



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Ms Sarah Mead: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

July 2023

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

Teacher: Ms Sarah Mead
TRA reference: 20827
Date of determination: 26 July 2023
Former employer: Meridian Angel Primary School, Enfield

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened virtually on 24 to 26 July 2023, to consider the case of Ms Sarah Mead.

The panel members were: Ms Jasmin Choudhury (teacher panellist – in the chair), Ms Geraldine Baird (lay panellist) and Mr Dara Islam (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Ben Schofield of Blake Morgan LLP.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Miss Jessica Hocking, instructed by Kingsley Napley LLP.

Ms Mead was present and was represented by Mr Colin Henderson of The Reflective Practice.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded, save for parts of the evidence which were heard in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 12 May 2023.

It was alleged that Ms Mead was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst working as a Teacher at Meridian Angel Primary School:

1. On or around 13 May 2022, she allowed pupils to use glue guns:
 - a) without adequate supervision;
 - b) without a risk assessment having been conducted; and/or
 - c) without two members of staff being present.
2. As a result of using a glue gun in her class on 13 May 2022, Pupil A sustained an injury to his hand.
3. In relation to the injury sustained by Pupil A, she did not:
 - a) arrange for Pupil A to be taken to the medical room and/or receive treatment for his injury;
 - b) notify Pupil A's parent of the accident/injury;
 - c) notify the Headteacher of the accident/Pupil A's injury; and/or
 - d) complete an accident report in a timely manner and/or until requested to do so by the Headteacher.

Ms Mead admitted the factual allegations and that they amounted to unacceptable professional behaviour and conduct that might bring the profession into disrepute.

Preliminary applications

Privacy application

Mr Henderson made an application for parts of the hearing that would discuss [REDACTED] to be considered in private. This application was not opposed by Miss Hocking. The panel were aware of the application in advance and gave some consideration to the application prior to the further oral submissions.

The panel recognised the importance of the public nature of these proceedings. The panel was satisfied that evidence relating [REDACTED] was evidence that would

legitimately be considered part of her private life. There were no factors in this case which suggested that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to hear that evidence in private. The panel was satisfied that this was a discreet area of the evidence and would not materially affect the public's understanding of the case in general. It was satisfied the application went no further than was necessary to protect this aspect of Ms Meads' private life.

The panel therefore granted the application.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and anonymised pupil list – pages 1 to 7

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 8 to 13

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 14 to 22

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 23 to 251

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 252 to 277

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

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called on behalf of the TRA:

- Pupil A's mother;
- Individual A;

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called on behalf of the teacher:

- Ms Sarah Mead (The teacher);
- Individual B.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case before it and reached a decision. The material facts before the panel were not in dispute between the parties.

Meridian Angel Primary School (the "School"), is a one form entry primary school in Edmonton, Enfield. It is part of the London Diocesan Board for Schools Academies Trust (the "Trust"). Ms Mead was employed by the School as an Assistant Headteacher in June 2015. In September 2020, Ms Mead was promoted to interim Deputy Headteacher and the following year took the substantive post. At the material time of these allegations, Ms Mead was also the Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL") and held classroom teaching responsibilities.

On Friday 13 May 2022, Ms Mead was teaching a Year 6 class for the day. The pupils had completed their Key Stage 2 SATs test that week. The class was mainly undertaking art and design tasks in the afternoon, including creating characters for the School's library display.

Ms Mead had split the class into three groups and two of them were working on projects relating to the display. The class was split between the Year 6 classroom, a neighbouring breakout room and the adjoining art room. Ms Mead rotated through the groups and was supervising them on her own. She did not have the support of a teaching assistant on that day.

One of the groups working on the art projects was using PVA glue to stick parts of the character together that they had made. Two pupils from this group approached Ms Mead with a glue gun they had obtained. Ms Mead told them not to use the glue gun and to keep using the PVA glue. When Ms Mead next returned to the pupils in this group, she found they had switched the glue gun on, and they showed Ms Mead how the PVA glue was not working for the task. Having been shown this by the pupils, Ms Mead accepted the PVA glue was not effective and showed those pupils how to use the glue gun safely and allowed them to use it. Ms Mead continued to check on other pupils in the class as they were spread out in their groups.

It was almost the end of the day and on returning to the group with the glue gun, Pupil A had now joined this group and was watching the other pupils using the glue gun, Ms Mead asked Pupil A to return to his group, but he explained that he had finished his task with that group. On later returning to the group, Ms Mead noticed that Pupil A had started to use the glue gun. Ms Mead showed Pupil A how to use it safely.

As the children were packing up for the end of the day, one of the pupil's told Ms Mead that Pupil A had 'hurt' himself. Ms Mead spoke to Pupil A and in her evidence stated he was reluctant to show her his hand and was covering it with his other hand. Another pupil then moved Pupil A's hand and Ms Mead could see there was a small 'single blister' on his forehead. Ms Mead told Pupil A to visit the medical room, but Pupil A 'refused'. Ms Mead additionally told Pupil A to go and run his hand under the tap in the nearby toilet.

Ms Mead was required to be on gate duty that afternoon and as Pupil A left the School to go home, Ms Mead told Pupil A to show his hand to his mother when he got home. Ms Mead was then involved in a high-risk safeguarding issue with some other vulnerable pupils, who had not been collected at the end of the day. As she was dealing with this high-risk issue as the DSL until 16:30, Ms Mead was not able to deal with Pupil A's issue straight after school as she would normally do. As a result, Ms Mead forgot to deal with Pupil A's issues and follow the School's procedures, such as contacting his mother, informing the Headteacher or recording it in the School accident book.

When Pupil A got home from school, he showed his hand to his mother. Pupil A's mother called 111 and was advised to take Pupil A to a hospital, which she did that evening.

The clinical summary sheet from the hospital's emergency department described the injury as:

"Very small are[a] of burn to the dorsum of his right hand. 2 tiny blisters. One is oozing. Blisters debrided. Burn is less than 1%.

IMPRESSION: Superficial burn."

The panel had photographs of the injury taken by Pupil A's mother before it, which were consistent with this description.

The hospital advised that Pupil A return in a few days to check for any infection. Pupil A's mother was subsequently told to treat the injury by taking over-the-counter pain relief medication and regularly applying Vaseline to the burn.

At some point over the early part of the weekend, Pupil A's mother made a post about the glue gun situation on Twitter and had 'tagged' the School in the post.

On Saturday 14 May 2022, Pupil A's mother called The Sun newspaper to report the incident. The paper subsequently ran a story under the *headline "STICKY ISSUE I'm furious after my son, [REDACTED], burnt his hand at school using a glue gun – I didn't find out until he got home"*. The panel only had a copy of the headline in the evidence before it and did not have a full copy of the article.

Also on 14 May 2022, the IT department raised the Twitter post with the Headteacher, who subsequently emailed Ms Mead to ask about it. Ms Mead responded to the Headteacher's email on the same day and confirmed that Pupil A had hurt himself with a glue gun the previous day.

On Sunday 15 May 2022, Pupil A's mother emailed a complaint to the Trust.

On the return to school on Monday 16 May 2022, events had picked up further pace. On arrival at the School, Ms Mead met with the Headteacher to discuss the issue. Following

the conversation, Ms Mead taught her morning class and made the required entries in the accident book during her lunchtime break.

Pupil A's mother also attended the School to obtain further information and the School started to receive press enquiries. The CEO of the Trust emailed Pupil A's mother to offer an apology and explained that an investigation was underway. Furthermore, the Headteacher of the School emailed Pupil A's mother.

At the end of the school day, the Headteacher had a conversation with Ms Mead in which her position at the School and the situation was discussed. There was a conversation regarding the HR advice that was given regarding her role which included that she consider resigning her position. Although Ms Mead was unsure of the situation and ramifications, she agreed to resign immediately.

On 19 May 2022, Pupil A's mother reported the incident to the Police. Also, on this date, she made a referral to the TRA. On 22 May 2022, she reported the incident to the Health and Safety Executive.

During this week, Pupil A's mother, who was unaware of Ms Mead's resignation, started an online petition and also an in-person petition collecting signatures outside the School to have Ms Mead removed from the School. Pupil A's mother subsequently started the process of bringing a civil claim regarding her son's injury.

In her evidence before the panel, Ms Mead accepted the allegations in full. She accepted a number of failings relating to her conduct prior, during and after the burn to Pupil A had occurred. Also before the panel were the relevant School policies in regards to health and safety, first aid and an example of the risk assessments used by the School.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

1. On or around 13 May 2022, you allowed pupils to use glue guns:

- a) without adequate supervision;**
- b) without a risk assessment having been conducted; and/or**
- c) without two members of staff being present.**

Ms Mead admitted this allegation in full. The panel was satisfied that Ms Mead's admission was unequivocal and consistent with the surrounding evidence.

Therefore, the panel found this allegation proved.

2. As a result of using a glue gun in your class on 13 May 2022, Pupil A sustained an injury to his hand.

Ms Mead admitted this allegation in full. The panel was satisfied that Ms Mead's admission was unequivocal and consistent with the surrounding evidence.

Therefore the panel found this allegation proved.

3. In relation to the injury sustained by Pupil A, you did not:

- a) arrange for Pupil A to be taken to the medical room and/or receive treatment for his injury;**
- b) notify Pupil A's parent of the accident/injury;**
- c) notify the Headteacher of the accident/Pupil A's injury; and/or**
- d) complete an accident report in a timely manner and/or until requested to do so by the Headteacher.**

Ms Mead admitted this allegation in full. The panel was satisfied that Ms Mead's admission was unequivocal and consistent with the surrounding evidence.

Therefore the panel found this allegation proved.

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

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

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach

The evidence before the panel showed that Pupil A's and the two other pupils' safety was not suitably safeguarded by Ms Mead, in that she allowed them the use of the glue gun in the fashion that she did. The panel considered it an important right that parents be informed in a timely manner when a child in their care had injured themselves with a burn at school. As previously set out, Ms Mead did not on this occasion follow the relevant procedures in this area.

The panel also considered whether Ms Mead's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on page 12 onwards of the Advice. At paragraph 25 of the Advice, it indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found none of these offences were relevant in this case.

The panel were mindful that not every breach of the Teachers' Standards would automatically amount to unacceptable professional conduct and only that which fell significantly below the standard would be considered so. The panel also took account that behaviour that was a momentary lapse, otherwise excusable or forgivable should not be considered as unacceptable behaviour.

The panel recognised this was an isolated incident in Ms Mead's career as a teacher and senior leader, who at that time was attempting to undertake a number of highly pressurised roles and was also dealing with significant safeguarding concerns.

However, the panel's view was that the allegations demonstrated a number of discrete failings on the part of Ms Mead. It could not therefore properly be considered as a momentary lapse and as a result had crossed the threshold into unacceptable professional conduct. Whilst recognising that the standards apply equally to all members of the profession, these failures were somewhat heightened by Ms Mead's knowledge of the safeguarding requirements as she was a DSL and senior leader.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Mead 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 considered that Ms Mead's failures risked undermining the trust the public and parents placed in the profession to safeguard pupils, particularly so when teachers are acting *in loco parentis*. The panel paid no regard to any media publicity in the evidence

before it, but considered that a well-informed member of the public would consider these allegations to be serious and the conduct displayed would likely have a negative impact on Ms Mead's status as a teacher, potentially damaging the public perception of the profession.

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

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely,

- the protection of pupils;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession;
- the interest of retaining the teacher in the profession;

In the light of the panel's findings against Ms Mead which involved failures to safeguard pupils in the equipment they use in schools, there was a public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils.

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

The panel also decided that there was a strong public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon her abilities as an educator and she was able to make a valuable contribution to the profession.

In view of 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 Mead.

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 Mead. 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 was:

- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk

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 considered there was a significant amount of mitigating evidence before it in this case.

The vast majority of the allegations before the panel could properly be categorised as not being 'deliberate'.

Ms Mead immediately informed the Headteacher of the situation, once she was reminded of it on Saturday 14 May 2022 and from the outset accepted her failings. That position has continued throughout these proceedings including full admissions to the allegations.

In her evidence before the panel, Ms Mead demonstrated genuine remorse for the situation that had occurred, and most importantly, recognised the impact of her actions on Pupil A.

Ms Mead was clearly able to articulate what her failures were and how she would remedy such a situation if it were to arise in the future. The panel was satisfied that Ms Mead's understanding and high level of insight demonstrated that the risk of any repetition of similar conduct occurring in the future was extremely low.

The panel also considered the wider context of the circumstances that Ms Mead found herself in. It accepted that the Key Stage 2 SATs test week was an extremely difficult and stressful week for primary school teachers. Ms Mead was also undertaking both a Deputy Head's role and was the DSL, whilst she was required to still undertake classroom teaching in Year 6 and was the lead practitioner, both of which are highly pressured roles within a school.

Individual B confirmed in her evidence that previously, the Deputy Head and DSL roles were not combined with classroom teaching duties. [REDACTED]. The panel considered these factors had a material impact on the misconduct and whilst they did not excuse her actions, they significantly reduced her personal level of culpability in this case.

The panel considered evidence from Individual A and Individual B. There was a clear theme in the evidence of Ms Mead's resolute dedication to the teaching profession and to pupils. Both professionals stated that she constantly gave all that she could to her roles, despite the numerous challenges that working at school in a deprived area of North London presented. This was an isolated incident in a long and otherwise unblemished career.

Individual B stated in her live evidence that she could not speak highly enough of Ms Mead and that she would never knowingly put pupils at risk and would also follow procedures.

Individual A stated in her live evidence [REDACTED], she always willing to make the time up and support me in any way.

Furthermore, despite this incident, Ms Mead's dedication to the profession has continued. The panel considered it was admirable that despite the challenges she faced after the incident on 13 May 2022 and the following days, that she chose to continue teaching and remain in the profession.

Before the panel was a witness statement from the Headteacher at her current school which highlighted:

"When Sarah arrived for a trial day at our school with a view to me deciding if Sarah was right for the long-term supply position, Sarah provided me with full disclosure of the incident, as well as a full account of the proceedings taken against her. Sarah did not know me at all, she had only just registered with the agency and was looking for work. I felt that Sarah's level of professionalism, openness and honesty was extraordinary, and put her in a vulnerable position of potentially losing work as a result of her full disclosure. Sarah and I had a full and frank conversation about the incident, she was open to any questions I asked and information I required to make an informed decision about her coming to work in my school.

Sarah showed a considerable level of genuine remorse about the injury sustained by the child and the incident having taken place, as well as the outcomes that resulted from it thereafter. Sarah's honesty, integrity and openness immediately built trust with me and enabled me to unequivocally make the decision that, along with Sarah being an outstanding practitioner, Sarah was a trustworthy professional that I would feel safe and reassured to have lead teaching and learning in my school."

Ms Mead's current Headteacher further set out the many positive attributes she had brought to the school, in the short time that she has been there.

Another teacher highlighted that:

“She was always the teacher I wanted to go and observe to learn from, and high quality teaching was so natural to her. She is a naturally outstanding educator and every child in her classroom adored her and would hang on her every word. She brought learning journeys to life for the children and went above and beyond every single day to provide an exciting, supportive environment for every child in her care. Sarah taught me how to see the classroom from the child’s point of view, and even today when I am leading my team of sixteen teachers who I line manage, I hear myself echoing Sarah’s words which I know will inspire teachers to provide purposeful and meaningful experiences and skills-based curriculums. Her knowledge of how children learn and what they need to achieve is unmatched, and although we teach at different ends of the primary spectrum, she is always the person I would go to for support.”

It was apparent to the panel that a prohibition in this case would create a significant loss to the teaching profession.

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 compelling 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 of this finding would meet the public interest requirement of upholding the confidence in the profession.

Accordingly, the panel recommended to the Secretary of State that no prohibition order be imposed in this case.

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 all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that 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 Ms Sarah Mead is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach

The panel finds that the conduct of Ms Mead 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 Ms Mead, 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/safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, "The evidence before the panel showed that Pupil A's and the two other pupils' safety was not suitably safeguarded by Ms Mead, in that she allowed them the use of the glue gun in the fashion that she did. The panel considered it an important right that parents be informed in a timely manner when a child in their care had injured themselves with a burn at school. As previously set out, Ms Mead did not on this occasion follow the relevant procedures in this area." 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 it sets out as follows, "In her evidence before the panel, Ms Mead demonstrated genuine remorse for the situation that had occurred, and most importantly, recognised the impact of her actions on Pupil A." The panel goes on to note that, "Ms Mead was clearly able to articulate what her failures were and how she would remedy such a situation if it were to arise in the future. The panel was satisfied that Ms Mead's understanding and high level of insight demonstrated that the risk of any repetition of similar conduct occurring in the future was extremely low." Given the degree of insight and remorse demonstrated by Ms Mead, 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 that, "...public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Ms Mead were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession." However, I also note that the panel was presented with a significant amount of mitigating evidence and this means that I have given this element less weight in reaching my decision.

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 Mead herself. The panel were presented with significant evidence attesting to Ms Mead's contribution and commitment to teaching and education including from Individual A and Individual B. The panel observe that, "There was a clear theme in the evidence of Ms Mead's resolute dedication to the teaching profession and to pupils. Both professionals stated that she constantly gave all that she could to her roles, despite the numerous challenges that working at school in a deprived area of North London presented. This was a isolated incident in a long and otherwise unblemished career."

The panel also note that since these events Ms Mead has continued to demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching, "Furthermore, despite this incident, Ms Mead's dedication to the profession has continued. The panel considered it was admirable that despite the challenges she faced after the incident on 13 May 2022 and the following days, that she chose to continue teaching and remain in the profession."

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

In this case, I have noted the seriousness of the incident and the need for teachers to promote the safety of their pupils and follow established procedures. I have also taken into account the impact of Ms Mead's actions on her pupils. However, I have also taken into account the mitigating evidence considered by the panel, the evidence of Ms Mead's contribution to the teaching profession, her long and otherwise unblemished record as a teacher, and the substantial insight and remorse demonstrated.

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Cavey', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 28 July 2023

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