



National College for  
Teaching & Leadership

# **Ms Julie Beech: Professional conduct panel outcome**

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

**April 2015**

## Contents

A. Introduction	3
B. Allegations	4
C. Preliminary applications	4
D. Summary of evidence	4
Documents	4
Witnesses	5
E. Decision and reasons	5
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	6
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	7

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

<b>Teacher:</b>	Ms Julie Beech
<b>Teacher ref no:</b>	8645067
<b>Teacher date of birth:</b>	7 February 1964
<b>NCTL case ref no:</b>	12774
<b>Date of determination:</b>	24 April 2015
<b>Former employer:</b>	Sunnyfields Primary School, Doncaster

### **A. Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (“the National College”) convened on 24 April 2015 at 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry CV1 3BH to consider the case of Ms Julie Beech.

The panel members were Ms Fiona Tankard (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Colin Parker (teacher panellist) and Mr Martin Greenslade (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Nick Leale of Blake Morgan Solicitors.

The presenting officer for the National College, who was not present, was Ms Louisa Atkin of Browne Jacobson Solicitors.

Ms Julie Beech was not present and was not represented.

The meeting took place in private. The announcement of the decisions of the panel were announced in public and recorded.

## **B. Allegations**

The panel considered the allegation set out in the Notice of Meeting dated 13 April 2015.

It was alleged that Ms Julie Beech was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in that whilst employed as a Headteacher of Sunnyfields Primary School, Doncaster, during May 2014, she:

1. Failed to comply with her responsibilities under the 2014 key stage 2 test administrators' guide in respect of the 2014 key stage 2 national curriculum assessments by failing to ensure that:

a. children's answers in their completed test scripts were not reviewed after the tests;

b. children's answers were their own and were not amended after the tests.

2. Acted dishonestly, in that she intentionally changed pupils' answers in respect of:

a. five mental maths scripts;

b. three spelling scripts;

despite knowing that the scripts were meant to contain the pupils' own unaided work.

Ms Beech admitted the facts in full and that they amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. Such admissions were made by way of Ms Beech's Notice of Referral Form, signed by her on 27 February 2015 and by way of the statement of agreed facts, signed by her on 15 March 2015.

## **C. Preliminary applications**

There were no preliminary applications.

## **D. Summary of evidence**

### **Documents**

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

Section 1 – Chronology and list of key people (pages 1-3);

Section 2 – Notice of Referral, response and Notice of Meeting (pages 4-10);

Section 3 – Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations (pages 11-15);

Section 4 – NCTL documents (pages 16-49);

Section 5 – Teacher documents (pages 50-55).

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

## **Witnesses**

The panel did not hear oral evidence at the meeting.

## **E. Decision and reasons**

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

We have now carefully considered the case before us and have reached a decision.

We confirm that we have read all the documents provided in the bundle in advance of the meeting.

This case relates to the Headteacher of Sunnyfields Primary School in Doncaster who was found to have amended one answer each of eight pupils in key stage 2 national curriculum assessments. The alterations came to light after the Standards and Testing Agency raised concerns over the fact that certain scripts appeared to have been altered, with the alterations forming an indentation on subsequent scripts. These concerns were investigated by the local authority and the teacher admitted that she was responsible for the alterations to the scripts.

## **Findings of fact**

Our findings of fact are as follows:

We have found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you proven, for these reasons:

**1. You failed to comply with your responsibilities under the 2014 key stage 2 test administrators' guide in respect of the 2014 key stage 2 national curriculum assessments by failing to ensure that:**

**a. children's answers in their completed test scripts were not reviewed after the tests;**

**b. children's answers were their own and were not amended after the tests.**

These particulars have been admitted in full and are, in any event, clearly made out from the evidence within the bundle.

**2. You acted dishonestly, in that you intentionally changed pupils' answers in respect of:**

**a. five mental maths scripts;**

**b. three spelling scripts;**

**despite knowing that the scripts were meant to contain the pupils' own unaided work.**

These particulars have been admitted in full and, in any event, we are satisfied that the objective and subjective elements of dishonesty are made out. The teacher's status as headteacher would have left her in no doubt that what she was doing was dishonest and would be viewed as such.

## **Findings as to unacceptable professional conduct**

The teacher accepts by way of the statement of agreed facts (signed by her on 15 March 2015) that her conduct amounts to unacceptable professional conduct as, in her words, it amounts to misconduct of a serious nature that falls significantly short of the standards expected of a teacher. We agree with that admission. There has been a serious departure from the professional conduct elements of Part Two of the Teachers' Standards. By, when in the position of headteacher, acting in such a dishonest manner during the course of a key stage assessment, the teacher has clearly failed to uphold public trust in the profession and failed to maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour.

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

We recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State. We believe that this is an appropriate and proportionate measure that is clearly required in this case in order to maintain public confidence in the profession and declare and uphold proper standards of conduct. The teacher's actions were deliberate and dishonest and abused her position of trust as headteacher.

On the basis that the teacher has an unblemished record in the profession until these proceedings, has demonstrated clear remorse, and was clearly highly regarded by senior professional colleagues, we recommend that the teacher should be allowed to apply for review of the prohibition order after 2 years.

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

I have carefully considered the findings and recommendations of the panel in this case.

The panel has found the facts proved and have judged that those facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct. Ms Beech admitted the facts and agreed herself that her actions amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

As a headteacher, acting in such a dishonest manner during the course of a key stage assessment, Ms Beech has clearly failed to uphold public trust in the profession and failed to maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour.

I agree with the panel's recommendation that prohibition is an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

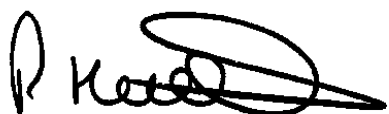
Ms Beech had a previously unblemished record. She has demonstrated clear remorse, and was highly regarded by colleagues. I agree that Ms Beech should be allowed to apply to have the order set aside after a minimum period of 2 years has elapsed.

**This means that Ms Julie Beech is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England.** She may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 6 May 2017, 2 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If she does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Ms Julie Beech remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Ms Julie Beech 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.

**NAME OF DECISION MAKER: Paul Heathcote**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Heathcote', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

**Date: 28 April 2015**

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