



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Karim Parmar: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

June 2022

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

Teacher: Mr Karim Parmar
TRA reference: 19824
Date of determination: 15 June 2022
Former employer: Haydon School, Greater London

Introduction

A professional conduct panel ('the panel') of the Teaching Regulation Agency ('the TRA') convened on 13 to 15 June 2022 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Karim Parmar.

The panel members were Mrs Melissa West (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Paul Millett (lay panellist) and Mr Alan Wells (former teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Tom Sharpe of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Samantha Paxman of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Mr Parmar was present and was represented by Mr Mark Rose of NASUWT.

The hearing took place by way of a virtual hearing in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 22 March 2022.

It was alleged that Mr Parmar was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst employed as a teacher at Haydon School:

1. On or around 13 October 2020 he engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour in that he:
 - a. Showed a video of to a class of Year 8 pupils which included:
 - i. Civilians being shot at from a helicopter; and
 - ii. Dead bodies.
 - b. Engaged in discussions with a class of Year 8 students, including discussions about:
 - i. Terrorism;
 - ii. Rape;
 - iii. Brutalization of children and/or babies; and
 - iv. The use of stress positions in jail.
2. In behaving as may be found proven at Allegation 1 above, he allowed students to be exposed to material of an extremist nature.
3. On or around 13 October 2020 he engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour toward one or more pupils in that he referred to them as:
 - a. 'Idiot'; and
 - b. 'Spastic'.

Mr Parmar admitted the facts of allegations 1 to 3, as set out in the response to the notice of referral dated 20 January 2022. However, Mr Parmar denied that those admitted facts amounted to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Preliminary applications

Application to admit additional documents

The panel considered a preliminary application from the teacher's representative for the admission of additional documents.

The presenting officer did not object to the application.

The teacher's documents consisted of 11 additional pages of evidence comprised of a mixture of character references and medical evidence.

The documents subject to the application had not been served in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.37 of the Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession, May 2020 ('the Procedures'). Therefore, the panel was required to decide whether the documents should be admitted under paragraphs 5.33 and 5.34 of the Procedures.

The panel considered the additional documents were relevant. Accordingly, the documents were added to the bundle.

Application for part of the hearing to be heard in private

During the course of the teacher's evidence, the panel considered a request by the teacher's representative for some of the hearing be held in private. Specifically, the teacher's representative requested that evidence concerning the teacher's medical record and circumstances be heard in private. The presenting officer did not object to the application.

The panel considered whether to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11 of the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 ('the Regulations') and paragraph 5.87 of the Procedures to exclude the public from all or part of the hearing.

The panel took into account the general rule that hearings should be held in public and that this is generally desirable to maintain public confidence in the administration of these proceedings and also to maintain confidence in the teaching profession. The panel also had regard to whether the request runs contrary to the public interest. On this occasion, however, the panel was satisfied that the application for the hearing to be partially heard in private was a reasonable one when it concerned confidential matters relating to the teacher's health.

Accordingly, the panel was content to grant the request for partial privacy on this basis.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

- Section 1: Notice of referral and notice of hearing and response – pages 5 to 16
- Section 2: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 18 to 31

- Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 33 to 294
- Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 296 to 311

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

- Section 4: Additional Teacher documents – pages 312 to 322

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle in advance of the hearing and the additional documents that the panel decided to admit.

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called by the TRA:

- Witness A

No witnesses were called to give oral evidence on behalf of the teacher.

Mr Parmar was present at the hearing and therefore gave oral evidence.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case before it and reached a decision.

Mr Parmar was employed as a computing teacher by Haydon School ('the School') from September 2020 until he was suspended and subsequently dismissed.

Concerns were raised by pupils on 15 October 2020, that on or around 13 October 2020, Mr Parmar allegedly showed the class a video of people being shot at from a helicopter and that their dead bodies were also shown. It was also alleged that further inappropriate discussions ensued. Four pupils provided written statements regarding the alleged incidents.

On 19 October, a meeting was held with Mr Parmar to make him aware of the concerns that had been raised.

On 19 October 2020, a meeting was held with the LADO, Prevent lead, HR contact, EPM and the Police Counter Terrorist Unit where it was discussed that statements would be taken from more of the pupils in the class and that Mr Parmar's electronic devices were to be seized by the police.

Between 20 and 22 October 2020, further statements were taken from pupils who were in the class. The statements also referred to a further incident in which Mr Parmar allegedly called one or more pupils 'spastic' and 'idiot'.

A second LADO meeting was held on 23 October 2020. An investigation meeting was held with Mr Parmar on 2 November 2020. Mr Parmar was dismissed by the School, by reason of gross misconduct, by letter dated 30 November 2020.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

The panel found the following particulars of the allegations against you proved, for these reasons:

1. On or around 13 October 2020 you engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour in that you:

a. Showed a video of to a class of Year 8 pupils which included:

- i. Civilians being shot at from a helicopter; and**
- ii. Dead bodies.**

b. Engaged in discussions with a class of Year 8 students, including discussions about:

- i. Terrorism;**
- ii. Rape;**
- iii. Brutalization of children and/or babies; and**
- iv. The use of stress positions in jail.**

The panel noted that in the response to the notice of referral, dated 20 January 2022, Mr Parmar admitted the facts of allegations 1(a)(i)-(ii) and 1(b)(i)-(iv).

The panel considered the written statement and oral evidence of Mr Parmar. Mr Parmar submitted that, on the day of the incident, he prepared a lesson on 'fake news'. Mr Parmar had been having issues with pupils' behaviour, and wanted to choose a lesson subject that was topical in the hope that it would engage pupils in an impactful way with a view to helping to alleviate any behaviour problems. Mr Parmar admitted that he showed the video clip. However, he fast-forwarded through various points of the video which were blurry or because he did not want the pupils to see graphic content. Mr Parmar submitted that, even though he did not show gratuitous violence in the video, the pupils were able

to see dead bodies in the aftermath, for which he acknowledged his misjudgement. He maintained, however, that the video clip was freely available to the public on YouTube and had been shown before the watershed on national television news programmes.

Mr Parmar admitted that he had not watched the video prior to showing it to the class. He said he remembered seeing it previously on Channel 4 news, and didn't think it was too controversial, but was in a rush on the morning of the lesson while assisting Year 13 pupils. Mr Parmar said that he thought he knew what was on the video and had shown many video clips to pupils in the past. Mr Parmar admitted that he had been quite complacent about the video as he thought it was mainstream and not controversial.

Mr Parmar further submitted that although the lesson was about fake news, the video led to discussion around the matters identified in allegation 1(b)(i-iv). Mr Parmar admitted that the subject of terrorism was discussed, but said this was in the context [REDACTED].

Mr Parmar said the subject of rape arose in the context of a discussion around a [REDACTED]. He explained that in discussing the matter he had been seeking to explain that Islam is not about violence or narrow-minded fundamentalism. Mr Parmar acknowledged his poor judgement in addressing this subject.

Mr Parmar admitted that the subject of brutalization of children and/or babies had arisen in the context of comments that Oliver Stone had made in a documentary about films he produced concerning the Vietnam war. Mr Parmar admitted that he had discussed a child being beheaded.

Mr Parmar also admitted that the use of stress positions in jail had also been discussed, and he confirmed that this related to the United States detention camp located at Guantanamo Bay.

The panel considered the witness statement and oral evidence of Witness A. Witness A was appointed as the investigating officer in relation to the allegations made against Mr Parmar. On 15 October 2020, Witness A was made aware, via emails from Individual B and Individual C, of concerns raised by Year 8 pupils in relation to Mr Parmar. The first email received from Individual C informed Witness A that concerns were raised regarding a video that had been shown to pupils where people were being shot at and discussions which followed about babies being hit against a wall.

Witness A submitted that Individual B had been approached by four pupils during lunch break on 15 October 2020 and was made aware of concerns relating to Mr Parmar. The concerns raised were that Mr Parmar had shown a video to his Year 8 class which showed people in a helicopter killing people on the ground and then their dead bodies. It was also alleged that further discussions ensued of an inappropriate nature, including [REDACTED], rape, terrorism and people being held in stress positions in jail. Individual

B took statements from the four pupils and the statements were then passed to Witness A.

Witness A held a meeting with Mr Parmar and the headteacher of the School to make Mr Parmar aware of the concerns that had been raised. Between 20 and 22 October, Witness A spoke with pupils in the class and she took a written account of their evidence. The pupils claimed that Mr Parmar had told them he should not be showing the video. Witness A later spoke with the remaining pupils in the class and took written accounts from them too.

Witness A held a meeting with Mr Parmar on 2 November 2020. Witness A submitted that Mr Parmar stated that he had been conducting a lesson on 'fake news' and confirmed that he showed a video. He said that he had not viewed it prior to showing the class and that he did not realise how graphic the content was until he was in the class, and he fast-forwarded some of the video where he thought it was too graphic. Mr Parmar also admitted to discussing topics such as terrorism, brutalisation of children and stress positions in prisons, though he was unsure whether he had discussed rape.

Witness A submitted that, when a search was conducted of Mr Parmar's school laptop, the history had been cleared. When Mr Parmar was questioned about this, he stated that he had done some online shopping using his personal email address so cleared the history.

Further, Witness A submitted that Mr Parmar admitted using the words "idiot" and "spastic" and that he was really sorry about using the two words, especially the second one. Mr Parmar stated that "I have fallen below both the standards of the school and my own standards I wish to apologise to the school and the students and I feel that I have personally let you down."

Witness A was concerned that the video and discussions were potential radicalisation and Mr Parmar was using his platform in an inappropriate manner with pupils and was not teaching what he should have been.

The panel noted that, although the investigation into the alleged incident by the School had produced a number of witness statements from pupils, it only heard oral evidence from Witness A (who was not herself a witness to the events that allegedly unfolded in the classroom). The panel therefore identified that Witness A's evidence and the evidence from the School's investigation amounted to hearsay evidence. The panel was advised that hearsay evidence is admissible, but should be recognised as such and the panel should determine the weight to be placed on it.

Accordingly, the panel weighed up the hearsay evidence from the School's investigation and it noted that all of the pupils were direct eyewitnesses to events in the classroom on the day in question. The panel considered that the student accounts were of different

degrees of consistency, but while Witness A said that she took the statements one-to-one, and attempted to record the student's responses as verbatim as possible, the panel was concerned at the potential for collusion between the students. As a result, the panel decided to afford the student evidence limited weight.

Instead, the panel placed primary weight on the evidence adduced by Mr Parmar and specifically the various admissions he made both in writing and during his oral evidence.

The panel found allegations 1(a)(i)-(ii) and 1(b)(i)-(iv) proven.

2. In behaving as may be found proven at Allegation 1 above, you allowed students to be exposed to material of an extremist nature.

The panel noted that in the response to the notice of referral, dated 20 January 2022, Mr Parmar admitted the facts of allegation 2.

Mr Parmar submitted that, in the context of a Prevent referral, he had been interviewed by the Metropolitan Police Service Counter Terrorism Command and that the interviewing officer, Individual D, had provided an email that was included in the bundle in which he stated that he did not think Mr Parmar was a danger to or trying to radicalise pupils. In the email, Individual D stated:

"I wasn't of the opinion that you posed a risk to yourself or others and wasn't of the opinion that you would be likely to being drawn into any form of radicalisation."

Mr Parmar submitted that his intention when acting in the manner set out in allegation 1 was actually to protect pupils from radicalism. However, during his oral evidence to the panel he continued to acknowledge that he had, as a matter of fact, shown the video to the pupils and discussed the matters raised thereafter (in each case as described in allegations 1(a) and 1(b)).

The panel acknowledged the evidence from Individual D, and concluded that the evidence before it does not support a finding that Mr Parmar was seeking to radicalise pupils. The panel also noted that there were no allegations to that effect from the TRA.

However, the panel was satisfied that there is a distinction between action that amounts to an attempt to radicalise, as opposed to action that instead simply exposes pupils to material of an extremist nature (whether pursuant to an attempt to radicalise or not). This specific allegation falls into the latter category.

In this context, and notwithstanding that Mr Parmar had admitted this allegation, the panel was mindful that the burden of proof is on the TRA to prove the facts of the case.

The panel considered the Government's revised statutory guidance on the Prevent duty (April 2021), in which the term 'extremism' is defined as follows:

“Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.”

Notwithstanding that it had found that allegations 1(a) and (b) were proved, and amounted to behaviour that was inappropriate and/or unprofessional, the panel was not satisfied, on a balance of probabilities, that Mr Parmar’s actions allowed the pupils he was teaching to be exposed to material of an ‘extremist’ nature within the meaning of the term as defined above.

The panel therefore found allegation 2 not proven.

3. On or around 13 October 2020 you engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour toward one or more pupils in that you referred to them as:

a. ‘Idiot’; and

b. ‘Spastic’.

The panel noted that in the response to the notice of referral, dated 20 January 2022, Mr Parmar admitted the facts of allegation 3(a) and 3(b).

The panel considered the written statement and oral evidence of Mr Parmar. Mr Parmar submitted that he was having to conduct the lesson in question under difficult circumstances and that four or five pupils were intent on derailing the class at every opportunity.

Mr Parmar submitted that his use of the word ‘idiot’ arose in circumstances where he had sent a pupil out of the classroom to ‘cool off’ but who then became involved in play-fighting with another pupil. Mr Parmar submitted that he did not directly call the pupil an idiot, but that in the process of dealing with this incident, and while returning his pupil to the classroom, he questioned whether the pupil enjoyed being “...the idiot of the class, acting the fool and playing to the class”. Mr Parmar acknowledged that this distinction may not have been apparent to the pupil.

Mr Parmar also identified that a pupil from the class next door was causing additional disruption while standing immediately outside the door to the classroom. He submitted that it was in this context that he used the word ‘spastic’ and that it was directed towards the pupil outside the classroom who was causing disruption. Mr Parmar submitted that this word escaped his mouth in the heat of the moment. He said he was not looking at the pupil, who remained outside the classroom. Mr Parmar submitted that he had never used the word before and would never use it again. He apologised unreservedly for doing so and recognised that he had fallen below the standards of the School.

The panel considered the witness statement and oral evidence of Witness A. Witness A submitted that she took written accounts of evidence from pupils in the class. Those accounts referred to Mr Parmar calling a pupil an 'idiot' and another a 'spastic'.

For the same reasons as set out in relation to allegations 1(a) and (b), the panel afforded limited weight to the student evidence, on the basis it is hearsay evidence. However, the panel noted that Mr Parmar's account of his use of the word 'spastic' accorded with the statements provided by pupils, in that it was directed towards a pupil who was outside the classroom.

The panel found allegation 3 proven.

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

Having found allegations 1(a)(i)-(ii), 1(b)(i)-(iv), 3(a) and 3(b) proved, but not allegation 2, 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 Mr Parmar, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 1, Mr Parmar was in breach of the following standard:

- Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:
 - Establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Parmar 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:
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions

- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Parmar amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The panel also considered whether Mr Parmar's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. The panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

Accordingly, due to the breach of the professional standards, the panel was satisfied that Mr Parmar 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 that they behave. The panel found that Mr Parmar's behaviour fell short of this standard.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher, potentially damaging the public perception.

The panel therefore found that Mr Parmar's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Having found the facts of allegations 1(a)(i)-(ii), 1(b)(i)-(iv), 3(a) and 3(b) proved, the panel further found that Mr Parmar's 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.

The panel was aware that 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 a punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely: the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public; the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct; and that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest, if they are in conflict.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Parmar, which involved inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour towards pupils, there was a public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils. However, the panel considered the public interest consideration was limited in this case. The panel had found that Mr Parmar had exercised extremely poor judgement in relation to planning and conducting the lesson on 13 October 2020. Yet, the panel found no evidence that Mr Parmar's motivations in conducting the lesson in the way he did (as found proven above), had been due to anything other than a genuine attempt to meaningfully engage with a class that he was experiencing difficulties with. The panel considered that Mr Parmar's actions were severely ill-judged, but it was satisfied that there was no evidence of malicious or malign intent on Mr Parmar's part.

Equally, although the panel had found that Mr Parmar's use of the words "idiot" and "spastic" was wholly inappropriate and unacceptable, it accepted his evidence that his utterance of such words occurred in challenging circumstances (as addressed below).

Having taken these factors into account, and reflected on Mr Parmar's clear insight and remorse for his actions (also referred to below), the panel believed the risk of Mr Parmar engaging in such an inappropriate and misjudged manner again was extremely low.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Parmar was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.

The panel was of the view that there was a public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession as the conduct found against Mr Parmar was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated. However, the panel considered that in the circumstances of this case the public interest consideration would be sufficiently and appropriately met by a published finding of unacceptable professional

conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, and no further sanction was required in order to achieve this.

The panel decided that there was a strong public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator nor upon his ability to make a valuable contribution to the profession. The panel took into account the fact that there is no evidence to suggest that Mr Parmar has anything other than a good history in the teaching profession. To the contrary, the panel considered that the allegations in this case related to one lesson in an otherwise unblemished 15 year career. The panel considered that Mr Parmar should be able to make a valuable contribution to the profession as a computing teacher in the future.

In view of the 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 Mr Parmar.

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 Mr Parmar. 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 were relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- failure to act on evidence that indicated a child's welfare may have been at risk e.g. failed to notify the designated safeguarding lead and/or make a referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies when abuse, neglect and/or harmful cultural practices were identified;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE); and
- violating of the rights 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.

There was no evidence that Mr Parmar's actions were not deliberate.

The panel noted the witness statement of Witness A, who confirmed that no previous concerns had been raised in relation to Mr Parmar during his time at the School.

The panel considered that there was no evidence to suggest that Mr Parmar was acting under what it would term 'extreme' duress. However, there was evidence that Mr Parmar found himself faced with challenging circumstances.

Mr Parmar submitted that he was new to the School, as he had only joined in September 2020, and he was not well known by pupils or staff. Mr Parmar was teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, and during this time the School was using "bubbles". Mr Parmar had been asked to teach English instead of computer science as the School did not have any computers in the Year 8 bubble. Although an experienced teacher, Mr Parmar was not an English teacher and so he was teaching a subject not familiar to him. Other than being provided with an outline lesson plan, no specific training or coaching had been given to him by the School as regards how to conduct the English lessons.

Mr Parmar also explained the difficulties that he had experienced with Year 8 behaviour. During his lesson on 13 October, a pupil who Mr Parmar had sent outside to "cool off" engaged in play fighting with another pupil quite vigorously. Mr Parmar's evidence was that he was quite stressed after having been pushed and sworn at by the pupil he had sent outside and the other pupil. During this time, Mr Parmar pressed the alarm for on-call but no support or assistance was provided. Mr Parmar's lesson was also being disrupted by pupils from the class next door. Mr Parmar pressed for on-call support a second time, but again no support or assistance was provided. Mr Parmar submitted that this all led to him becoming "frustrated and discombobulated".

Mr Parmar apologised unreservedly for his actions, acknowledged his misjudgement and stated that he had learnt from this incident. Mr Parmar submitted that, with hindsight, he could see that his actions were ill-judged.

In addition, the panel noted the submissions made by Mr Parmar regarding [REDACTED], together with the medical evidence that the panel agreed to admit on the first day of the hearing. Whilst the panel acknowledged Mr Parmar's evidence regarding [REDACTED], in the absence of any expert evidence to attest to any contemporaneous link between it and the allegations that the panel found to be proven, the panel felt incapable of attaching anything other than limited weight to it.

The panel noted that Mr Parmar had fully cooperated with the process throughout, and admitted his actions during the School's investigation and at all times during the hearing, repeatedly apologising for them. The panel considered that Mr Parmar exhibited genuine and sincere remorse for his actions and accepted his evidence that he was "mortified" by what had happened.

The panel also found that Mr Parmar displayed insight into his actions and what he needed to do to ensure he never repeated such actions again should he return to teaching (for which he expressed a clear desire). The panel did not consider that Mr Parmar would gain any further insight to that which he has acquired since his dismissal by being prohibited from teaching (even if that prohibition was subject to the minimum review period). In such circumstances, the panel considered that a prohibition order would have an unduly punitive effect on Mr Parmar.

In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, there was nothing to suggest that (other than as found proven in this case), Mr Parmar did not usually demonstrate high standards in both personal and professional conduct and has contributed to the education sector.

In this context, the panel noted that Mr Parmar co-operated with the Prevent referral process and voluntarily met with representatives from the Metropolitan Police. The Panel noted that Mr Parmar had produced an email from Individual D (the officer who interviewed Mr Parmar as part of the Prevent referral), in which Individual D states:

“Following on from our conversation this afternoon I can confirm that I had no concerns for you from a Counter Terrorism perspective, I wasn’t of the opinion that you posed a risk to yourself or others and wasn’t of the opinion that you would be likely to being drawn into any form of radicalisation.”

In addition, the panel noted the certificate of professional record as a Chartered London Teacher submitted as part of the bundle. Mr Parmar’s pride in achieving this standard was evident to the panel and was clear evidence of his commitment to the education sector.

The panel noted a number of character references submitted on Mr Parmar’s behalf, to attest to his ability as a teacher. In particular, the panel noted the following:

Individual E

“Mr Parmar is very motivated and dedicated to all the students that he teaches, this is something I witnessed first-hand. He always strives very hard to ensure that everyone achieves their goals and this was well known to everyone in all year groups. He always takes his work very seriously.”

Individual F

“I have known Karim Parmar for over four years. We met when he joined Bishopshalt School as Head of the Computing Department in 2018...I had the pleasure of working with Karim for two years and during that time he conveyed a positive attitude and a commitment to developing the department...Karim is dedicated, hardworking and

committed to raising the attainment of every student. In addition to the above he is also ambitious, highly driven and professional in his work.”

Individual G

“I found him an excellent manager, with sharp awareness of all teaching standards and expectations. I affirm that his character is of the highest calibre with constantly appropriate respect and boundaries. Karim not only modelled high standards in the classroom but also organised several successful school trips whilst at Bishopshalt.”

Individual H

“I know Karim to be a man of strong moral character who treats others with courtesy and respect.”

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, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum and, having considered the mitigating factors that were present, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

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 sanction.

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 some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, including allegation 2. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Karim Parmar should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Parmar is in breach of the following standards:

- Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:
 - Establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- 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 Mr Parmar fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

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 Mr Parmar, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, “The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely: the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public” 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 noted that Mr Parmar had fully cooperated with the process throughout, and admitted his actions during the School’s investigation and at all times during the hearing, repeatedly apologising for them. The panel considered that Mr Parmar exhibited genuine and sincere remorse for his actions and accepted his evidence that he was “mortified” by what had happened.” 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, “In the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Parmar, which involved inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour towards pupils, there was a public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils. However, the panel considered the public interest consideration was limited in this case. The panel had found that Mr Parmar had exercised extremely poor judgement in relation to planning and conducting the lesson on 13 October 2020. Yet, the panel found no evidence that Mr Parmar’s motivations in conducting the lesson in the way he did (as found proven above), had been due to anything other than a genuine attempt to meaningfully engage with a class that he was experiencing difficulties with. The panel considered that Mr Parmar’s actions were severely ill-judged, but it was satisfied that there was no evidence of malicious or malign intent on Mr Parmar’s part.”

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 Mr Parmar himself and the panel comment “there was nothing to suggest that (other than as found proven in this case), Mr Parmar did not usually demonstrate high standards in both personal and professional conduct and has contributed to the education sector” and “the panel noted the certificate of professional record as a Chartered London Teacher submitted as part of

the bundle. Mr Parmar's pride in achieving this standard was evident to the panel and was clear evidence of his commitment to the education sector".

The panel noted a number of character references submitted on Mr Parmar's behalf, to attest to his ability as a teacher.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Parmar from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his 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 concerning insight or remorse. The panel has said, "The panel also found that Mr Parmar displayed insight into his actions and what he needed to do to ensure he never repeated such actions again should he return to teaching (for which he expressed a clear desire). The panel did not consider that Mr Parmar would gain any further insight to that which he has acquired since his dismissal by being prohibited from teaching (even if that prohibition was subject to the minimum review period). In such circumstances, the panel considered that a prohibition order would have an unduly punitive effect on Mr Parmar."

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that "there was a strong public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator nor upon his ability to make a valuable contribution to the profession. The panel took into account the fact that there is no evidence to suggest that Mr Parmar has anything other than a good history in the teaching profession. To the contrary, the panel considered that the allegations in this case related to one lesson in an otherwise unblemished 15 year career. The panel considered that Mr Parmar should be able to make a valuable contribution to the profession as a computing teacher in the future."

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.



Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 17 June 2022

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