



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Mr Richard Taylor Professional conduct panel meeting outcome**

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

**December 2023**

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

<b>Teacher:</b>	Mr Richard Taylor
<b>Teacher ref number:</b>	8849959
<b>Teacher date of birth:</b>	6 May 1966
<b>TRA reference:</b>	20195
<b>Date of determination:</b>	20 December 2023
<b>Former employer:</b>	Cantrell Primary School, Nottingham

### Introduction

A professional conduct panel ('the panel') of the Teaching Regulation Agency ('the TRA') convened on 20 December 2023 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Richard Taylor.

The panel members were Mrs Bev Williams (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Dara Islam (lay panellist) and Mrs Diana Barry (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs 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 Mr Taylor that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Taylor provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Ms Sherelle Appleby of Browne Jacobson LLP, Mr Taylor or any representative for Mr Taylor.

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 10 October 2023.

It was alleged that Mr Taylor was guilty of having been convicted, at any time, of relevant offences, in that:

1. On or around February 2022 he was convicted at the Nottingham Crown Court of:
  - a. 2 counts of indecent assault on a girl under 14

- b. 9 counts of assault a girl under 13 by touching contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Mr Taylor admitted allegations 1(a) and 1(b) and that his behaviour amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence, as set out in the response to the notice of referral form and the statement of agreed facts, both signed by Mr Taylor on 7 September 2023.

## **Preliminary applications**

There were no preliminary applications

## **Summary of evidence**

### **Documents**

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

- Section 1: Notice of meeting – pages 3 to 4
- Section 2: Statement of agreed facts and teacher's response to notice of referral form – pages 5 to 9
- Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 11 to 127

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 Mr Taylor on 7 September 2023, and subsequently signed by the presenting officer on 19 September 2023.

## **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 Mr Taylor 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.

Mr Taylor was employed as a teacher at Cantrell Primary School ('the School') from 1 September 1999 until 23 November 2020.

On 4 November 2017 Mr Taylor was arrested and charged with criminal offences including assault of a child and possession of indecent images. The charges related to pupils at the School, and one other school.

On 12 December 2017, the [REDACTED] was contacted by Pupil A's [REDACTED] who informed her that Pupil A disclosed to her that she had been sexually abused by Mr Taylor and that this was being reported to the police.

On 15 December 2017, Mr Taylor was arrested and on the 18 December 2017 he was suspended from the School.

On 14 January 2020, the School commenced an internal investigation into the charges against Mr Taylor. It was noted within the investigation letter that there had been media coverage regarding Mr Taylor's conduct which presented serious reputational damage to the School.

On 23 November 2020, a disciplinary hearing took place at the School.

On 10 February 2022, Mr Taylor was convicted at Nottingham Crown Court for 2 counts of indecent assault on girl under 14 and 9 counts of assault on a girl under 13 by touching, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

On 29 April 2022, Mr Taylor was sentenced to a total of 13 years imprisonment, and he was prohibited from undertaking any work likely to bring him into more than transient contact with persons under 16 years of age in the absence of the young person's parent or guardian; prohibited from any unsupervised contact with any person under 16 years of age; prohibited from participating directly or indirectly with any school, voluntary group, resident association or any public or private organisation which includes attendance or participation of children under 16 years; he received a sexual harm prevention order until further order; he was placed on a barring list by the Disclosure Barring Service and was ordered to sign the Sex Offenders Register for life.

## **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. In or around February 2022 you were convicted at the Nottingham Crown Court of:**
  - a. 2 counts of indecent assault on girl under 14**

## **b. 9 counts of assault a girl under 13 by touching contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.**

The panel considered the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Taylor on 7 September 2023. In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Taylor admitted the particulars of allegations 1(a) and 1(b), and further admitted that 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 Nottingham Crown Court, which detailed that Mr Taylor had been convicted of 2 counts of indecent assault on girl under 14 and 9 counts of assault on a girl under 13 by touching contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The panel noted that Mr Taylor pleaded not guilty to all offences.

In respect of the allegations, Mr Taylor was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment, and he was prohibited from undertaking any work likely to bring him into more than transient contact with persons under 16 years of age in the absence of the young person's parent or guardian; prohibited from any unsupervised contact with any person under 16 years of age; prohibited from participating directly or indirectly with any school, voluntary group, resident association or any public or private organisation which includes attendance or participation of children under 16 years; he received a sexual harm prevention order until further order; he was placed on a barring list by the Disclosure Barring Service and was ordered to sign the Sex Offenders Register for life.

On examination of the documents before the panel, the panel was satisfied that allegations 1(a) and 1(b) were proven.

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

Having found the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to conviction of a relevant offence.

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document the Advice.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position;
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions; and
  - 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, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel noted that Mr Taylor's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting, as he had assaulted numerous young pupils at the Schools in which he taught.

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 Mr Taylor's behaviour in committing these offences could undoubtedly affect public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. His conduct ran counter to what should have been at the very core of his practice as a teacher with a duty of care towards children. By virtue of his position, Mr Taylor was in a position of trust and responsibility in relation to the pupils who he assaulted. He abused that position.

The panel noted that Mr Taylor's behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed. The child protection and public protection issues engaged by Mr Taylor's actions were demonstrated by the Court's sentence.

This was a case involving an offence of sexual activity / sexual communication with a child / voyeurism, 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 Mr Taylor's ongoing suitability to teach. The panel considered that a

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

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

Given the panel's findings in respect of 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; that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest, if they are in conflict.

In light of the nature of the offences for which Mr Taylor was convicted, there was an extremely strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils and other members of the public. His actions raised obvious and significant public and child protection concerns.

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

The panel decided that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Taylor was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

Notwithstanding the clear public interest considerations that were present, the panel considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order, taking into account the effect that this would have on Mr Taylor. The panel was mindful of the need to strike the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest.

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations both in favour of, and against, prohibition as well as the interests of Mr Taylor. 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;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting such activity, including one-off incidents;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- violating of the rights of pupils;
- sustained or serious bullying, or other deliberate behaviour that undermines pupils, the profession, the school or colleagues;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour; and
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions or purposeful destruction of evidence, especially where these behaviours have been repeated or had serious consequences, or involved the coercion of another person to act in a way contrary to their own interests.

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 Mr Taylor's actions were not deliberate.

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

There was no evidence which demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both personal and professional conduct or that Mr Taylor contributed significantly to the education sector.

Mr Taylor did not provide any mitigation, and there was no evidence of remorse or insight on the part of Mr Taylor.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings was sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Taylor of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Taylor. The Certificate of Conviction prohibiting Mr Taylor from being involved in any capacity whatsoever, directly or indirectly with any school, voluntary group, residents' association or any other public or private organisation which at any time include the participation or attendance by children under the age of 16 years old was a significant factor 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 his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons / any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel found that Mr Taylor was convicted of 2 counts of indecent assault on a girl under 14, and 9 counts of assault on a girl under 13 by touching, all incidents involved pupils at schools he had taught at.

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 did not find any of these behaviours relevant.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate in all the circumstances for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

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

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

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

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to a relevant conviction.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Taylor is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position;
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions; and
  - 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, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Taylor involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

The panel finds that the conduct of Mr Taylor fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of a conviction for the very serious criminal offences of indecent assault on a girl under 14 and assault on a girl under 13 by touching contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which resulted in a lengthy prison sentence.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of a relevant conviction, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Taylor, 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, "Mr Taylor's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting, as he had assaulted numerous young pupils at the Schools in which he taught." 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 has set out as follows, "Mr Taylor did not provide any mitigation, and there was no evidence of remorse or insight on the part of Mr Taylor." In my judgement, the lack of evidence of insight and remorse 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 has observed, "Mr Taylor's behaviour in committing these offences could undoubtedly affect public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community." I am particularly mindful of the finding of a conviction for very serious criminal offences including indecent assault of a child in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of a relevant conviction, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Taylor himself. The panel has commented “There was no evidence which demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both personal and professional conduct or that Mr Taylor contributed significantly to the education sector.”

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

In the case, I have also placed considerable weight on panel’s comments, “The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Taylor. The Certificate of Conviction prohibiting Mr Taylor from being involved in any capacity whatsoever, directly or indirectly with any school, voluntary group, residents’ association or any other public or private organisation which at any time include the participation or attendance by children under the age of 16 years old was a significant factor 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.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the lack of evidence of insight and remorse.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Taylor 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 insight and remorse, 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 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 his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons / any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel found that Mr Taylor was convicted of 2 counts of indecent assault on a girl under 14, and 9 counts of assault on a girl under 13 by touching, all incidents involved pupils at schools he had taught at."

I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the very serious nature of the offences of which Mr Taylor was convicted and the lack of evidence of insight and remorse.

I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

**This means that Mr Richard Taylor is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England.** Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of the allegations found proved against him, I have decided that Mr Taylor shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of his eligibility to teach.

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', written in a cursive style.

**Decision maker: David Oatley**

**Date: 22 December 2023**

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