



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Mr Steven Bould: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome**

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

**February 2022**

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

<b>Teacher:</b>	Mr Steven Bould
<b>Teacher ref number:</b>	933564
<b>Teacher date of birth:</b>	18 March 1984
<b>TRA reference:</b>	18580
<b>Date of determination:</b>	17 February 2022
<b>Former employer:</b>	The de Ferrers Trust, Staffordshire

### **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened virtually on 17 February 2022, to consider the case of Mr Bould.

The panel members were Mr Duncan Tilley (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Steve Woodhouse (teacher panellist) and Ms Esther Maxwell (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Surekha Gollapudi 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 Mr Bould that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Bould provided a statement of agreed facts, signed on his behalf by his authorised representative, and admitted conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer Ms Sherelle Appleby, Mr Bould or his representative, Ms Bould.

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 8 February 2022.

It was alleged that Mr Bould was guilty of having been convicted of a relevant offence, in that he was:

1. Convicted on 19 October 2020 and sentenced on 9 February 2021 at Stafford Crown Court of 6 counts of intentionally touching a female, with no penetration contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 on the following dates:
  - a. 01/11/16- 21/11/16;
  - b. 01/09/15- 21/11/16;
  - c. 01/10/18- 06/02/19;
  - d. 01/01/19- 06/02/19;
  - e. 01/11/18- 06/02/19;
  - f. 01/12/18- 06/02/19.
2. Convicted 19 October 2020 and sentenced on 9 February 2021 at Stafford Crown Court of 3 counts of sexual assault of a female under 13 between 01/11/18- 06/02/19 contrary to Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 7.

## Preliminary applications

The panel noted that the allegations contained a typographical error in that they incorrectly referred to the date of conviction as 9 February 2021, when this was in fact the date of sentence. The panel carefully considered the certificate of conviction and noted that the date of conviction was 19 October 2020.

The panel took account of the legal advice and noted that the change to clarify the correct date of conviction does not change the nature, scope or seriousness of the allegations. The panel therefore amended the allegation to reflect the correct date of conviction.

## Summary of evidence

### Documents

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

Section 1: Notice of meeting and response – pages 2 to 11

Section 2: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 13 to 190

Presenting officer submissions – not numbered

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the meeting. The panel also read the presenting officer's submissions which were provided one day before the meeting.

### Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by the teacher's authorised representative on 20 August 2021.

### Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Bould for the allegations 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.

The teacher was employed as a mathematics teacher at the School between September 2018 until his dismissal in July 2019. On 19 October 2020 he was convicted of 9 separate counts including, sexually assaulting females with no penetration and sexual assault on a female child under 13.

### 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:

**Convicted on 19 October 2020 and sentenced on 9 February 2021 at Stafford Crown Court of 6 counts of intentionally touching a female, with no penetration contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 on the following dates:**

**01/11/16- 21/11/16;**

**01/09/15- 21/11/16;**

**01/10/18- 06/02/19;**

**01/01/19- 06/02/19;**

**01/11/18- 06/02/19;**

**01/12/18- 06/02/19.**

**Convicted 19 October 2020 and sentenced on 9 February 2021 at Stafford Crown Court of 3 counts of sexual assault of a female under 13 between 01/11/18- 06/02/19 contrary to Sexual Offences Act 2003 section 7.**

The panel had regard to the Certificate of Conviction which confirmed the fact of the convictions.

The panel also had regard to the statement of agreed facts (which was signed by Mr Bould's authorised representative), in which Mr Bould admitted the fact of the convictions and that they were relevant offences.

The panel therefore found allegations 1 and 2 proven.

### **Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence**

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Bould in relation to the facts it found proved involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that by reference to Part 2, Mr Bould 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

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 was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Bould, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel noted that the individual's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and working in an education setting in that the actions which led to the convictions took place within the classroom setting.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offence could have had an impact on the safety of pupils.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Bould's behaviour in committing the offence could affect public confidence in the teaching profession, given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community.

The panel noted that Mr Bould's behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed.

This was a case involving an offence of sexual activity, which the Advice states is likely to be considered a relevant offence.

The panel considered that a finding that these convictions were for relevant offences was necessary to reaffirm clear standards of conduct so as to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession.

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

Given the panel's findings in respect of convictions of a relevant offence, 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 a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely the protection of pupils, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Bould, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils given the serious findings of convictions relating to inappropriate touching of children in the classroom setting.

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

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 Mr Bould 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 Mr Bould.

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 Bould. 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 are:

- 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;

- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;

- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving vulnerable pupils) or violation of the rights of pupils;

- sexual misconduct, for example, involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;

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. The panel found that none of the mitigating factors were present in this case.

The panel saw evidence that Mr Bould was previously subject to warnings in respect of his teaching practice and failure to maintain appropriate personal space with pupils.

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 Mr Bould of prohibition.



The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Bould. 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. One of these behaviours is serious sexual misconduct, such as where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons. The panel noted that Mr Bould was responsible for sexual misconduct against pupils in the school setting, and that this conduct resulted in 9 convictions and a significant prison sentence.

The panel decided that the 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 a relevant conviction.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Bould 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

- 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

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 was also, "satisfied that the conduct of Mr Bould, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards."

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of sexual misconduct against pupils.

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 a relevant conviction, 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 Bould, and the impact that will have on him, 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, "that the individual's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and working in an education setting in that the actions which led to the convictions took place within the classroom setting." 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, "Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate. The panel found that none of the mitigating factors were present in this case."

In my judgement, the apparent lack of insight or remorse puts at risk the future well-being of pupils. 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, "The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Bould's behaviour in committing the offence could affect public confidence in the teaching

profession, given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of sexual misconduct in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

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 a relevant conviction, 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 Bould himself. The panel comment that it “saw evidence that Mr Bould was previously subject to warnings in respect of his teaching practice and failure to maintain appropriate personal space with pupils.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Bould from teaching and 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, “The panel noted that Mr Bould was responsible for sexual misconduct against pupils in the school setting, and that this conduct resulted in 9 convictions and a significant prison sentence.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Bould 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 by any evidence of remorse or 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 “The panel decided that the 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.”

I have considered whether allowing for no 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, the factors which mean that a no review is necessary are the serious nature of the convictions and the lack of any apparent remorse or insight.

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 Mr Steven Bould 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 him, I have decided that Mr Steven Bould shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of his eligibility to teach.

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

Mr Steven Bould has a right of appeal to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Meyrick', followed by a vertical line.

**Decision maker: Alan Meyrick**

**Date: 21 February 2022**

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