



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Ms Cecilia Rooms: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome**



**Panel decision and reasons on behalf of the  
Secretary of State for Education**

**September 2021**

## Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Preliminary applications	4
Summary of evidence	4
Documents	4
Statement of agreed facts	5
Decision and reasons	5
Findings of fact	6
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	10
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	14

## **Professional conduct panel decision and recommendations, and decision on behalf of the Secretary of State**

<b>Teacher:</b>	Ms Cecilia Rooms
<b>Teacher ref number:</b>	9802132
<b>Teacher date of birth:</b>	05 August 1964
<b>TRA reference:</b>	18871
<b>Date of determination:</b>	10 September 2021
<b>Former employer:</b>	Overton School, Ludlow

### **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 10 September 2021, remotely, to consider the case of Ms Cecilia Rooms.

The panel members were Ms Hilary Jones (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Kamal Hanif (teacher panellist) and Mr Graham Ralph (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Phil Taylor of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Ms Rooms that the allegation(s) be considered without a hearing. Ms Rooms provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer Mr Andrew Cullen or Ms Rooms.

The meeting took place in private, save for the announcement of the panel's decision, which was announced in public and recorded.

## Allegations

The panel considered the allegation(s) set out in the notice of meeting dated 2 September 2021.

It was alleged that Ms Cecilia Rooms was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst employed at the Overton School as Deputy Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead between September 2018 and July 2019, she:

1. Demonstrated a lack of judgement in relation to Individual A, whom she knew had been convicted of a criminal offence for downloading and/or producing indecent images of children and/or animals on one or more occasions, including by:
  - a. Failing to disclose to the school that she had an ongoing personal relationship with Individual A;
  - b. Allowing Individual A to use and/or access her work laptop;
  - c. Inviting Individual A to visit her property and/or discussing the prospect of Individual A visiting her property at a time when it was likely that her [redacted] would have been present at her property.

Ms Rooms has admitted allegations 1a – 1c, and that the facts of these allegations as admitted amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

## Preliminary applications

There were no preliminary applications.

## Summary of evidence

### Documents

In advance of the meeting, the panel received a bundle of documents which included:

Section 1 – Notice of Meeting (*separate document*)

Section 2 – Statement of Agreed Facts and Presenting Officer's Representations – pages 3 to 8

Section 3 – Teaching Regulation Agency Documents – pages 10 to 146

Section 4 – Teacher Documents – pages 148 to 155

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the meeting.

## **Statement of agreed facts**

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Ms Rooms on 16 June 2021.

## **Decision and reasons**

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case and reached a decision.

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Ms Rooms for the allegation(s) to be considered without a hearing. The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest. The panel did not determine that such a direction was necessary or appropriate in this case.

Ms Rooms was employed at the Overton School (the "School") as Deputy Head Teacher between September 2018 and July 2019. She was also Deputy Safeguarding Lead at the School.

On 9 July 2019, the School was informed that Ms Rooms had a personal relationship with Individual A, a registered sex offender ("RSO"). The School informed the LADO of the disclosure on 9 July.

Individual A was subject to an indefinite Sexual Harm Prevention Order with the following provisions:

- a) Using any device capable of accessing the internet unless:
  - i. it has the capacity to retain and display the history of internet use, and
  - ii. he makes the device available on request for inspection by a police officer;
- b) Deleting such history;
- c) Possessing any device or storing digital images unless he makes it available on request for inspection by a police officer.

A fact-finding meeting was held at the School on 11 July 2019. Ms Rooms attended the meeting. Following the meeting, she was suspended pending further investigations.

On 16 July 2019, a further meeting was held with Ms Rooms at the School. During the meeting, Ms Rooms tendered her resignation with immediate effect and this was accepted by the School. Following the meeting, Ms Rooms confirmed this in writing.

On 17 July 2019, the School wrote to Ms Rooms confirming that her final date of employment was 16 July and informing her that a referral would be made to the DBS. The School submitted this referral the same day.

## **Findings of fact**

The findings of fact are as follows:

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you proved, for these reasons:

Whilst employed at the Overton School as Deputy Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead between September 2018 and July 2019, you:

**1. Demonstrated a lack of judgement in relation to Individual A, whom you knew had been convicted of a criminal offence for downloading and/or producing indecent images of children and /or animals on one or more occasions, including by:**

**a. Failing to disclose to the school that you had an ongoing personal relationship with Individual A;**

This allegation was admitted and supported by evidence presented to the panel, in particular the Statement of Agreed Facts signed by Ms Rooms, as well as the Mitigation Statement submitted to the panel, and other documents in the hearing bundle including reports of the School's fact finding meetings. At a meeting on 11 July 2019, Ms Rooms admitted commencing a friendship with Individual A in 2004 and that this was continuing at the time. Ms Rooms elsewhere referred to her relationship with Individual A as a "personal friendship"; however, the panel considered that the term "relationship" covers friendships also and so found this element of the allegation to be proved.

The panel noted that Ms Rooms admitted being aware that Individual A had a conviction in 2015, and that she was aware of the nature of the conviction, albeit by way of media reports. She also admitted she was "fully aware" that Individual A was a Registered Sex Offender.

It was clear to the panel that Ms Rooms had not informed the School of her relationship. The panel noted that when the School was told of the relationship by a third party, it acted swiftly to contact Ms Rooms and the relevant agencies. The panel considered that this indicated that the School was not previously aware of the relationship.

The panel noted that Ms Rooms was a Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for safeguarding at a special needs school and as such would have been aware of national guidance on keeping children safe, and the duty to disclose relevant information; the children in her care had particular vulnerabilities. The panel therefore had no doubt that

Ms Rooms' actions in failing to disclose her relationship demonstrated a very serious lack of judgement.

No evidence was provided which cast any doubt on the facts having taken place as alleged. The allegations were therefore found proved.

**b. Allowing Individual A to use and/or access your work laptop;**

This allegation was admitted and supported by evidence presented to the panel, in particular the Statement of Agreed Facts signed by Ms Rooms, as well as the Mitigation Statement submitted to the panel. The hearing bundle also contained further detail provided by Ms Rooms as to why she had given Individual A access to her School laptop, which in the panel's view gave further weight to the allegation.

The panel noted that Ms Rooms explained in her Mitigation Statement that Individual A's use of the laptop was "never unsupervised". However, in the panel's view, allowing any individual unconnected to the School to use a device which could allow access to personal data regarding children would demonstrate a lack of judgement. This became all the more serious given that Individual A was a RSO.

No evidence was provided which cast any doubt on the facts having taken place as alleged. The allegation was found proved.

**c. Inviting Individual A to visit your property and/or discussing the prospect of Individual A visiting your property at a time when it was likely that your [redacted] would have been present at your property.**

This allegation was admitted and supported by evidence presented to the panel, in particular the Statement of Agreed Facts signed by Ms Rooms, as well as the Mitigation Statement submitted to the panel.

The panel noted that Ms Rooms had clearly and unequivocally admitted that she invited Individual A to her home by way of a text message and that she stated her [redacted] may be present; Ms Rooms accepted that this was a lack of judgement on her behalf.

The panel considered evidence in the hearing bundle which suggested that police and social services had taken action quickly and directly as soon as they became aware of the potential for contact between Individual A and a child. This evidence included a report of a police visit to Individual A, during which his phone was checked and text messages were viewed from a contact named "Celia Rooms". In the panel's view, the actions taken by the relevant agencies indicated that Individual A was considered a serious potential risk. In the panel's view, therefore, Ms Rooms' actions as set out in allegation 1c demonstrated at least a lack of judgement.

No evidence was provided which cast any doubt on the facts having taken place as alleged. The allegation was found proved.

In summary, the panel concluded that each of allegations 1a, 1b and 1c which it had found proven demonstrated a very serious lack of judgement on the part of Ms Rooms, which had led to a high risk of potential harm to children.

## **Findings as to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute**

Having found all of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher Misconduct: The Prohibition of Teachers, which is referred to as “the Advice”.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Rooms in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Ms Rooms was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by ...
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

In the panel’s view, the statutory frameworks around safeguarding are very clear, and should be well known by all in the teaching profession. In addition, the panel noted that Ms Rooms had been given a role which included strategic leadership over child protection procedures; it was noted that the Job Description for Ms Rooms’ role, included in the hearing bundle, listed as a responsibility “to support the implementation of Every Child Matters”.

In relation to the policies and practices of the School the panel noted that:

- the School had a clear policy in place around the use of IT (as contained in the Employee Handbook included in the hearing bundle); and
- the Employee Handbook comprised a section titled ‘Behaviour outside of work’ which included requirements for employees not to bring the name of the School into disrepute, or take actions that result in loss of confidence in the employee’s integrity.



The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Rooms fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession. The panel felt this to be particularly the case given she was a senior teacher with a specific safeguarding role. The panel considered that the training Ms Rooms' had received meant she would have been aware of the standards of behaviour expected and that she should have been applying the standards and principles expected at work in her personal life also.

The panel also considered whether Ms Rooms' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 10 and 11 of the Advice. The panel considered that none of the offences listed was directly relevant to Ms Rooms herself, but noted that Individual A, with whom she had a close relationship, had been convicted of an offence relating to the viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or pseudo photograph or image of a child.

The panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting, but involved a School laptop. The panel noted that the Advice defines unacceptable professional conduct as "misconduct of a serious nature, falling significantly short of the standard of behaviour expected of a teacher."

The panel considered that Ms Rooms was subject to an overarching and ongoing safeguarding duty towards her pupils at the School. In this regard, the panel referred to the current version of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document which states: "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child." The panel further noted that this document makes clear that the safeguarding responsibility to which a teacher is subject further extends to any person under the age of 18.

The panel considered that Ms Rooms should have been acutely aware of this responsibility given she was an experienced teacher with a position on the Senior Leadership Team, and was the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the panel's view, allowing Individual A to use a School laptop created a significant risk of allowing him access to information on pupils in Ms Rooms' own School. The panel considered that Ms Rooms had also put her [redacted] at risk.

Consequently, the panel considered that Ms Rooms' conduct, albeit outside of the education setting, would have affected the way she fulfilled her teaching and pastoral roles.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Rooms was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others and considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel also took account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and the fact that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way they behave.

The findings of misconduct were serious and the conduct displayed, even though it took place outside the education setting, would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher, potentially damaging the public perception.

In the panel's view, teachers are expected to act as appropriate role models, and the public expects high standards of them. The panel considered that the public would perceive Ms Rooms' conduct as being incompatible with the role of any teacher, and that the public would be likely to hold a senior teacher such as Ms Rooms to even higher standards.

In the panel's view, Ms Rooms' actions in maintaining a relationship with a RSO, and inviting him into her home, including at a time when a child may be present, would call into question her commitment to safeguarding both inside and outside the School in the eyes of the public. The panel considered that these actions may also lead the public to question the motives behind the invitation, thus further bringing the profession into disrepute.

The panel therefore found that Ms Rooms' actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Having found the facts of particulars 1a – 1c proved, the panel further found that Ms Rooms' conduct amounted to both unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

## **Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State**

Given the panel's findings in respect of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, it was necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found all of these to be equally relevant in this case, namely: the

protection of pupils, the protection of other members of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

The panel's findings against Ms Rooms involved a demonstration of a clear and serious lack of judgement when inviting Individual A to visit her property without regard to the implications of the fact that her [redacted] would be present there. There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils and the protection of other members of the public (including her own young family member), given the serious findings made against Ms Rooms.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Ms Rooms were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. This was particularly the case given her seniority within the School, her safeguarding role and her consequent awareness of safeguarding responsibilities.

The panel decided that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Ms Rooms was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

Notwithstanding the clear public interest considerations that were present, the panel considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order, taking into account the effect that this would have on Ms Rooms.

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations both in favour of, and against, prohibition as well as the interests of Ms Rooms. The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proved. In the list of such behaviours, those that are relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards; and
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or well-being of pupils.

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

In the panel's view, the evidence put before it indicated that Ms Rooms' actions had been deliberate and there was no evidence to suggest that Ms Rooms was acting under duress.

Ms Rooms had continued in her relationship with Individual A for 4 years following his conviction and being designated as a RSO. The panel considered that Ms Rooms

therefore had ample opportunity to disclose her relationship to her family and the School, and limit the risks arising from it. The panel had not been presented with any mitigating evidence in this regard; on the contrary, it appeared that Ms Rooms' decision to end her relationship with Individual A was purely reactive, and that there had been some secrecy about the relationship on Ms Rooms' part. Ms Rooms had only become open about it once the police confirmed to her that the School was aware of it. The panel considered that a reasonable person would find it difficult to separate this conduct from her professional duties and role at the School.

The panel weighed this against the fact that it appeared on the evidence before it that Ms Rooms had a clean disciplinary record at the School.

The panel first considered whether it would be proportionate to conclude this case with no recommendation of prohibition, considering whether the publication of the findings made by the panel would be sufficient.

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings was sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Ms Rooms of prohibition.

The panel was therefore of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations relating to safeguarding outweighed the interests of Ms Rooms. The panel did not consider this to be a case where the teacher had made an exceptional contribution to education to the extent that there was a public interest in her being able to continue to teach.

One of the key factors to this decision was that Ms Rooms was a well-trained, senior teacher with a key safeguarding role and yet had continued in a relationship with a RSO who presented a risk to children, had kept this relationship hidden from her family and the School, had allowed Individual A access to a School laptop, and had invited him to her home when a young child could have been present.

Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

The panel went on to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to recommend that a review period of the order should be considered. The panel was mindful that the Advice states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances, in any given case, that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would militate against the recommendation of a review period. The panel found that none of these behaviours was directly relevant to Ms Rooms.

The panel acknowledged that it had been provided with a number of statements attesting to Ms Rooms' good character, indicating that she had contributed positively to the School and the teaching profession and was dedicated to her work, professional, supportive, and passionate about teaching. The panel noted that only one statement appeared to have been provided by a recent colleague at the School.

The panel also took into account Ms Rooms' Mitigation Statement in which, among other things, she offered her sincere apologies for her decisions in regard to Individual A and stated that she understood these had had an undesirable impact on her personal and professional life. The panel considered that she had thereby shown some remorse for her actions; however, the panel did not consider that she had shown any real insight into who she may have harmed and to what extent, the impact of her actions on the School, or that she may have put children at risk by giving Individual A access to her work laptop and her home.

Ms Rooms' confirmed in her Mitigation Statement that she has ceased contact with Individual A. However, in the panel's view there was no indication that she had taken any such steps until the relationship became known to her family and the School, and therefore the panel did not place weight on this element of her Statement.

The panel also noted Ms Rooms' reference to her 'good intentions' to help Individual A, but found that this could not in any way excuse Ms Rooms' failure to disclose the relationship to the School particularly given her long experience as a teacher, her role as Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the heightened training she would have received which should have left her particularly aware of how to detect and react to safeguarding issues, including those relating to vulnerable adults.

The panel noted that it appeared that no direct harm had been caused to any child in circumstances where the consequences could have been a lot more serious and where the risks were high. The panel found it difficult to see that Ms Rooms' could reasonably be trusted in a position of responsibility within an education setting given the allegations it had found proved and the very poor judgement she had shown despite her knowledge and training as a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The panel therefore decided that its findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate in all the circumstances for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

## Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

I have given very careful consideration to this case and to the recommendation of the panel in respect of both sanction and review period.

In considering this case, I have also given very careful attention to the Advice that the Secretary of State has published concerning the prohibition of teachers.

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Ms Cecilia Rooms should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Ms Rooms is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by ...
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel finds that the conduct of Ms Rooms fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of failing to disclose a personal relationship with a convicted and registered sex offender, allowing the individual to use/access a school laptop and inviting the individual to visit a property when it was likely a young child was present.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Ms Rooms, and the impact that will have on her, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children. The panel has observed, “In summary, the panel concluded that each of allegations 1a, 1b and 1c which it had found proven demonstrated a very serious lack of judgement on the part of Ms Rooms, which had led to a high risk of potential harm to children.” A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel’s comments on insight and remorse, which the panel sets out as follows, “The panel also took into account Ms Rooms’ Mitigation Statement in which, among other things, she offered her sincere apologies for her decisions in regard to Individual A and stated that she understood these had had an undesirable impact on her personal and professional life. The panel considered that she had thereby shown some remorse for her actions; however, the panel did not consider that she had shown any real insight into who she may have harmed and to what extent, the impact of her actions on the School, or that she may have put children at risk by giving Individual A access to her work laptop and her home.” In my judgement, the lack of insight means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk future pupils’ wellbeing. I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, “public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Ms Rooms were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. This was particularly the case given her seniority within the School, her safeguarding role and her consequent awareness of safeguarding responsibilities.”

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of unacceptable professional conduct, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Ms Rooms herself and the panel comment “it had been provided with a number of statements attesting to Ms Rooms’ good character, indicating that she had contributed positively to the School and the teaching profession and was dedicated to her work, professional, supportive, and passionate about teaching.”

A prohibition order would prevent Ms Rooms from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of her contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel's comments "Ms Rooms was a well-trained, senior teacher with a key safeguarding role and yet had continued in a relationship with a RSO who presented a risk to children, had kept this relationship hidden from her family and the School, had allowed Individual A access to a School laptop, and had invited him to her home when a young child could have been present." In my view as it appears this relationship continued over a number of years and in Ms Rooms' role, it is reasonable to expect that she would have been aware of the need to disclose this information to the school at the earliest opportunity and prevent further risk.

I have also given considerable weight to the risk of Ms Rooms' actions in allowing Individual A use of a school device, which could potentially allow access to personal data regarding children, which is particularly serious given Individual A was unconnected with the school and a registered sex offender.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Ms Room has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up insight, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest in order to achieve the intended aims of a prohibition order.

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel's comments "it appeared that no direct harm had been caused to any child in circumstances where the consequences could have been a lot more serious and where the risks were high. The panel found it difficult to see that Ms Rooms' could reasonably be trusted in a position of responsibility within an education setting given the allegations it had found proved and the very poor judgement she had shown despite her knowledge and training as a Designated Safeguarding Lead."

I have considered whether not allowing for a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is proportionate to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, two key factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the seriousness of the proven facts and the lack of insight on the impact of her actions on the school or children that were put at risk.

I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.



**This means that Ms Cecilia Rooms is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England.** Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of the allegations found proved against her, I have decided that Ms Rooms shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of her eligibility to teach.

This order takes effect from the date on which it is served on the teacher.

Ms Cecilia Rooms has a right of appeal to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date she is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SABuxcey', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey**

**Date: 16 September 2021**

This decision is taken by the decision maker named above on behalf of the Secretary of State.