone to the Old Orleans in Broad Street on May 28 last year for a leavers party.

It was alleged the teacher had behaved inappropriately with students there, grabbing a 17-year-old girl's bottom.

Some of the pupils and teachers had then gone on to the Walkabout Bar.

The prosecution claimed that Mr Fludgate had taken an 18-year-old pupil, who was drunk, to a hotel room he had booked earlier and forced her to have sex.

The teacher, who had denied grabbing the girl in Old Orleans, said the 18-year-old had come to the hotel after she had told him she had no where to stay that night and that they had consensual sex.

<http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/local-news/erdington-teacher-matthew-fludgate-says-156533>