



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Liam I'Anson-North Professional conduct panel outcome

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

October 2024

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

Teacher:	Mr Liam l’Anson-North
Teacher ref number:	1246649
Teacher date of birth:	02 June 1994
TRA reference:	20793
Date of determination:	17 October 2024
Former employer:	Ravensthorpe CE (VC) Junior School, Dewsbury (the “School”)

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened virtually on 17 October 2024, to consider the case of Mr l’Anson-North.

The panel members were Mr Nigel Shock (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Rosemary Joyce (teacher panellist), and Mrs Hannah Foster (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Elizabeth Gilbert of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Ella Crine of Three Raymond Buildings barristers.

Mr l’Anson-North was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Hearing dated 17 July 2024.

It was alleged that Mr l'Anson-North was guilty of having been convicted of relevant offences, namely:

1. On 12 June 2023, Mr l'Anson-North was convicted of the offence of Attempt/Engage in Sexual Communication with a Child on 25/03/21 - 09/06/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.15A(1).
2. On 12 June 2023, Mr l'Anson-North was convicted of the offence of Attempt/Cause/Incite Female Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Offender 18 or over - No Penetration on 25/03/21 - 09/06/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.10(1)(a).
3. On 12 June 2023, Mr l'Anson-North was convicted of the offence of Attempt/Cause/Incite a Girl Under 13 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Penetration on 28/03/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.8(1).

Mr l'Anson-North admitted having been convicted of all three counts by a jury, but maintained his innocence. He therefore does not admit that he is guilty of any relevant offences.

Preliminary applications

The panel considered preliminary applications as follows:

Application to proceed in absence

The panel considered an application from the presenting officer to proceed in the absence of Mr l'Anson-North.

The panel considered whether the hearing should continue in the absence of Mr l'Anson-North.

The panel was satisfied that the TRA had complied with the service requirements of paragraph 19(1)(a) to (c) of the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 (the "Regulations").

The panel was also satisfied that the Notice of Hearing complied with paragraphs 5.23 and 5.24 of the Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession May 2020, (the "Procedures").

The panel took as its starting point the principle from R v Jones [2003], that its discretion to commence a hearing in the absence of the teacher has to be exercised with the utmost care and caution, and that its discretion is a severely constrained one. In

considering the question of fairness, the panel recognised that fairness to the professional is of prime importance but that it also encompasses the fair, economic, expeditious and efficient disposal of allegations against the professional, as was explained in *GMC v Adeogba & Visvardis* [2016].

In making its decision, the panel noted the teacher may waive his right to participate in the hearing. The panel firstly took account of the various factors drawn to its attention from the case of *R v Jones* [2003].

Mr l'Anson-North communicated with the TRA via a prison officer who explained that Mr l'Anson-North's ability to correspond was limited. On 26 June 2024, the prison officer communicated queries Mr l'Anson-North had around the public nature of the hearing and whether the case could be concluded based solely on his convictions, rather than whether he admitted his guilt or maintained his innocence. On the same date, the prison officer confirmed they were content for any correspondence to be directed via their email address.

A response to Mr l'Anson-North's queries was provided to the prison officer on 2 July 2024.

On 16 July 2024, the TRA asked the prison officer if he could consult with Mr l'Anson-North regarding his availability for the hearing, and that if no response was received, the TRA would proceed to list the hearing. The same day, the TRA informed the prison officer that a professional conduct panel was available to hear the case on 17 October 2024, and asked if Mr l'Anson North intended to be present, requesting a response by 23 July 2024. On 23 July 2024, the prison officer responded stating "I can confirm that Liam has declined to attend the hearing."

The panel therefore considered that Mr l'Anson-North had waived his right to be present at the hearing in the knowledge of when and where the hearing is taking place.

There was no indication that Mr l'Anson-North would attend if the hearing was adjourned. To the contrary, Mr l'Anson-North communicated via the prison officer that he fully accepted that "he will never be able to teach again". There was no indication that Mr l'Anson-North intended to present any defence to the allegations, nor any mitigation. Mr l'Anson-North was not represented in these proceedings but had not indicated that he wished to obtain representation.

Since this case related to a number of convictions, the panel was obliged to accept any certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of both the conviction and the facts necessarily implied by the conviction unless exceptional circumstances apply. Mr l'Anson-North had not indicated any exceptional circumstances apply. Given that the panel will be dependent upon the certificate of conviction as to whether the facts alleged

are proven, which the panel anticipated receiving as evidence, the extent of the disadvantage to Mr l'Anson North not being able to give his account of events relates only to whether the convictions were of relevant offences and mitigation.

The panel considered that the risk of reaching an improper conclusion about the absence of Mr l'Anson-North was low, given the clear communication that he had declined to attend and the concerns he had expressed about the hearing being in public.

The panel recognised that the allegations against Mr l'Anson-North were serious and that there was a real risk that if proven, the panel would be required to consider whether to recommend that the teacher ought to be prohibited from teaching.

The panel recognised that the efficient disposal of allegations against teachers is required to ensure the protection of pupils and to maintain confidence in the profession.

No witnesses were due to give evidence and therefore the effect of delay on the memories of witnesses is not a factor to be taken into consideration in this case.

The panel determined to exercise its discretion under paragraph 5.47 of the Procedures to proceed with the hearing in the absence of Mr l'Anson-North. The panel considered that Mr l'Anson-North had clearly waived his right to appear. On balance, these are serious allegations and the public interest in this hearing proceeding within a reasonable time is in favour of the hearing continuing.

Application to admit late documents

The presenting officer applied to admit documents not served in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.36 of the Procedures. The panel had regard to the presenting officer's submission that the hearing bundle, referred to as "the Bundle", was not served on Mr l'Anson North within 10 weeks of the hearing. As such, the panel was required to decide whether those documents should be admitted under paragraph 5.34 of the Procedures at the discretion of the panel.

Under paragraph 5.33 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 presenting officer directed the panel to the correspondence bundle dated 15 October 2024. The panel determined the correspondence bundle was admitted in support of the presenting officer's applications and therefore did not need to comply with the service requirements of paragraph 5.36 of the Procedures. The panel noted the correspondence bundle contained an email from Mr l'Anson-North's prison officer to a representative of the TRA, stating that Mr l'Anson-North had "confirmed he is happy to waiver the 10 week period".

The panel was satisfied that the Bundle was relevant to the case as it contained the evidence to be relied upon by the presenting officer at the hearing, including the certificate of conviction.

The panel took into account the representations from the presenting officer on the admission of documents and the panel exercised caution in exercising this discretion given that it has determined to proceed with this hearing in the absence of the teacher.

With regard to the overall question of fairness, the panel concluded it would be fair to admit the evidence. Given, the absence of the teacher, the panel considered whether he had received the documents and had sufficient opportunities to make representations about it. The panel determined that Mr l'Anson-North was served the Bundle within 6 weeks of the hearing, and the correspondence from his prison officer confirmed that he did not wish "to provide anything to the panel" or to have "any part in the proceedings". Further, the panel acknowledged that Mr l'Anson-North had waived the service requirements of paragraph 5.36 of the Procedures.

By reason of the above, the panel decided to admit each of the documents referred to.

Application to amend allegations

The panel considered an application by the presenting officer to amend the Notice of Hearing, by amending the particulars of allegation 3. The proposed amendment to allegation 3 was to amend "Under 13" to "Under 16" and to remove reference to "s.8(1)", so that allegation 3 reads as follows:

"On 12 June 2023, Mr l'Anson-North was convicted of the offence of Attempt/Cause/Incite a Girl Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Penetration on 28/03/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003"

The panel has the power to, in the interests of justice, amend an allegation or the particulars of an allegation, at any stage before making its decision about whether the facts of the case have been proved.

Before making an amendment, the panel was required to consider any representations by the presenting officer and by the teacher. The panel acknowledged that it had not had the opportunity to hear representations by Mr l'Anson-North regarding the amendment as he waived his right to attend the hearing.

The panel had regard to the presenting officer's submissions, that the amendment was required to correct the wording of the allegation so that this aligned with Mr l'Anson-North's conviction. The panel considered the certificate of conviction from Leeds Crown Court, and the sentencing remarks transcript of Judge [REDACTED] sitting at Leeds Crown Court dated 23 July 2023, which was consistent in confirming that the offence

against Mr l'Anson-North was with reference to a child under 16 with no reference to a s8(1) offence.

The panel considered the amendment proposed was a correction of a typographical error. The panel also considered that the amendment proposed reduced the seriousness of the allegation against Mr l'Anson-North, as the originally worded allegation made reference to a younger child.

The panel determined that there was no prospect of Mr l'Anson-North's case being presented differently had the amendment been made at an earlier stage, and therefore no unfairness or prejudice was caused. The panel therefore decided to amend the allegation as proposed.

Application to exclude the public from the hearing

In his response dated 5 August 2024 to the notice of hearing dated 17 July 2024, Mr l'Anson-North stated that he intended to make an application for the hearing to be held in private.

The panel considered whether to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11 of the Regulations and paragraph 5.85 of the Procedures to exclude the public from 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.

In his response dated 5 August 2024, Mr l'Anson North stated, "the negative impacts public can have on family / loved ones". He further stated that his "[REDACTED]". Finally, Mr l'Anson North outlined that a public hearing "inhibits [his] right to be forgotten / right to rehabilitation by re-bringing up things from the past".

The panel balanced the reasons why Mr l'Anson-North 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 has to be no greater than the extent reasonably necessary and that interference for a limited period of the hearing is preferable to a permanent exclusion of the public. The panel therefore, considered whether there are any steps short of excluding the public that would serve the purpose of protecting Mr l'Anson North's ability to rehabilitate or any negative impacts on [REDACTED], and considered that to the extent it becomes necessary during the course of the hearing to discuss such matters, the panel can consider at that stage whether to exclude the public from that portion of the hearing only.

Considering the above, the panel determined not to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11 of the Regulations and paragraph 5.85 of the Procedures that the public should be excluded from the hearing.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Bundle

Section 1: Chronology and List of Key People – page 2 to 3

Section 2: Notice of Hearing and Response – pages 4 to 18

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency Documents – pages 19 to 105

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following documents submitted by the presenting officer:

- Correspondence bundle dated 15 October 2024 – page 1 to 20

The panel members confirmed they had read all of the documents in advance of the hearing.

Witnesses

Mr l'Anson-North was not present at the hearing and did not give oral evidence.

No witnesses gave evidence.

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 l'Anson-North was employed as a teacher at the School from 1 September 2015.

On 10 June 2021, Mr l'Anson-North was arrested by the police at the School. The LADO was advised of Mr l'Anson-North's arrest the same day and Mr l'Anson-North was placed on a precautionary suspension from his employment at the School.

On 18 February 2022, Mr l'Anson-North was charged with three offences.

Mr l'Anson-North was referred to the TRA by the headteacher of the School on 9 May 2022.

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:

You are guilty of having been convicted of relevant offences, namely:

- 1. On 12 June 2023, you were convicted of the offence of Attempt/Engage in Sexual Communication with a Child on 25/03/21 - 09/06/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.15A(1).**
- 2. On 12 June 2023, you were convicted of the offence of Attempt/Cause/Incite Female Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Offender 18 or over - No Penetration on 25/03/21 - 09/06/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s.10(1)(a).**
- 3. On 12 June 2023, you were convicted of the offence of Attempt/Cause/Incite a Girl Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Penetration on 28/03/21 Sexual Offences Act 2003.**

Mr l'Anson-North admitted having been convicted of the offences by a jury, but maintained his innocence.

The panel was presented with a certificate of conviction from Leeds Crown Court, confirming that Mr l'Anson-North was convicted on 12 June 2023 of the offences particularised in these allegations.

Mr l'Anson-North was sentenced on 23 July 2023 to a total of 40 months imprisonment. Mr l'Anson-North was further placed on the [REDACTED] Sex offenders register indefinitely and there is a Sexual Harm Prevention Order until further order under s.103 of Sexual Offences Act 2003.

The panel was presented with the transcript of the proceedings and the transcript of the sentencing remarks of Judge [REDACTED] sitting at Leeds Crown Court, dated 23 July 2023, summarising the offences and the reason for the sentences imposed. In particular, the panel had regard to the following statements made by Judge [REDACTED] in his sentencing remarks:

- “you were deriving kicks out of having such conversations with a child who had told you that she was 13 years of age”;

- “once she started to open up, in relation to sexual matters, your conversations became more regular and ongoing talking about sexual matters until she stopped to communicate”; and
- “Insofar as Count 1 is concerned, there’ll be a concurrent sentence of nine months’ imprisonment. For Count 2, there will be a sentence of 18 months’ imprisonment. Again, both of those sentences will be concurrent to each other and concurrent to Count 3, making a total of 40 months.”

The panel acknowledged that Mr l’Anson-North maintained his innocence regarding the offences, despite his convictions. The panel considered the judgement of the jury was determinative of Mr l’Anson-North’s guilt and that Mr l’Anson-North had provided no further evidence to persuade the panel there were exceptional circumstances to call into question the facts necessarily implied by the convictions. The panel accepted the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of the commission of these offences by Mr l’Anson-North.

The panel therefore found allegations 1, 2 and 3 proven.

Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence

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

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr l’Anson-North, in relation to the facts it found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considered that by reference to Part 2 of the Teachers’ Standards, Mr l’Anson-North 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;
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; and
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 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 l'Anson-North's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and working in an education setting as Mr l'Anson-North's convictions relate to sexual offences against a child.

The panel noted the behaviour involved in committing the offences would have an impact on the safety and security of pupils and members of the public.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr l'Anson-North's behaviour in committing the offences would likely affect public confidence in the teaching profession, if Mr l'Anson-North was allowed to continue teaching.

The panel noted that Mr l'Anson-North's behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed, and which the Advice states is likely to be considered "a relevant offence".

This was a case concerning offences involving sexual communication with a child. The Advice indicates that a conviction for any offence that relates to or involves such offences is likely to be considered "a relevant offence".

Whilst the panel acknowledged the offences involved an undercover officer pretending to be a child, the panel viewed the offences to be extremely serious given Mr l'Anson-North was of the understanding that he was engaging in sexual communication with a 13 year old child.

Additionally, the panel considered the proceedings transcript and sentencing remarks transcript, both dated 23 July 2023, which referred to Mr l'Anson-North's attempt to conceal his actions by using another teacher's identity and the impact this had on their life. In particular, the effect on the "self-confidence and self-esteem" of the individual whose identity was stolen.

The panel took into account evidence of mitigating circumstances, such as the sentencing remarks dated 23 July 2023 stating "from the witness statements that were read out in the course of the trial" that "it's quite clear that [Mr l'Anson-North] is someone who cares about others, considerate towards [REDACTED] and [he is] a good friend to have. People can rely on [him]".

The panel saw no evidence in relation to Mr l'Anson-North's previous ability as a teacher. Even had the panel seen this evidence, the panel found the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the convictions was relevant to Mr l'Anson-North's fitness to be a teacher. The panel considered a finding that these convictions were for relevant offences was necessary to reaffirm clear standards of conduct so as to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession.

The panel therefore found that the facts of those proved against Mr l'Anson-North amounted to convictions of a relevant offence.

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 is appropriate, the panel had to consider the public interest, the seriousness of the behaviour, any mitigation offered by Mr l'Anson-North 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 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 protection of other members of the public;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession;
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct; and
- the interest of retaining the teacher in the profession.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr l'Anson-North, which involved convictions of a relevant offence, there was an extremely strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protection of other members of the public. The serious findings relating to sexual communication with a child against Mr l'Anson-North raises 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 l'Anson-North were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. This was conduct that was, very clearly, at the most serious end of the spectrum, amounting to a breach of the trust placed in him as a teacher.

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 l'Anson-North was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

The panel concluded there was not a public interest consideration in retaining Mr l'Anson-North in the profession. The panel considered the adverse public interest considerations above outweighed any interest in retaining Mr l'Anson-North in the

profession, given the nature of the allegations in this case, regardless of whether there had been any evidence that Mr l'Anson-North ought to be regarded as an exceptional teacher.

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 l'Anson-North.

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;
- 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 disclosure;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- abuse of position or trust;
- sexual misconduct;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent 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 Keeping Children Safe In Education);
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;
- dishonesty or lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions; and
- collusion and concealment including lying to prevent the identification of wrongdoing.

The panel also attached appropriate weight and seriousness to the conduct found proven, given the convictions related to online behaviour including online misconduct,

facilitating online abuse and facilitating an inappropriate relationship with an individual he believed to be 13 years old.

Even though 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 whether there were mitigating circumstances.

The panel considered that Mr l'Anson-North's actions were deliberate, given he had attempted to conceal his conduct using a false identity. Additionally, despite being told the person he was communicating with was 13 years old on a number of occasions, over several weeks, Mr l'Anson-North repeatedly engaged in sexual communication with someone he believed to be a child.

The panel acknowledged there was no evidence to suggest that Mr l'Anson-North was acting under extreme duress, such as due to a physical threat or significant intimidation.

There was no evidence of Mr l'Anson-North having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in professional conduct or of having contributed significantly to the education sector.

The panel saw no evidence that showed Mr l'Anson-North was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings or warnings.

The panel were not provided with any character references regarding Mr l'Anson-North. In the absence of this evidence, the panel had regard to Judge [REDACTED]'s sentencing remarks dated 23 July 2023, which stated that Mr l'Anson-North had previously "been of good character" and that he is "someone who cares about others, considerate towards [REDACTED] and [he is] a good friend to have". The panel determined this statement carried limited weight compared with other evidence before it.

The panel considered that it saw no evidence that Mr l'Anson-North was remorseful, or that he showed any insight into his conduct. To the contrary, in Mr l'Anson-North's response dated 5 August 2024 to the Notice of Hearing dated 17 July 2024, he maintained his innocence regarding the conduct found proven, stating "due to a guilty verdict I have had to accept the allegations".

Given Mr l'Anson-North had not shown any accountability for his conduct, the panel determined there to be a high risk of him repeating his behaviour.

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 would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr l'Anson-North of prohibition.

Mr l'Anson-North's actions were fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher. This was conduct of the most serious nature. The nature and gravity of the offence was a matter of significant concern. Accordingly, there were particularly strong public interest considerations in this case in terms of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protecting the public, public confidence in the teaching profession and the declaring of proper standards of conduct in this case.

The panel noted, in particular, the following statements of Judge [REDACTED] in the sentencing remarks transcript dated 23 July 2023:

- "The picture she gave you was 13 years of age and reflected that. There were no questions about you saying she looked older or anything like that at all. Yet, the conversation very quickly, right from the word go, started to move towards sexual matters";
- "Every opportunity you got to change the conversation to sexual matters you did";
- "You, right from the outset, had worked it out how you were going to conceal this aspect of your life in the sense that you used the App Kik which is often used by those who commit offences of this nature because I've come across it in dealing with cases of this nature";
- "A case, pretending to be 23 years of age, even though that was closer to your own age, I accept, nevertheless there is a differential of 10 years between yourself and the child you assumed you were speaking to. That makes it a culpability A case"; and
- "The aggravating features in this case, trying to conceal evidence by deleting your messages, the conversations on the telephone, that's an aggravating feature, using someone else, an innocent person's identity and the sort of impact it has had on [REDACTED], that's an aggravating feature and, of course, thirdly, you did not desist. It only came to an end, these conversations, if not in reality you carrying out these acts, only came to an end because the police officer stopped to respond".

The panel had particular regard to Mr l'Anson-North's attempt to conceal his identity by using that of another teacher.

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 l'Anson-North. The seriousness of the conduct as well as the impact this would have on a child if repeated 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 for it to decide to recommend a review period of the order. 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 two years.

The panel considered the list of behaviours at paragraph 50 of the Advice. The Advice indicates that there are cases involving certain conduct where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. These cases include any sexual misconduct involving a child and serious sexual misconduct, both of which were relevant in this case. The panel found that Mr l'Anson-North had been convicted of offences relating to sexual communication with a person he believed to be a child.

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 Liam l'Anson-North should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr l'Anson-North 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;
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; and
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 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 l'Anson-North involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education'.

The panel finds that the conduct of Mr l'Anson-North fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include convictions for attempting to engage in sexual communications with a child resulting in a prison sentence.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In assessing 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 l'Anson-North, 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 makes the following observation:

"In the light of the panel's findings against Mr l'Anson-North, which involved convictions of a relevant offence, there was an extremely strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protection of other members of the public. The serious findings relating to sexual communication with a child against Mr l'Anson-North raises significant public and child protection concerns."

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:

"The panel considered that it saw no evidence that Mr l'Anson-North was remorseful, or that he showed any insight into his conduct. To the contrary, in Mr l'Anson-North's response dated 5 August 2024 to the Notice of Hearing dated 17 July 2024, he maintained his innocence regarding the conduct found proven, stating "due to a guilty verdict I have had to accept the allegations".

Given Mr l'Anson-North had not shown any accountability for his conduct, the panel determined there to be a high risk of him repeating his behaviour."

In my judgement, the lack of evidence of Mr l'Anson-North's insight into his behaviour means that I agree with the panel 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 observes that:

"Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr l'Anson-North were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. This was conduct that was, very clearly, at the most serious end of the spectrum, amounting to a breach of the trust placed in him as a teacher."

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a teacher attempting to engage in sexual communications with a child in this case and the negative impact that such a finding is likely to have on the reputation of the profession. I also note that Mr l'Anson-North adopted the name of a fellow teacher in undertaking the misconduct found and again consider that this too could have a negative impact on the public's perception 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 l'Anson-North. The panel makes the following remarks regarding the evidence as to his character:

"The panel were not provided with any character references regarding Mr l'Anson-North. In the absence of this evidence, the panel had regard to Judge [REDACTED]'s sentencing remarks dated 23 July 2023, which stated that Mr l'Anson-North had previously "been of good character" and that he is "someone who cares about others, considerate towards [REDACTED] and [he is] a good friend to have". The panel determined this statement carried limited weight compared with other evidence before it."

The panel does not record having seen any evidence to suggest that Mr l'Anson North has made a significant contribution to the teaching profession.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr l'Anson-North from 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 this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel's comments concerning the seriousness of the misconduct it found, describing Mr l'Anson-North's behaviour as being "fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher". I have also placed significant weight on the lack of evidence found by the panel that he has attained full insight into and remorse for his actions.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr l'Anson-North 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, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest in order to achieve the intended aims of a prohibition order.

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"The panel considered the list of behaviours at paragraph 50 of the Advice. The Advice indicates that there are cases involving certain conduct where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. These cases include any sexual misconduct involving a child and serious sexual misconduct, both of which were relevant in this case. The panel found that Mr l'Anson-North had been convicted of offences relating to sexual communication with a person he believed to be a child."

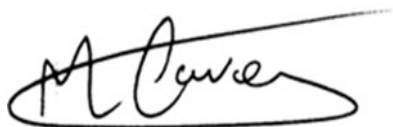
I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the very serious nature of the misconduct found as well as the lack of evidence of insight and remorse which means, in my judgment, that there is a risk of a repetition of this behaviour in the future.

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 Liam l'Anson-North 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 l'Anson-North 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 l'Anson-North 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 'M Cavey', enclosed within a large, loopy oval stroke.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 21 October 2024

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