



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Andrew Ramsey: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

April 2023

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

Teacher:	Mr Andrew Ramsey
TRA reference:	19093
Date of determination:	14 April 2023
Former employer:	St Michael's Catholic Academy, Billingham

Introduction

A professional conduct panel ("the panel") of the Teaching Regulation Agency ("the TRA") convened on 30 January to 3 February 2023 at Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT, to consider the case of Mr Andrew Ramsey. The panel convened virtually on 8 February 2023, 9 March 2023 and 14 April 2023 for its deliberations.

The panel members were Mr Paul Hawkins (lay panellist - in the chair), Mrs Christine McLintock (teacher panellist) and Ms Hannah Fellows (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Claire Watson of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors who attended by virtual means.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Andrew Cullen of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors. Ms Holly Quirk of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors presented submissions on sanction.

Mr Andrew Ramsey was present, except on 9 March 2023, and was represented by Mr Andrew Faux of The Reflective Practice.

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

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 23 August 2022.

It was alleged that Mr Andrew Ramsey was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that:

1. Whilst employed as a Music Teacher at Carmel School Darlington between around 1995-2001, he engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A, by:
 - a) giving Pupil A lifts home;
 - b) disclosing personal information to Pupil A;
 - c) buying Pupil A gifts;
 - d) inviting and/or permitting Pupil A to visit his home;
 - e) accompanying Pupil A on a trip to London;
 - f) visiting sex shops with Pupil A;
 - g) kissing Pupil A;
 - h) engaging in sexual activity with Pupil A;
 - i) coercing Pupil A to engage in sexual activity despite Pupil A's express reservations.
2. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Queens Park Community School, Brent between around 2001-2002, he permitted former Pupil A to live with him in London.
3. His behaviour as may be found proven at allegations 1 and 2 was sexually motivated.

Mr Ramsey admitted that he gave lifts to Pupil A as alleged at 1a, bought gifts for Pupil A as alleged at 1c and allowed Pupil A to visit his home as alleged at 1d. Mr Ramsey denied however, that he had engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A as alleged in the stem of allegation 1. He also admitted allegation 2. Mr Ramsey denied the remainder of the allegations and unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Preliminary applications

A referral was made to the TRA around 5 February 2020. As the referral was made prior to 19 May 2020, the Teacher Misconduct: Disciplinary Procedures for the Teaching Profession dated April 2018 ("the Procedures") were followed.

Excluding the public

The panel considered an application from the teacher's representative that the hearing should be held in private.

The panel considered whether to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11 of the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 (the "Regulations") and paragraph 4.57 of the Procedures to exclude the public from all or part of the hearing.

The panel took into account the general rule that hearings should be held in public and that this is generally desirable to maintain public confidence in the administration of these proceedings and also to maintain confidence in the teaching profession.

The panel noted that there were concerns about confidential matters relating to the teacher's personal life being placed in the public domain. The panel took account of a letter received from a professional involved in the care of the teacher which gave reasons as to why they considered the public should be excluded from the hearing. The panel balanced the reasons why the teacher had requested that the public be excluded against the competing reasons for which a public hearing is required.

The panel noted that any departure from the general rule had to be no greater than the extent reasonably necessary and that interference for a limited period of the hearing was preferable to a permanent exclusion of the public. The panel did not consider Mr Ramsey to be a vulnerable witness. However, the panel decided to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11(3)(b) of the Regulations and the second bullet point of paragraph 4.57 of the Procedures that the public should be excluded from the hearing, and excluded the public from parts of the hearing relating to the teacher's personal life.

The presenting officer made an application for Pupil A's medical history to be heard in private.

The panel considered whether it would sufficiently protect the interests of Pupil A to grant anonymity to Pupil A without the need to exclude the public from the hearing. Although Pupil A was already anonymised in these proceedings, the panel was not satisfied that this would be a sufficient step given the personal nature of the information and the number of individuals that knew the identity of Pupil A.

The panel decided to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11(3)(a) of the Regulations and the third bullet point of paragraph 4.57 of the Procedures that the public should be excluded from the hearing, and excluded the public from parts of the hearing relating to Pupil A's medical history.

Video evidence

The teacher's representative made two separate applications for 2 witnesses (Witness C and Witness E) to give evidence by virtual means.

The panel considered whether the witnesses fell within the category of vulnerable witnesses which is defined in paragraph 4.71 of the Procedures as being a person whose "quality of evidence is likely to be adversely affected at a hearing". The panel noted the examples of witnesses that require special consideration and did not consider the circumstances of the witnesses to be akin to those examples.

However, the panel noted that pursuant to paragraph 4.18 of the Procedures, the panel may admit any evidence where it is fair to do so, which may reasonably be considered to be relevant to the case.

The panel therefore considered it had a discretion as to whether to allow the witnesses to give evidence by video-link given the distance the witnesses would have to travel to Coventry and their personal circumstances. In exercising that discretion, the panel balanced its obligation to ensure that Mr Ramsey was not put at an unfair disadvantage, as against the panel's duty in the public interest to investigate the allegations in so far as possible, consistent with fairness to Mr Ramsey. The panel also took into account that there may be subtleties of tone or body language that might be lost via the medium of video link.

The panel was satisfied on the evidence that there has been sufficient explanation as to how Witness E's personal commitments [REDACTED] would prevent them from attending in person.

In relation to Witness C, the panel was not satisfied that sufficient avenues had been explored to allow the witness to attend the hearing to give evidence in person. However, the panel noted that it would be difficult for the witness to attend in person at the late stage of the proceedings given their caring responsibilities. The panel considered it was in the public interest to hear evidence from Witness C, being a teacher at the School during the time period in the allegations and mentioned by Pupil A in their witness statement.

Allowing evidence to be given by video link ensured that Mr Ramsey was fully able to present his case, and fairness required that the presenting officer should be given the opportunity to ask questions of the witnesses. The public interest was in favour of the allegations being investigated by the panel receiving the evidence of these witnesses. The panel realised there may be subtleties of tone or body language lost via the medium of video link but considered that such matters could, in any event, be taken into account when assessing the weight it attributes to the evidence admitted by video link.

The panel therefore decided to allow both Witness C and Witness E to give evidence by virtual means.

Late documents

The teacher's representative applied to admit the witness statement of Pupil H. That witness statement was not served in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.20 of the Procedures, and as such the panel was required to decide whether it should be admitted under paragraph 4.25 of the Procedures at the discretion of the panel. The panel took into account the representations from the teacher's representative that the witness statement had been uploaded to an online platform to share it with the presenting officer, but the presenting officer had not been able to access these documents and it

had accidentally been missed when a second attempt to share the documents was made. The presenting officer did not object to the application.

Under paragraph 4.18 of the Procedures, the panel may admit any evidence, where it is fair to do so, which may reasonably be considered to be relevant to the case.

The panel was satisfied that the document was relevant to the case. The document was a witness statement from an individual who knew both Pupil A and Mr Ramsey and would be called to give oral evidence. The panel decided to admit the witness statement of Pupil H.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Notice of hearing and response - pages 5 to 8

Section 2: Anonymised pupil list - page 10

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements - pages 12 to 48

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents - pages 50 to 54

Section 5: Teacher documents - pages 63 to 487

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

Witness statement of Pupil H - pages 488 to 492

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

Witnesses

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

- Pupil A

The panel also heard oral evidence from the following witnesses, called by the teacher:

- Pupil E, [REDACTED]
- Pupil H, [REDACTED]
- Witness A, [REDACTED]
- Witness B, [REDACTED]

- Witness C, [REDACTED]
- Witness D, [REDACTED]

Mr Ramsey also gave oral evidence.

The panel heard evidence from Witness E, [REDACTED] of Mr Ramsey, in relation to the application for the hearing to be heard in private.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Ramsey was employed at Carmel School (the "School") between 1995 and 2001 as director of music and public performances. During that time, it is alleged that he engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A. In [REDACTED], Pupil A left the sixth form at the School and [REDACTED]. Mr Ramsey [REDACTED] left the School in 2001 and moved back to London, having lived there prior to 1995. It is alleged that he permitted former Pupil A to live with him in London. In 2019, Pupil A reported being sexually abused by Mr Ramsey to the police. Pupil A later withdrew their support from the police investigation and no further action was taken by the police. Pupil A reported their concerns in relation to Mr Ramsey to the TRA in February 2020.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

- 1. Whilst employed as a Music Teacher at Carmel School Darlington between around 1995-2001, you engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A, by:**

- c) buying Pupil A gifts;**

In written evidence, Pupil A stated that Mr Ramsey would buy gifts, such as [REDACTED] and a '[REDACTED]' given after school.

Mr Ramsey accepted that he bought Pupil A gifts, but denied buying Pupil A a '[REDACTED]'. He stated that the purchasing of gifts was in the context of thanking Pupil A for their assistance and contribution to school productions, and that he would purchase gifts for other pupils. The panel heard from Pupil E, Pupil H and Witness D that Mr Ramsey bought other pupils gifts, as did other staff members at the School at the time. The panel did not consider these gifts to be indicative of an inappropriate

relationship.

The panel also heard evidence from Pupil A that Mr Ramsey bought Pupil A makeup whilst Pupil A was a pupil at the School. In oral evidence, Mr Ramsey thought Pupil A had confused this with the School's stage makeup. The panel considered Mr Ramsey to have bought Pupil A stage makeup and this to show an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A. The panel heard evidence from Mr Ramsey that Pupil A's father would have disapproved of Pupil A wearing makeup and therefore the panel considered that the gift had the potential to undermine the relationship between Pupil A and their father and that the purchase of the stage makeup was kept secret from Pupil A's father.

During oral evidence, Pupil E stated that Mr Ramsey had taken them and Pupil A on a trip to [REDACTED] and paid for this. The panel considered whether the trip to [REDACTED] was a gift to Pupil A. The panel was advised by the legal adviser to consider whether the allegations had been sufficiently particularised for the teacher to understand that the allegation of buying Pupil A gifts included paying for the trip to [REDACTED]. It is for the TRA to prove the facts of the case. The right to a fair hearing under Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights includes the right to be informed promptly and in detail of the nature and cause of the accusation against the accused, the right to have adequate time and the facilities for the preparation of the defence and the right to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on the behalf of the defence.

The panel considered that the allegation in relation to buying Pupil A gifts had been sufficiently particularised by the presenting officer to include the trip to [REDACTED]. Although Pupil A could not recall the specific trip to [REDACTED], Pupil E recalled a trip to [REDACTED] with Mr Ramsey and Pupil A in detail. When questioned by the panel on who paid for the trip to [REDACTED], Pupil E stated that Mr Ramsey had paid for this trip. When questioned by the panel, Witness D stated that they were not aware of a trip to [REDACTED] and would have expected to have been aware of it and would know of it had it been booked through the School's office. The panel considered the teacher's representative to have had the opportunity to question the witnesses regarding who paid for the trip to [REDACTED], as referred to by Pupil E.

The panel considered the trip to [REDACTED] to be inappropriate as Pupil A was still a pupil at the School. The panel heard from Pupil E as to their clear recollection that they attended with Pupil A and Mr Ramsey and his behaviour towards Pupil A was the same behaviour as towards Pupil E. However, the panel considered paying for the trip to [REDACTED] to show an inappropriate relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey, beyond that of a teacher and pupil relationship.

The panel therefore, found this allegation proved.

d) inviting and/or permitting Pupil A to visit your home;

In oral evidence, Pupil A stated that they would regularly visit Mr Ramsey's home and the spare room held their belongings. In the material that the panel had sight of, Pupil A had

named a former teacher at the School, Witness C, as being aware that Pupil A was in Mr Ramsey's home when the former teacher visited. In oral evidence, Pupil A had stated that this individual knew they were in a relationship with Mr Ramsey.

The panel heard evidence from Witness C, who categorically denied having any knowledge of a relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey. Witness C described a visit to Mr Ramsey's home one evening for a meal with another colleague and Pupil A was not present.

Mr Ramsey accepted that Pupil A had visited his home, but stated that this was for [REDACTED] and other people were present. Mr Ramsey also stated that on the first two occasions that Pupil A had visited his home, Pupil A turned up uninvited.

The panel heard evidence from Pupil E, Pupil H and Witness D that it was not unusual for rehearsals for school productions or community productions to take place at Mr Ramsey's home, even though this was not something that would happen in the present day. Witness D stated in their written evidence that the home rehearsals would be with a group of students and with the full knowledge and consent of parents. Pupil E and Pupil H recalled Pupil A being present at these rehearsals.

The panel had sight of photographs and in oral evidence Pupil A stated that some of the photographs had been taken on New Year's Eve 1999. In contrast to this, Mr Ramsey gave evidence that Pupil A was not at his home then and Mr Ramsey was at a hotel with his family celebrating the millennium. The photographs had no date or time stamp on them. The panel considered whether the photographs had been taken on the run up to the Christmas period as opposed to New Year's Eve, as it had heard evidence of [REDACTED] being held at Mr Ramsey's flat. If the photographs were taken in the run up to the Christmas period, the panel considered there to be a reason for Pupil A visiting Mr Ramsey's flat which was not indicative of an inappropriate relationship. While it was accepted that the photographs were taken in Mr Ramsey's home and over the Christmas period, due to the Christmas decorations present in the photographs, the panel saw no evidence that these photographs were taken on New Year's Eve.

The panel also had sight of a scanned copy of a Christmas card sent to Pupil A by Pupil E, wishing them luck with a school production, care of Mr Ramsey's address. At the time, Pupil E had left the School. Pupil A stated Pupil E had sent the Christmas card to Mr Ramsey's home address as they knew Pupil A to be living there. In contrast to this, Pupil E stated that they had sent the Christmas card to Mr Ramsey's address as they did not know Pupil A's address and trusted Mr Ramsey to deliver the card to Pupil A. Pupil E explained this was sent at a time when easy access to the internet was not available and they would not have thought to send it to the School. The panel did not consider the Christmas card to evidence that Pupil A was spending time at Mr Ramsey's flat.

The panel heard from Pupil A that they had a key to Mr Ramsey's home. Mr Ramsey denied this and stated that the intercom to his flat did not work and sometimes people

would take a key to the outside door, which entered the communal area of the building, so that he did not have to keep leaving the rehearsal to let them in.

In the bundle of documents, the panel had sight of a note of a meeting between Witness D and Pupil A, which formed part of the School's investigation when a complaint was made by a third party to the School that Pupil A had a key to Mr Ramsey's flat. The panel heard from Witness D that the records of the full investigation had been destroyed given the passage of time, but these notes had been found in a cabinet as opposed to in Mr Ramsey's file. In oral evidence when questioned about the investigation, Witness D stated that Mr Ramsey was present in the headteacher's office whilst Witness D was asked by the headteacher to interview Pupil A. The panel considered this to remove the possibility of collusion between Mr Ramsey and Pupil A after the complaint had been made. In the note of the interview, it is stated that Pupil A had informed Witness D that they did not have a key but on one occasion in December 1999 had been given a key to the external door of the block of flats for a late rehearsal of a song for a concert that Pupil A was taking part in and other members of the concert team were also present at Mr Ramsey's home. A third party gave Pupil A a lift after a pantomime rehearsal and Pupil A had said to that individual that they had a key, but left this on the piano in Mr Ramsey's home when they left. In contrast to this, the panel had sight of an interview Pupil A gave to the police, in which Pupil A stated that they had been given a lift by this third party to Mr Ramsey's flat on New Year's Eve in 1999. In their written evidence, Witness D stated that other students present at the rehearsals had confirmed the statement that Pupil A had made as part of the School's investigation at the time.

The panel heard from Pupil E and Pupil H that the intercom to Mr Ramsey's flat did not work. The panel also heard from Pupil H about a key to the outside door which was made available to visitors.

The panel did not consider it proved that Pupil A had a key to Mr Ramsey's flat.

In his written evidence, Mr Ramsey had stated that the first time Pupil A turned up at his flat, Pupil A did so uninvited with a younger sibling, due to family circumstances. Mr Ramsey stated in oral evidence that he had called Pupil A's mother and informed the School of Pupil A visiting his flat. The panel heard from Witness D that they were aware at the time that Pupil A had visited Mr Ramsey's flat on this occasion. Mr Ramsey stated it is possible that Pupil A knew his address, as he gave piano lessons at the time to other pupils.

The panel found that Mr Ramsey permitted Pupil A to visit his flat. The panel considered that these occasions were for rehearsals and, in and of itself at the time, did not amount to an inappropriate relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey.

However, the panel had sight of photographs of Pupil A in Mr Ramsey's flat wearing a revealing costume that did not appear likely to be for the purpose of a school production. The panel heard evidence as to how Pupil A's father would not approve of Pupil A

wearing heels and makeup. The panel considered this to show an inappropriate relationship between Mr Ramsey and Pupil A, in that Pupil A had changed outfits at Mr Ramsey's flat and the outfit had the potential to undermine the relationship between Pupil A and their father.

The allegation was therefore, found proved.

e) accompanying Pupil A on a trip to London;

The panel heard from Pupil A that Mr Ramsey would accompany them to London for [REDACTED] and took them to see [REDACTED] in London. The panel had sight of photographs of Pupil A and Mr Ramsey in London.

The panel heard evidence from Witness D that Pupil A's [REDACTED] had asked the School for assistance to help Pupil A [REDACTED]. As such, Pupil A [REDACTED] and the School paid for travel to London. Mr Ramsey was asked by the School in his role as director of music and public performances to accompany Pupil A on these trips to London.

The panel also heard evidence from Witness D that they were aware of a trip to London to see [REDACTED]. The School paid for Pupil A and Pupil E to attend this trip, as a thank you for their contributions towards a large school production.

Therefore, the panel did not consider the trips to London to demonstrate an inappropriate relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey. The trips to London had been organised and paid for by the School.

However, the panel had sight of 2 strips of photographs, taken in a photo booth. It was accepted by Mr Ramsey during oral evidence that one of these photographs had likely been taken during one of the trips to London, although he could not remember exactly when and where the photographs had been taken. The panel considered these photographs to be inappropriate, given the close proximity between Mr Ramsey and Pupil A in the photographs. The panel considered the ordinary meaning of the wording of the allegation of 'by accompanying Pupil A on a trip to London'. The panel considered this to include Mr Ramsey's actions on a trip to London as well as physically accompanying Pupil A to London. As such, the panel found Mr Ramsey to have acted inappropriately when accompanying Pupil A on a trip to London.

The panel therefore, found this allegation proved.

2. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Queens Park Community School, Brent between around 2001-2002, you permitted former Pupil A to live with you in London.

In written evidence, Pupil A stated that they had [REDACTED]. In oral evidence, Pupil A stated that they [REDACTED].

Mr Ramsey accepted that Pupil A stayed with him in London in 2001. The panel also heard evidence from Pupil H that they were aware that Pupil A had stayed with Mr Ramsey in London.

The panel heard oral evidence from Mr Ramsey that a discussion had taken place between himself, Pupil A and Pupil A's father, around Easter in [REDACTED] while Pupil A was a pupil at the School, as to how Pupil A could afford to live in London and it was agreed that Pupil A could stay with Mr Ramsey until alternative accommodation was found.

The allegation was therefore, found proved.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegations against you not proved, for these reasons:

1. Whilst employed as a Music Teacher at Carmel School Darlington between around 1995-2001, you engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A, by:

a. giving Pupil A lifts home;

The panel heard evidence from Pupil A that Mr Ramsey would give them lifts home.

The panel also heard evidence from Pupil E and Pupil H that it was common practice for Mr Ramsey, as well as other teachers at the School, to give pupils a lift home.

Mr Ramsey admitted that he gave Pupil A lifts. He stated in oral evidence that this was to ensure Pupil A got home safely and to enable Pupil A to partake in extra-curricular activities, as Pupil A would otherwise have had no transport.

The panel heard evidence from Witness D that the School had safeguarding policies in place at the time, requiring parents to sign consent forms to enable staff members to give pupils lifts home and it was common practice for staff to give lifts to pupils. There were many extra-curricular events which students would otherwise not have been able to attend without staff providing lifts. The panel also heard from Witness D that Pupil A's parents had given permission for Mr Ramsey to give Pupil A lifts.

Taking into account accepted practices within the School at that time, the panel did not find the fact that Mr Ramsey gave lifts to Pupil A to amount to an inappropriate relationship. This allegation was therefore, not proved.

b. disclosing personal information to Pupil A;

The panel heard limited evidence that Mr Ramsey had disclosed personal information to Pupil A, while they were a pupil at the School.

In their statement to the police, Pupil A had stated that Mr Ramsey would confide in them. However, during oral evidence, Pupil A provided no detail as to any personal information that Mr Ramsey had disclosed while Pupil A was a pupil at the School.

The panel also heard that Mr Ramsey was a private person. While Pupil A had mentioned some limited information relating to Mr Ramsey's personal life prior to working at the School in their statement, the panel heard no evidence as to this information being disclosed while Pupil A was a pupil at the School. Given the length of time Pupil A and Mr Ramsey stayed in contact after Pupil A left the School, the panel considered it reasonable that this information could have been disclosed to Pupil A when they were no longer a pupil at the School.

The panel had the opportunity to question other pupils at the School and a more recent former pupil at a school where Mr Ramsey worked. The panel heard no evidence from these pupils which indicated that it was Mr Ramsey's character to disclose personal information.

The allegation was therefore, not proved.

f) visiting sex shops with Pupil A;

The panel heard from Pupil A that they visited sex shops in London with Mr Ramsey, during the times in which Pupil A attended [REDACTED] in London. In written evidence, Pupil A stated that visits to London for [REDACTED] occurred monthly, but in oral evidence Pupil A stated that the trips to London increased in frequency to weekly and would sometimes be on weekends. In written evidence, Pupil A stated that they would go around shops in Soho after the lessons. In contrast to this in oral evidence, when questioned by the panel Pupil A stated that they would visit the sex shops before the [REDACTED] and would get a train home around 10pm. Pupil A stated that they would not be in school on a Wednesday, and would travel to London on the morning and catch the last train from London back to Darlington.

In his written evidence, Mr Ramsey stated that he and Pupil A did not leave the tube whilst in Central London. In his oral evidence, Mr Ramsey accepted that they did sometimes visit a music shop when in London. However, he stated that he would be in School on a Wednesday morning, leaving to go to the train station around lunchtime. On arrival in London, they would have approximately one hour to travel across London from King's Cross Station to Ballam, where the [REDACTED] were located, and did not have time to visit the shops.

The panel heard from Witness D that Pupil A and Mr Ramsey would attend [REDACTED] in London on a Wednesday afternoon, and that Mr Ramsey had been asked to

accompany Pupil A to London. Witness D stated that Mr Ramsey and Pupil A would be in school on Wednesday morning, leaving to go to the train station around mid-morning.

The panel did not find that Mr Ramsey and Pupil A had visited sex shops while on trips to London for [REDACTED]. The panel accepted that the trips to London occurred on a Wednesday afternoon and that Mr Ramsey would have been teaching in School on the Wednesday morning.

Furthermore, in written evidence, Pupil A had stated that they would use the purchased sex toys on the train back to Darlington from London. The panel heard evidence from Mr Ramsey and Witness B as to Mr Ramsey's character and considered his character as described to be contrary to that of someone who would use sex toys in a public place. The panel did not consider the strength and quality of the evidence as to the purchase and use of sex toys to be sufficient to prove that the allegation was more likely than not to have happened, given the inherent unlikelihood of the use of sex toys on a train due to the risk of being seen doing so, particularly given the evidence received that Mr Ramsey had no propensity towards such activity and was described as a private person.

The allegation was therefore, found not proved.

g) kissing Pupil A;

In oral evidence, Pupil A stated that, when they were exiting the car after a lift home, Mr Ramsey would kiss them on the cheek. He stated this then developed into kissing on the lips. Mr Ramsey denied kissing Pupil A.

The panel heard evidence from witnesses as to Mr Ramsey's character. The panel did not hear any evidence from witnesses other than Pupil A that it was in Mr Ramsey's character to kiss individuals on the cheek. As outlined above in relation to allegation 1f, the panel considered Mr Ramsey to be a private person and it was unlikely that he would engage in such behaviour in a public place.

The allegation was therefore, found not proved.

h) engaging in sexual activity with Pupil A;

The panel heard from Pupil A that they and Mr Ramsey had engaged in sexual activity whilst Pupil A was a pupil at the School. The panel did not hear evidence from any other witness as to Mr Ramsey engaging in sexual activity with Pupil A, despite Pupil A identifying individuals to whom they had made disclosures about their alleged sexual relationship.

The panel heard from Mr Ramsey, who categorically denied this allegation. The panel also heard from Pupil E and Pupil H, who were present on many occasions when Mr Ramsey and Pupil A were together, whilst at School. Pupil H had also seen them whilst

Pupil A was staying with Mr Ramsey in London. Both witnesses gave evidence that they never saw or heard anything untoward occurring between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey.

All witnesses called by the teacher, who knew both Mr Ramsey and Pupil A and had seen them together, stated that they had never seen Mr Ramsey acting in a manner towards Pupil A which would cause them concern or any interaction between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey which would indicate a sexual relationship.

In written evidence, Pupil A had named individuals that were aware of the sexual activity with Mr Ramsey. However, the panel were not provided with any evidence from those individuals. Pupil A had stated that Pupil E was aware that they had a room at Mr Ramsey's home while a pupil at the School. Pupil A also stated in oral evidence that Witness C was aware that they were having a relationship with Mr Ramsey. However, the panel heard from Pupil E that they did not send a Christmas card to Mr Ramsey's address as they knew Pupil A to be spending time there and from Witness C who denied any knowledge of a relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey.

[REDACTED].

The panel, therefore, found there to be no evidence of Mr Ramsey engaging in sexual activity with Pupil A, other than Pupil A's account, which contradicted the evidence it heard from other witnesses.

The panel therefore, found this allegation not proved.

i) coercing Pupil A to engage in sexual activity despite Pupil A's express reservations.

The panel did not find that Pupil A and Mr Ramsey had engaged in sexual activity. The panel therefore, also found this allegation not proved.

3. Your behaviour as may be found proven at allegations 1 and 2 was sexually motivated.

The panel considered whether Mr Ramsey's behaviour, as found proved at allegation 1c, 1d, 1e and 2, was sexually motivated.

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED].

The panel heard from Witness B, who described their relationship with both Mr Ramsey and Pupil A as 'close', having worked with Pupil A and Mr Ramsey after Pupil A had left the School. Witness B described Pupil A and Mr Ramsey as 'friends' and never "heard, saw, observed or felt anything that would have created any cause of concern at all".

In relation to allegation 1c, the panel heard evidence as to Mr Ramsey buying food for

pupils if they were rehearsing late or gifts for pupils as a thank you for their contributions towards productions or concerts. The panel did not consider the buying of gifts to be specific to Pupil A or sexually motivated.

In relation to allegation 1d, the panel heard evidence that rehearsals were held at Mr Ramsey's flat and other pupils were present during these rehearsals. The panel considered there to be a credible explanation for Pupil A's presence at Mr Ramsey's flat. The panel heard evidence from Witness D and Pupil E that Pupil A was "flamboyant" and confident. The panel also heard evidence from Pupil H that Pupil A made costumes and liked to dress up and "shock people". Although the panel had sight of Pupil A in Mr Ramsey's flat in a costume and that it was inappropriate for Mr Ramsey to have allowed Pupil A to wear such a costume in his flat, the panel considered it to be within Pupil A's character to dress up. This did not indicate any sexual motivation on the part of Mr Ramsey.

In relation to allegation 1e, the panel found that the trips to London were paid for and organised by the School. The panel considered the photographs in the photo booth to be concerning given the close proximity needed for a photograph in a photo booth, but did not consider this to be evidence of a sexual motivation on the part of Mr Ramsey.

In relation to allegation 2, in his oral evidence, Mr Ramsey stated that Pupil A's father had started a conversation about how Pupil A would afford to live in London and the idea was that Pupil A would stay with Mr Ramsey initially until they found somewhere else to live. In their oral evidence, Pupil A stated that their parents knew that they were living with Mr Ramsey in London.

The panel heard from Witness B that it was a characteristic of Mr Ramsey, that whatever the need of the child, this came first. He has a "complete level of integrity" with regards to meeting the needs of young people. The panel also heard from Witness B that lots of people, both ex-students and staff, had stayed at Mr Ramsey's flat in London, describing it as being used "like a B&B". Pupil H confirmed that they had once stayed at Mr Ramsey's flat in London and would see Pupil A there.

The panel considered the evidence it had heard in relation to Mr Ramsey's character and his relationships throughout his adult life. The panel did not consider the reasons for permitting Pupil A to live with him in London in 2001 to 2002 to be sexually motivated.

The panel therefore, found this allegation not proved.

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

Having found a number of 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".

With regard to Mr Ramsey's conduct prior to the coming into force of the Teacher's Standards, the panel had regard to its knowledge and experience of teaching standards at that time and considered that the boundary between a teacher and a pupil was an important one then and that Mr Ramsey had breached this in his conduct in:

- buying Pupil A make-up;
- paying for a trip to [REDACTED];
- allowing a photograph to be taken in close proximity inside a photo booth while Pupil A was a pupil at the School;
- allowing Pupil A to dress in a revealing costume in his flat; and
- discussing living arrangements in London with Pupil A while still a pupil at the School, without the knowledge of the School.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Ramsey fell significantly short of the standard of behaviour expected of a teacher. The panel found that Mr Ramsey had engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A. This was not found to be sexually motivated, but rather the panel considered Mr Ramsey's behaviour to show a level of overfamiliarity with Pupil A.

The panel also considered whether Mr Ramsey's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice.

The Advice 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 that none of these offences was relevant.

The panel noted that allegation 2 took place outside the education setting. However, Mr Ramsey knew Pupil A by virtue of the teacher and pupil relationship. Mr Ramsey had discussed Pupil A living with him with Pupil A and Pupil A's father while Pupil A was still a pupil at the School. In oral evidence, the panel heard from Mr Ramsey that he did not ask the School's permission for this, as he considered it not necessary given that Pupil A would have left the School and he was no longer going to be working at the School. The panel heard from Witness D that they were not aware of this discussion, but would have expected the School to have been told at the time.

The panel also heard that Pupil A was a vulnerable pupil and could not 'dress up' or wear makeup around family members. The panel considered that Mr Ramsey's conduct in allowing Pupil A to wear makeup and 'dress up' in his home had the potential to undermine the relationship between Pupil A and their family members.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr Ramsey was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel also considered whether Mr Ramsey's conduct amounted to conduct that may

bring the profession into disrepute. The panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others, the responsibilities and duties of teachers in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils 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.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Ramsey's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice. As referred to above, the panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

The panel noted that the advice is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that panels consider to be "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute".

Mr Ramsey had formed an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A and permitted Pupil A to live with him in London the year after Pupil A had left the School. Mr Ramsey had allowed Pupil A to visit his flat and behave in a manner that had the potential to undermine Pupil A's relationship with their family at a time when Pupil A was considered to be vulnerable. The panel did not consider that Mr Ramsey's conduct would damage the public perception of the teaching profession. While Mr Ramsey's conduct was concerning and could potentially damage his reputation as a teacher, the panel did not consider the allegations as found proven to amount to serious misconduct that could bring the teaching profession as a whole into disrepute.

The panel therefore did not find that Mr Ramsey's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Having found the facts of particulars 1c, 1d, 1e, and 2 proved, the panel further found that Mr Ramsey's conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of unacceptable professional conduct, 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 is appropriate, the panel had to consider the public interest, the seriousness of the behaviour and any mitigation offered by Mr Ramsey and whether a prohibition order is necessary and proportionate. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have a punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice

and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely, the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct. The panel also found the interest of retaining the teacher in the profession to be relevant.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Ramsey, which involved engaging in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A through buying gifts for Pupil A, permitting Pupil A to visit his flat, taking photographs with Pupil A in a photo booth and allowing Pupil A to live in his flat in London between 2001 and 2002, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the findings of an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A. However, the panel considered the relevance of this public interest to be limited, given the extent to which it had found an inappropriate relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey. Additionally, Mr Ramsey had taught for a number of years following the time period as stated in the allegations and there was no evidence of an inappropriate relationship with any other pupil.

Similarly, the panel considered public confidence in the profession. The panel had not found Mr Ramsey to have been guilty of conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and did not consider Mr Ramsey's conduct, as found proven, to have the potential to seriously weaken public confidence in the profession.

The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Ramsey was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated. The panel had found that Mr Ramsey was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel decided that there was a strong public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator and he is able to make a valuable contribution to the profession. The panel had sight of a number of statements from witnesses and heard evidence as to Mr Ramsey's positive contribution to the profession and individual's lives, as well as his role as a school leader, as stated in further detail below.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times.

The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a panel will likely consider a teacher's behaviour to be incompatible with being a teacher if there is evidence of one or more of the factors that begin on page 15. In the list of such factors, those that were relevant in this case were:

serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;

abuse of position or trust (particularly involving vulnerable pupils); and

collusion or concealment.

The panel recognised that Mr Ramsey's conduct as found proved was prior to the coming into force of the Teacher's Standards and the panel had found that Mr Ramsey had breached the teaching standards in force at the time of his conduct.

In relation to the abuse of position of trust and collusion or concealment, the panel found these behaviours to be of some relevance, given its findings in relation to Mr Ramsey's actions in buying Pupil A gifts and allowing Pupil A to wear a revealing costume which had the potential to undermine the relationship between Pupil A and their family members. The panel noted that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position of trust should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest. While the panel considered there to be elements of this behaviour in the allegations as found proved, the panel did not consider these elements to be of a serious nature. The panel had not found Mr Ramsey's conduct to be sexually motivated.

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, taking account of the public interest and the seriousness of the behaviour and the likely harm to the public interest were the teacher be allowed to continue to teach, the panel went on to consider the mitigation offered by the teacher and whether there were mitigating circumstances.

There was evidence that Mr Ramsey's actions were deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Ramsey was acting under extreme duress.

Mr Ramsey did have a previously good history, having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct and having contributed significantly to the education sector.

For example, in their written statement Witness B stated that Mr Ramsey was appointed as a headteacher in 2010 of a school that was "facing significant challenges" and it "required a complete change of vision and values from the inherent culture which was actually quite toxic". Witness B further stated that "within three years the school had achieved a 'Good' judgement and was transformed into a thriving successful therapeutic community" and that Mr Ramsey's "integrity, strong moral principles and above all his core values were exhibited in all the time we worked together - Students and their best interest were always his number one priority".

Witness D, [REDACTED], stated that Mr Ramsey "has always been the consummate professional" and was a "dedicated practitioner who only ever had the welfare and education of students at the heart of all that he did". Witness D further stated that Mr Ramsey "transformed the music department and engagement in the performing arts" and he "forged many links with the wider community".

Witness A, [REDACTED] at which Mr Ramsey was a headteacher, stated: "There is not a single shadow of a doubt in my mind that Andrew enabled and accomplished huge positive change not only in my life and aspirations but also in that of

countless others."

Pupil E, [REDACTED], stated in their witness statement that through Mr Ramsey's "leadership, commitment and pure love and kindness, he turned an old-fashioned and divisive music department into a vibrant hive of activity where talent was nurtured and students thrived - I consider myself very lucky to have had a teacher like Andrew".

The panel also had sight of Ofsted reports within the bundle from a school at which Mr Ramsey was headteacher, which stated: "The principal provides strong leadership. His high aspirations ensure that pupils achieve increasingly well from their starting points" and "The new leadership team, under the skilful direction of the principal, has established a strong culture of accountability and exudes constantly high expectations of all staff".

The panel noted that the allegations related to 1995 to 2002 and Mr Ramsey had been teaching for a number of years since the time period in the allegations, with no evidence as to his forming inappropriate relationships with other pupils. It considered there to be a low risk of Mr Ramsey repeating his conduct. In his evidence, Mr Ramsey had demonstrated an understanding as to how teaching standards had developed over time and how his actions would not be repeated.

The panel first considered whether it would be proportionate to conclude this case with no recommendation of prohibition, considering whether the publication of the findings made by the panel would be sufficient.

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

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

I have given very careful consideration to this case and to the recommendation of the panel in respect of sanction.

In considering this case, I have also given very careful attention to the Advice that the Secretary of State has published concerning the prohibition of teachers.

In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct only. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, and, as above, found that some

allegations do not amount to conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute. I have therefore put all of those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In particular, the panel has stated, "The panel recognised that Mr Ramsey's conduct as found proved was prior to the coming into force of the Teacher's Standards and the panel had found that Mr Ramsey had breached the teaching standards in force at the time of his conduct."

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 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 Ramsey 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 The panel has said of the behaviour, "which involved engaging in an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A through buying gifts for Pupil A, permitting Pupil A to visit his flat, taking photographs with Pupil A in a photo booth and allowing Pupil A to live in his flat in London between 2001 and 2002, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the findings of an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A. However, the panel considered the relevance of this public interest to be limited, given the extent to which it had found an inappropriate relationship between Pupil A and Mr Ramsey." A prohibition order would of course 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, "It considered there to be a low risk of Mr Ramsey repeating his conduct. In his evidence, Mr Ramsey had demonstrated an understanding as to how teaching standards had developed over time and how his actions would not be repeated." I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my overall 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 had not found Mr Ramsey to have been guilty of conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and did not consider Mr Ramsey's conduct, as found proven, to have the potential to seriously weaken public confidence in 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 Mr Ramsey himself. The panel say, "Mr Ramsey did have a previously good history, having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct and having contributed significantly to the education sector."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Ramsey from teaching and would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that, "the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum"

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



Decision maker: Alan Meyrick

Date: 19 April 2023

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