



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Ms Shannon Parsons: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

December 2022

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Preliminary applications	4
Summary of evidence	5
Documents	5
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

Teacher:	Ms Shannon Parsons
Teacher ref number:	1587784
Teacher date of birth:	31 October 1987
TRA reference:	17715
Date of determination:	1 December 2022
Former employer:	Northfleet Technology College, Kent

Introduction

A professional conduct panel ('the panel') of the Teaching Regulation Agency ('the TRA') convened on 1 December 2022, by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Ms Shannon Parsons.

The panel members were Mr Clive Ruddle (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Geraldine Baird (lay panellist) and Ms Laura Flynn (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Samantha Cass of Birketts 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 Parsons that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Ms Parsons provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and/or conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Ms Carolyn Thackstone of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors, Ms Parsons or any representative for Ms Parsons.

The meeting took place in private by way of a virtual meeting.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 11 October 2022.

It was alleged that Ms Parsons was guilty of the following:

On or around 5 January 2021, she was convicted of a relevant offence, namely:

1. Causing/inciting sexual activity with a male 13-17, offender 18 or over, abuse of position of trust, pursuant to s.17(1)(e)(i) Sexual Offences Act 2003

And

She is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that, whilst employed at Northfleet Technology College between September 2016 and October 2018:

2. She failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A, including by
 - a) engaging in 1:1 contact via text message in which she:
 - i. told Pupil A she loved him;
 - ii. discussed meeting up with Pupil A; and
 - iii. asked Pupil A if he wanted a lift.
 - b) giving Pupil A a lift in her personal vehicle.

Ms Parsons admitted the facts of allegations 1, 2(a)(i)-(iii) and 2(b) and that her behaviour amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in relation to allegation 2 and/or a conviction of a relevant offence in relation to allegation 1, falling short of the standards of behaviour expected of a teacher, as set out in the statement of agreed facts signed by Ms Parsons on 4 August 2022.

Preliminary applications

There were no preliminary applications.

The panel noted that since the date of the referral to the TRA in this case, new 'Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession' were published in May 2020 (the 'May 2020 Procedures'). The panel understands that the earlier provisions contained within the 'Teacher misconduct: disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession' updated in April 2018 (the 'April 2018 Procedures') apply to this case, given

that those provisions applied when the referral was made. Although the panel has the power to direct that the May 2020 Procedures should apply in the interests of justice or the public interest, the panel had received no representations that this should be the case. For the avoidance of doubt, therefore, the panel confirms that it has applied the April 2018 Procedures in this case.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

- Section 1: Notice of referral, response and notice of meeting – pages 6 to 17
- Section 2: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 19 to 25
- Section 3: TRA documents – pages 27 to 290
- Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 292 to 322

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 Parsons on 4 August 2022.

Decision and reasons

The panel carefully considered the case and reached the following decision and reasons:

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Ms Parsons 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.

Ms Parsons was employed as a science teacher at Northfleet Technology School ('the School') from 1 September 2016 to 5 October 2018.

Ms Parsons engaged in 1:1 contact with Pupil A via text message between 2017 and 2018, whilst Pupil A was a pupil at the School.

Ms Parsons was arrested on 19 September 2018 following allegations that she had engaged in inappropriate relations with one or more students. Ms Parsons' conviction as outlined at allegation 1 relates to Pupil B.

On 5 January 2021, Ms Parsons was convicted of the offence 'Abuse of Position of trust – inciting male child to engage in sexual activity' for which she was later sentenced to 12 months in prison, suspended for two years, at Maidstone Crown Court on 25 March 2021.

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:

On or around 5 January 2021, you were convicted of a relevant offence, namely:

- 1. Causing/inciting sexual activity with a male 13-17, offender 18 or over, abuse of position of trust, pursuant to s.17(1)(e)(i) Sexual Offences Act 2003.**

The panel considered the statement of agreed facts signed by Ms Parsons on 4 August 2022. In that statement of agreed facts, Ms Parsons admitted the particulars of allegation. Further, it was admitted the facts of the allegations amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence.

The panel noted page 8 of the Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers ('the Advice') which states that where there has been a conviction at any time, of a criminal offence, the panel will accept the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of both the conviction and the facts necessarily implied by the conviction, unless exceptional circumstances apply. The panel did not find that any exceptional circumstances applied in this case.

The panel had been provided with a copy of the certificate of conviction from Maidstone Crown Court, which detailed that Ms Parsons had been convicted at Central Kent Magistrates Court on 5 January 2021 of one count of abuse of position of trust – inciting a male child to engage in sexual activity.

In respect of the allegation, Ms Parsons was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court on 25 March 2021 to 12 months' imprisonment, suspended for 2 years. In addition, she was made subject to a barring order, sexual harm prevention order for 5 years, and ordered to pay a statutory surcharge.

On examination of the documents before the panel, the panel was satisfied that the facts of allegation 1 were proven.

And

You are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that, whilst employed at Northfleet Technology College between September 2016 and October 2018, you:

2. You failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A, including by:

a) engaging in 1:1 contact via text message in which you:

- i. told Pupil A you loved him;**
- ii. discussed meeting up with Pupil A;**
- iii. asked Pupil A if he wanted a lift;**

b) giving Pupil A a lift in your personal vehicle.

The panel noted that within the statement of agreed facts, signed by Ms Parsons on 4 August 2022, Ms Parsons admitted the facts of allegations 2(a)(i)-(iii) and 2(b). Ms Parsons further admitted that the facts of those admitted allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct which may bring the profession into disrepute. Notwithstanding this, the panel made its own determination based on the evidence available to it.

Within the statement of agreed facts, Ms Parsons admitted that she engaged in 1:1 conduct with Pupil A via text message between 2017 and 2018 whilst Pupil A was a pupil at the School. Ms Parsons provided Pupil A her mobile phone number following an email from him stating that he needed help.

Ms Parsons admitted that she sent a number of text messages to Pupil A, in which she stated: *"Aw I love you!"*; *"Want a lift? X"*; and *"I know we talked about meeting up this week but I think [blank] would probably tell her dad. I do wanna see you soon though x x x"*.

The panel was provided with screenshots of the messages between Ms Parsons and Pupil A.

The panel found allegation 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), 2(a)(iii) and 2(b) proven.

Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence, unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

Having found the allegations proved, the panel considered whether the proven allegations amounted to: conviction of a relevant offence (in respect of allegation 1) and unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute (in respect of allegation 2).

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 firstly considered the Teachers' Standards. The panel was satisfied that Ms Parsons' conduct, in relation to the facts it found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that by reference to Part 2, Ms Parsons 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; and
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Relevant offence

The panel considered whether the proven facts of allegation 1 amounted to conviction of a relevant offence.

The panel found that Ms Parsons' conduct involved breaches of the Teacher's Standards, as set out above.

The panel noted that Ms Parsons' conduct took place outside of the education setting, in that she was communicating with Pupil B via Snapchat, and then attended Pupil B's home, where they engaged in sexual activity. The panel considered that Ms Parsons' actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting as Pupil B was a current pupil at the School.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offence could have had an impact on the safety or security of pupils and/or members of the public.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Ms Parsons' 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 Ms Parsons' behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, albeit that it was suspended, 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 more likely to be considered a relevant offence.

The panel found that the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the conviction was relevant to Ms Parsons' ongoing suitability to teach. The panel considered that a finding that this conviction was for a relevant offence was necessary to reaffirm clear standards of conduct so as to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession.

Unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

The panel went on to consider whether the proven facts of allegation 2 amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel found that Ms Parsons' conduct involved breaches of the Teacher's Standards, as set out above.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Parsons fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The panel also considered whether Ms Parsons' conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. The panel found that the offence of sexual activity was relevant. The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is more likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting, in that Ms Parsons was communicating with Pupil A via text message. The panel considered that Ms Parsons' behaviour touched upon her profession as a teacher, as Pupil A was still a pupil at the School.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Parsons 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 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 Ms Parson's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Having found the facts of allegations 1 and 2 proved, the panel further found that, in respect of allegation 1, Ms Parsons had been convicted of a relevant offence and, in respect of allegation 2, Ms Parsons' 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, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and a conviction 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 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 Ms Parsons, which involved a conviction of "Abuse of Position of trust – inciting male child to engage in sexual activity" in relation to her conduct towards Pupil B, as well as failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils given the serious findings of inappropriate relationships with children.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Ms Parsons 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 Ms Parsons 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 Parsons.

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 Parsons. 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;
- the commission of a serious criminal offence, including those that resulted in a conviction or caution, paying particular attention to offences that are 'relevant matters' for the purposes of The Police Act 1997 and criminal record disclosures.
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- any abuse of any trust, knowledge or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- 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; 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 Ms Parsons' actions were not deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Ms Parsons was acting under extreme duress, and, in fact, the panel found Ms Parsons' actions to be calculated and motivated.

No evidence was submitted to attest to Ms Parsons' history or ability as a teacher. Nor was any evidence submitted which demonstrates exceptionally high standards in personal and professional conduct or that Ms Parsons contributed significantly to the education sector.

The panel noted Ms Parsons' letter to the TRA dated 2 March 2022. Although the subject of the letter was regarding the case being referred back to the investigation stage, during which the allegations changed, Ms Parsons set out the reasons behind her actions. Ms Parsons submitted that she forged a friendship with Pupil A, and his parents, upon noticing that he used the same [REDACTED]. Ms Parsons offered Pupil A support; Pupil A stated that both Pupil A and his mother became reliant on her. Ms Parsons stated that the language used between her and Pupil A mirrored the language and familiarity that she used with Pupil A's mother. Ms Parsons accepted that this language is not appropriate and far exceeds the boundaries of her role.

Ms Parsons also explained that, having never witnessed a healthy relationship, someone coping well emotionally, or having a stable parent to guide her, she was not able to cope with the position of trust awarded to her.

The panel noted the short format pre-sentence report submitted as part of the bundle, which stated that Ms Parsons had accepted full responsibility for her actions, pleading guilty at her first opportunity. The report also highlighted that "*Miss Parsons demonstrated deficits in her ability to act, age appropriate at the time this relationship was happening.*" and that "*Miss Parsons was going through a tough time in her life, with her [REDACTED] and the victim being present on an occasion when she was upset.*"

The report stated that [REDACTED].

The report outlined that, at the time of the report, Ms Parsons was [REDACTED]. Ms Parsons felt that being outside, walking and gardening was helping her emotional wellbeing. The panel noted a number of letters submitted as part of the bundle, outlining Ms Parsons' [REDACTED].

In a letter to the TRA dated 4 August 2022, Ms Parsons stated that she regretted her actions, every moment of every day.

The panel considered Ms Parsons' letter at page 292 to 294 of the bundle with regards to Ms Parsons' insight, in particular her comments that:

- "*I was clear in my mind at the time, that our relationship was platonic.*"
- "*...by imprinting my own negative experiences in to my teaching, I have inadvertently and subconsciously made things worse, for myself and my students.*"

- *“This was dangerous and I recognise that now. My responsibilities as a teacher were blurred – I wanted to help and do the right thing for the students, but by not holding myself to account as an adult, the relationships forged were not appropriate. I really struggled to see the difference between right and wrong at this point.”*

However, whilst the panel considered that there was an element of insight, the panel was not satisfied that Ms Parsons had shown true insight of the impact that this had on the pupils involved and instead had focussed mainly on the impact that this had on her own life. Further, the panel found that Ms Parsons had not fully comprehended the inappropriateness of her actions as evidenced by her comment that the *“relationship [with Pupil A] was platonic”* and that they *“were friends”*.

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 Parsons 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 Ms Parsons. Insufficient mitigation, lack of genuine insight and the overall seriousness of both allegations were significant factors in forming that opinion. 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. These behaviours include 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 her professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons; and any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel found that Ms Parsons' was responsible for a conviction of Abuse of Position of trust – inciting a male child to engage in sexual activity.

The Advice also indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer review period. The panel found that Ms Parsons was not responsible for any such behaviours.

The panel considered whether a review period would be appropriate but noted Ms Parsons' comment in her letter at page 294 of the bundle which was "*I cannot work with young people. There is no doubt in my mind, of that fact.*" The panel noted that this letter was dated 2 March 2022 and that, now, with there being over four years since the incidents took place in 2017/2018, Ms Parsons was in non-teaching employment and had admitted herself that she could not work with children.

The panel found Ms Parsons' behaviour to be at the most serious end of the scale and, as such, found that a review period would not be appropriate in the circumstances. The panel found that this decision was proportionate taking into account the interests of the public.

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, in relation to allegation 2, to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and in respect of allegation 1, to a relevant conviction.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Ms Shannon Parsons 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; and
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The overall findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of abuse of a position of trust.

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 Parsons, 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 protect children and safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, "The panel noted that Ms Parsons' conduct took place outside of the education setting, in that she was communicating with Pupil B via Snapchat, and then attended Pupil B's home, where they engaged in sexual activity. The panel considered that Ms Parsons' actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting as Pupil B was a current pupil at the School." 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, "However, whilst the panel considered that there was an element of insight, the panel was not satisfied that Ms Parsons had shown true insight of the impact that this had on the pupils involved and instead had focussed mainly on the impact that this had on her own life. Further, the panel found that Ms Parsons had not fully comprehended the inappropriateness of her actions as evidenced by her comment that the *"relationship [with Pupil A] was platonic"* and that they *"were friends"*."

In my judgement, the lack of full insight means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk the future wellbeing 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 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.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of abuse of position of trust 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 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 Parsons herself. The panel comment “No evidence was submitted to attest to Ms Parsons’ history or ability as a teacher. Nor was any evidence submitted which demonstrates exceptionally high standards in personal and professional conduct or that Ms Parsons contributed significantly to the education sector.”

A prohibition order would prevent Ms Parsons from teaching and 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, “The panel found that Ms Parsons’ was responsible for a conviction of Abuse of Position of trust – inciting a male child to engage in sexual activity.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Ms parsons 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 full 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 considered whether a review period would be appropriate but noted Ms Parsons' comment in her letter at page 294 of the bundle which was *"I cannot work with young people. There is no doubt in my mind, of that fact."* The panel noted that this letter was dated 2 March 2022 and that, now, with there being over four years since the incidents took place in 2017/2018, Ms Parsons was in non-teaching employment and had admitted herself that she could not work with children."

The panel also, "found Ms Parsons' behaviour to be at the most serious end of the scale and, as such, found that a review period would not be appropriate in the circumstances. The panel found that this decision was proportionate taking into account the interests of the public."

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, the factors which mean that not allowing for a review is necessary are the abuse of trust found, the misconduct found and the lack of full 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 Ms Shannon Parsons 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 Shannon Parsons 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 Shannon Parsons has a right of appeal to the King's Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date she is given notice of this order.



Decision maker: Alan Meyrick

Date: 6 December 2022

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