



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Sayyad Rizvi: Professional conduct panel hearing outcome

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

November 2024

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Preliminary applications	5
Application for the hearing to be held in private	5
Application to admit additional evidence	6
Summary of evidence	7
Documents	7
Witnesses	7
Decision and reasons	8
Findings of fact	10
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	17
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	21

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

Teacher:	Mr Sayyad Rizvi
Teacher reference number:	3859922
Date of birth:	18 February 1984
TRA reference:	22174
Date of determination:	15 November 2024
Former employer:	Stantonbury School, Purbeck, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 6 to 8 November 2024 and again on 15 November 2024 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Sayyad Rizvi.

The panel members were Ms Katie Dent (lay panellist) – in the chair, Mrs Christine McLintock (teacher panellist) and Mrs Bernie Whittle (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Lucy Mosley of Blake Morgan Solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Scott Smith of Capsticks Solicitors.

Mr Rizvi was present and was unrepresented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings dated 15 August 2024.

It was alleged that Mr Rizvi was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst employed as a teacher at Stantonbury School ("the School"):

1. In August 2022 he sent one or more of the messages set out in Schedule A to Pupil A.
2. His conduct at allegation 1 above was sexually motivated.

Schedule A

- a. "U r good looking and gorgeous"
- b. "U r very pretty and talented"
- c. "The room is getting hot, is that bcoz of ur pics"
- d. "Love u my dear...u r great and friendly"
- e. "love u dear"
- f. "wht time u gona sleep"
- g. "What sort of bf u r looking..Tall?...Like.me"
- h. "That's me, not very sexy or smart"
- i. "Ur pics r very cool and sexy"
- j. "U look stunning"
- k. "I thought massage from u wud be best"
- l. "Take ur top off I will giv u a massage" accompanied by a photograph of a naked woman being given a massage
- m. "here u go darling" accompanied by a photograph of two semi-naked people
- n. "Shall I give u a massage" accompanied by the same photo as in Item 12
- o. A photograph of two semi-naked people
- p. An image that contained the web address 'Teenmegaworld.net'

Mr Rizvi admitted allegation 1 in relation to Schedule A (a), but denied the other allegations.

Mr Rizvi denied that his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Preliminary applications

Application for the hearing to be held in private

Mr Smith made an oral application to hear part of the proceedings in private when matters of Mr Rizvi's health were raised, in order to protect Mr Rizvi's interests and personal life.

This application was supported by Mr Rizvi.

In determining the application, the panel had careful regard to the parties' submissions, and accepted the legal advice provided.

The panel took account of the fact that there is a presumption that hearings of this nature will take place in public and there is a legitimate public interest in the openness and transparency of the TRA's disciplinary procedures.

The panel agreed that any references to Mr Rizvi's health should be heard in private, as this is a sensitive matter. That would not be contrary to the public interest.

The panel invited the parties to notify it if, at any stage, it was anticipated that it would be necessary to go into private session.

Application for special measures

Mr Rizvi did not make a formal application for special measures, however he informed the panel that he would require regular breaks in light of his [REDACTED].

Mr Smith had no objection to taking regular breaks in the circumstances.

In considering Mr Rizvi's request, the panel had careful regard to the parties' submissions, and accepted the legal advice provided.

The panel bore in mind the requirement to ensure a fair hearing and the overarching need to ensure that justice is done.

The panel was content to agree to providing Mr Rizvi with regular breaks in order to accommodate his needs. It determined that this was required in order to ensure a fair hearing.

Application to admit additional evidence

The panel considered an application made on behalf of the TRA to admit two additional documents, one a Tove Learning Trust Code of Conduct for All Adults dated September 2021, and the second a Tove Learning Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy dated September 2021. Mr Smith explained that versions of these documents were already contained within the TRA bundle, but both were dated September 2022 which post-dated the incidents in question. Therefore, he asked the panel to replace the 2022 versions (at items 12 and 17 in the TRA bundle) with the 2021 versions. In his submission, no prejudice would be caused to Mr Rizvi as this did not constitute new information. Mr Smith told the panel that the 2021 versions were substantially the same as the 2022 versions and the relevant sections were identical.

Mr Rizvi did not object to the admission of this evidence.

The panel was satisfied that the evidence was relevant to the issues before it and no prejudice or unfairness would be caused by its admission.

The documents were accordingly added to the case papers.

Application to amend the allegation

An application was made by the TRA to amend the wording of allegation 1 Schedule A (n) to address a typographical error. The application was to amend the allegation from:

n. “Shall I give u a massage” accompanied by the same photo as in Item 12

to:

n. “Shall I give u a massage” accompanied by the same photo as in Item 1

Mr Rizvi had no objection to the application.

The panel agreed to the application. The proposed amendment was only to correct a typographical error. It did not alter the substance of the allegation, or result in new factual particulars being alleged. There was no prejudice to Mr Rizvi as a result of the proposed amendment, and indeed it was to his benefit that the allegations were correctly drafted. The panel had regard to the wider public interest in ensuring that allegations are properly put and do not contain technical deficiencies. In the circumstances of this case, it concluded that the public interest and interest of justice required the allegation to be amended.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology, anonymised pupil list and list of key people – pages 4 to 6

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 7 to 36

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 37 to 50

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 51 to 274

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 275 to 397

Section 6: Teacher's case law – pages 398 to 437

In addition, the panel agreed to accept two additional documents, the Tove Learning Trust Code of Conduct for All Adults dated September 2021 and the Tove Learning Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy dated September 2021.

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher Misconduct: Disciplinary Procedures for the Teaching Profession 2020, (the "Procedures").

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from Witness 1 [REDACTED] Witness 2 [REDACTED] and Witness 3 [REDACTED]. Those witnesses were called by the presenting officer.

The panel heard oral evidence from Mr Rizvi.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

The School is located in Milton Keynes. At the relevant time it was a mixed gender school for students in years 7-11. It also had a sixth form. The School falls under the Tove Learning Trust ("The Trust").

Mr Rizvi started working at the School on 1 September 2017. He was initially employed under a contract for Griffin School Trust. In September 2021 the Trust took over the School and Mr Rizvi was transferred to the Trust. Mr Rizvi was not provided with a new contract as the staff terms and conditions remained the same.

Mr Rizvi initially joined the School as an unqualified teacher of science. He completed his teaching qualification in December 2018 and became a Chemistry teacher. He was appointed as Head of Chemistry on 7 June 2021. During the Covid pandemic Mr Rizvi set up a chemistry channel on various social media platforms called 'Quinone7' through which he provided online chemistry resources. This channel was known about by the School.

On 11 August 2022, Mr Rizvi reported to the police in Pakistan that his mobile phone had been lost.

On 12 August 2022, Person B made a complaint via email to Witness 2 [REDACTED] regarding messages between her daughter, Pupil A, and Mr Rizvi on Instagram. Person B attached a number of screenshots of the messages to the complaint. The messages had been sent from an account in the name of 'Quinone7'. One of the screenshot messages included an image of Mr Rizvi and four of the other screenshots contained images of unidentified naked or semi- naked people.

On 12 August 2022, Mr Rizvi received a message from an unknown person on Instagram informing him that a post had been made on a Facebook page of parents at the School, which stated that he had been inappropriately messaging a pupil. This prompted Mr Rizvi to send Witness 1 [REDACTED] a WhatsApp message. This message stated that Mr Rizvi was abroad in Pakistan and that his mobile phone had been lost on 11 August 2022. Mr Rizvi explained that his Instagram and Facebook accounts had been hacked.

Witness 2 [REDACTED] responded to Person B by email on 13 August 2022 requesting further details from Pupil A. These details were provided by Person B the same day.

On 14 August 2022, Witness 1 [REDACTED] responded to Mr Rizvi on WhatsApp requesting that he suspend his social media accounts. Mr Rizvi responded that day,

confirming that his accounts had been deleted and that he had reported his lost mobile phone to the Pakistan Cyber Security Federal Investigation Agency.

On 15 August 2022, Witness 2 [REDACTED] reported the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (“the LADO”).

On 17 August 2022, a Managing Allegations Meeting was held between the School, the police and the LADO. Following the meeting the police opened an investigation.

On 25 August 2022, Mr Rizvi was suspended from work whilst the School and police initial investigations were ongoing.

A Follow-up Managing Allegations Meeting was held on 27 September 2022 between the School and the LADO.

On 11 October 2022, Mr Rizvi was notified that the School would conduct a formal investigation.

In October 2022, a decision was made by the police to take no further action.

On 24 October 2022, Mr Rizvi was invited to an investigation meeting.

On 3 November 2022, an investigation meeting was held. Mr Rizvi attended with his union representative. At that meeting Mr Rizvi confirmed that the Instagram conversation with Pupil A had started on 7 August 2022, prior to the alleged hacking of his account. The School concluded that there was a case to answer.

On 5 December 2022, Mr Rizvi advised the School that he had been unwell and it was agreed to delay further meetings so that his health could improve.

On 22 March 2023, a disciplinary hearing was arranged and then postponed due to Mr Rizvi’s ill health.

On 26 April 2023, a disciplinary hearing was held. Mr Rizvi attended with his union representative. The decision was made to dismiss Mr Rizvi.

On 26 May 2023, an appeal hearing was held, but the decision to dismiss was upheld. Mr Rizvi was informed of this on 9 June 2023.

A referral was made to the TRA on 20 June 2023.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

While employed as a Teacher at Stantonbury School (“the School”):

- 1. In August 2022 you sent one or more of the messages set out in Schedule A to Pupil A.**

Schedule A

- “U r good looking and gorgeous”
- “U r very pretty and talented”
- “The room is getting hot, is that bcoz of ur pics”
- “Love u my dear...u r great and friendly”
- “love u dear”
- “wht time u gona sleep”
- “What sort of bf u r looking..Tall?...Like.me”
- “That’s me, not very sexy or smart”
- “Ur pics r very cool and sexy”
- “U look stunning”
- “I thought massage from u wud be best”
- “Take ur top off I will giv u a massage” accompanied by a photograph of a naked woman being given a massage
- “here u go darling” accompanied by a photograph of two semi-naked people
- “Shall I give u a massage” accompanied by the same photo as in Item l
- A photograph of two semi-naked people
- An image that contained the web address ‘Teenmegaworld.net’

The panel noted Mr Rizvi’s admission to allegation 1 in relation to Schedule A (a). This admission was unequivocal and was consistent with the other evidence before the panel, therefore it accepted the admission and found this allegation proven.

The panel went on to consider whether Mr Rizvi sent the other messages set out in Schedule A to Pupil A.

Witness 2 [REDACTED] told the panel that on 12 August 2022 Person B made a complaint via email to him regarding messages between her daughter, Pupil A, and Mr Rizvi on Instagram. Person B attached a number of screenshots of the messages to the complaint. At a Case Management Hearing (“CMH”) on 12 September 2024 a panel granted the TRA’s application to admit the hearsay evidence of Person B. The panel at this hearing did not reconsider the application to adduce the hearsay evidence, however it did carefully consider the weight to be attached to this evidence and considered it with the appropriate caution.

Screenshots of the messages were provided in the TRA bundle. The messages purporting to be from Mr Rizvi had been sent from an account in the name of 'Quinone7'. Mr Rizvi confirmed that this is his online chemistry account.

Witness 1 [REDACTED] told the panel that on 12 August 2022 he had received a WhatsApp message from Mr Rizvi which stated:

“Good evening sir, i hope you r fine. I’m in Pakistan to see my parents who were very ill. I’m travelling back to UK soon. My chemistry channel Quinone7 instagram and facebook is hacked and most of the students are on the account. I have changed the password but i came to know someone was trying to chat to one of the student and i have reported it but passwords being changed. I have suspected my promotion team in Pakistan but not sure. Will keep u updated. last but not least, if you need anything from Pakistan please let me know and i’m happy to bring it for you. Regards. Sayyad”

The panel also heard evidence from Witness 3 [REDACTED] who had investigated the case and conducted an investigation meeting with Mr Rizvi on 3 November 2022.

Mr Rizvi told the panel that during the Covid pandemic he had set up a chemistry channel on various social media platforms called 'Quinone7' through which he provided online chemistry resources. He had engaged the services of a marketing team in Pakistan to assist him with promoting the accounts to gain more followers.

Mr Rizvi explained that shortly before the end of the summer term in July 2022 [REDACTED] had become unwell, and he had flown to Pakistan to care for him. He told the panel that Pupil A had contacted him on 7 August 2022 on Instagram whilst he was in Pakistan. He accepted that this was unusual given that he was not particularly familiar with Pupil A, albeit that he had taught her for approximately two years. Mr Rizvi explained that Pupil A had expressed concern that [REDACTED] and she was worried about failing her chemistry exam. Mr Rizvi responded to the message, telling Pupil A *“U r good looking and gorgeous”* in order to reassure her as he was concerned for her welfare. In hindsight, Mr Rizvi stated that he was aware that he should not have engaged in such a conversation with Pupil A. However, he explained that at the time he was suffering from ill-health and was caring for [REDACTED], which impacted upon his ability to make sound judgements. He also denied being aware of the School's policy for raising safeguarding concerns during school holidays.

Mr Rizvi told the panel that his conversation with Pupil A ended on 7 August 2022. He denied sending the messages set out in Schedule A (b)- (p). Between 8-10 August 2022 Mr Rizvi stated that he had access to his phone and had no Instagram message notifications. On 11 August 2022 he went out shopping and on returning at approximately 08:00 hrs he realised that his phone was missing. This was reported to the police. On 12 August 2022 Mr Rizvi began using [REDACTED] spare phone with his own UK sim card (the lost phone used a local sim card), and was able to access his Instagram

account. He confirmed that there were no further messages between him and Pupil A on the account after 7 August 2022. On 12 August 2022 he received an Instagram message from an unknown person telling him that a comment had been made on a Facebook page of parents at the School that he had been messaging a pupil. This prompted him to send the WhatsApp message (as referred to above) to Witness 1 [REDACTED].

Mr Rizvi explained to the panel that he had initially suspected his marketing team in Pakistan of hacking his Instagram account. However, on reflection, he could not think of a reason why they would do this. Furthermore, the marketing team would not have been in possession of Mr Rizvi's phone and so would not have had access to his photo gallery where photographs of Mr Rizvi were stored, in order to send one of these photographs to Pupil A.

Mr Rizvi felt that a more likely explanation was that [REDACTED] in Pakistan had taken the phone as a result of an ongoing family dispute and had sent the messages to Pupil A whilst pretending to be Mr Rizvi. He explained that [REDACTED] had seen two of Mr Rizvi's [REDACTED] with Mr Rizvi's phone in the family home before it was lost. Mr Rizvi's phone was seen again in the hands of [REDACTED] (cousin A) on a train on 11 August 2022. When asked about cousin A's level of English, Mr Rizvi explained that whilst he did not speak English, he had some level of written ability and would have been capable of sending such messages to Pupil A.

The panel had significant concerns about the shortcomings in the School's investigation of this matter. In particular, it took into account that no meeting had taken place between Pupil A, Person B and the School, nor had the messages been viewed on Pupil A's phone. As a result, the panel was provided with screenshots of Instagram messages which were not timed or dated (other than one on 7 August 2022) and some messages appeared to have been deleted or clipped. The ordering of the messages was unclear and it was not possible to tell who had instigated the messages, or how they had started and ended. As a result, the panel's task at this hearing was made considerably more difficult.

The panel took into account all the evidence presented to it by the TRA and by Mr Rizvi at this hearing. On the balance of probabilities it considered that Mr Rizvi was more likely than not to have sent the messages set out in Schedule A (b)- (p) to Pupil A. In reaching this conclusion it noted the similarities in the grammar contained within the Instagram messages and within the WhatsApp message Mr Rizvi sent to Witness 1 [REDACTED] on 12 August 2022, in particular the use of "u" and "r" and the question posed about whether anything was needed from Pakistan. Whilst in his evidence Mr Rizvi explained that he had offered to bring Witness 1 [REDACTED] anything back from Pakistan for Diwali, he could not account for why the author of the Instagram messages had made the same offer to Pupil A. The panel was also of the view the messages continued seamlessly along the same theme and with the same tone, mainly aimed at flattering Pupil A about her looks following the breakdown of her relationship. There was no

obvious inconsistency between the messages Mr Rizvi accepted sending on 7 August 2022 and the other messages.

Furthermore, the panel considered that Mr Rizvi's explanation of events contained a number of inconsistencies. For example, in neither his police interview nor in his WhatsApp message to Witness 1 [REDACTED] did he admit to having had correspondence with Pupil A on 7 August 2022. In the School's investigation meeting Mr Rizvi told Witness 3 [REDACTED] that he had responded to Pupil A on 7 August 2022 because he was concerned for her welfare and was worried that she may self-harm. This was repeated in Mr Rizvi's witness statement to the panel. However, in his oral evidence he explained that at the time he wanted to reassure Pupil A following the end of her relationship. It was only subsequently when he returned to the UK and read an article in a newspaper about the [REDACTED] amongst children that he had reflected on potential concerns for Pupil A's welfare.

Mr Rizvi told the panel that he had not reported the 7 August 2022 communication with Pupil A because he was not aware of the School's policy for raising safeguarding concerns during school holidays. The panel did not accept this. Witness 2 [REDACTED] told the panel that whilst there was no specific school policy on this point, it would have been expected that staff would raise concerns to the School by whatever medium was available to them. He explained that the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy are available on the School's website, as is the DSL's ("Designated Safeguarding Lead") phone number. Mr Rizvi told the panel that he had completed all mandatory safeguarding training and the panel did not therefore accept that he did not know how to inform the School of his concerns around contact from Pupil A. In any event, Mr Rizvi contacted Witness 1 [REDACTED] by WhatsApp on 12 August 2022. This option was open to him on 7 August 2022.

The panel found Mr Rizvi's explanation that he did not know who Pupil A was when he had taught her for two years surprising. This made it strange that when she had contacted him on 7 August 2022 with concerns about a relationship breakdown, he continued a discussion with her.

The panel considered it implausible that Mr Rizvi's [REDACTED] had sent the messages to Pupil A when they did not have a good grasp of the English language. The messages used abbreviations such as "bf" for boyfriend and "bcoz" for because, which would have required some knowledge of English terms. Likewise, the panel felt that it was unlikely that if cousin A had taken the phone as part of a vendetta against Mr Rizvi that they would have only contacted one person on his Instagram account, rather than taking the opportunity to imitate Mr Rizvi across numerous accounts. Furthermore, the panel was unconvinced that cousin A would have been able to continue the Instagram messages with Pupil A so seamlessly having no previous knowledge of her.

The panel found allegations 1 Schedule A (a)- (p) proven.

2. Your conduct at allegation 1 above was sexually motivated.

In light of the panel's findings in relation to allegation 1 Schedule A (a)– (p), it went on to consider whether Mr Rizvi's actions were sexually motivated.

On the basis of his conduct and the context in which it occurred, the TRA submitted that the appropriate inference to draw was that Mr Rizvi's actions were sexually motivated, either in terms of seeking sexual gratification or seeking a future sexual relationship.

Mr Rizvi robustly denied this allegation. He explained that although he had told Pupil A “*U r good looking and gorgeous*”, this was in order to reassure her following the [REDACTED] and was not sexually motivated. He explained that “within my (*his*) culture”, calling someone ‘gorgeous’ is normal and appropriate and is said to many people, including family members and friends.

As regards the conduct relating to allegation 1 Schedule A (a)– (p), the panel was satisfied that Mr Rizvi's conduct was for the purpose of his immediate sexual gratification. The messages demonstrated that he had lost sight of what would be deemed to be appropriate language and professional behaviour. They contained a number of images showing naked or semi- naked unidentified people which were clearly sexual images and made numerous references to massages. The obvious inference to draw was that Mr Rizvi's actions were aimed at seeking sexual gratification. The panel also noted that Person B was sufficiently concerned about the messages to have reported them to the School.

The panel therefore found allegation 2 proven on the basis that Mr Rizvi's conduct in allegation 1 Schedule A (a)– (p) was sexually motivated.

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

Having found the allegations proven, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proven 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 dated February 2022, which is referred to as “the Advice”.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Rizvi in relation to the facts found proven involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards Guidance for School Leaders, School Staff and Governing Bodies (“the Teachers’ Standards”). The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2 of the Teachers’ Standards, Mr Rizvi 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The Advice indicates that where a teacher is found by a panel to have displayed behaviours associated with any of the offence types shown in the list that begins on page 12, but was not convicted of an offence, a panel is likely to conclude that those behaviours would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The Advice further indicates that misconduct outside the education setting will amount to unacceptable professional conduct if it affects the way the person fulfils their teaching role or if it may lead to pupils being exposed to or influenced by the behaviour in a harmful way. Both were applicable in this case, with the relevant offence type being sexual communication with a child.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Rizvi in relation to all of the allegations amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession, and thereby was unacceptable professional conduct.

In making this judgment, the panel drew upon its knowledge and experience of the teaching profession.

The panel would have expected Mr Rizvi as an experienced teacher to have recognised the need to communicate professionally with pupils and to have understood the need to maintain professional boundaries between teachers and pupils. The evidenced communications with Pupil A clearly crossed acceptable boundaries and undermined the wellbeing and safety of Pupil A.

In considering whether Mr Rizvi's actions amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, the panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. It considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel also took account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and the fact that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way that they behave.

The Advice indicates that where a teacher is found by a panel to have displayed behaviours associated with any of the offence types shown in the list that begins on page 12, but was not convicted of an offence, a panel is likely to conclude that those behaviours would amount to conduct that would bring the profession into disrepute. The Advice further indicates that misconduct outside the education setting will be considered relevant if the conduct displayed is of a serious nature and would likely have a negative impact on the public's perception of the individual as a teacher, therefore bringing the teaching profession into disrepute. Both were applicable in this case, with the relevant offence type being sexual communication with a child.

For the reasons set out above, the findings of misconduct were serious and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on Mr Rizvi's status as a teacher, and damaging to the public perception of the teaching profession.

The panel therefore found that Mr Rizvi's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In summary, the panel found that Mr Rizvi's conduct in relation to all the allegations amounted to both unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils, given the panel's finding that Mr Rizvi had engaged in numerous sexual communications with Pupil A. As Pupil A's teacher, Mr Rizvi was trusted by Pupil A, and was supposed to keep her safe.

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

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

The panel gave consideration as to whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr Rizvi in the profession. The panel noted that he had approximately five years of experience as a teacher at the time of the allegations. There was no evidence before the panel that Mr Rizvi is currently teaching, although he indicated to the panel that he intended to return to the profession.

In view of the clear public interest considerations that were present, the panel considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order, taking into account the effect that this would have on Mr Rizvi.

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 Rizvi. The panel took account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order

may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proven. In the list of such behaviours, those that were relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- 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 (particularly involving pupils);
- sexual misconduct, e.g. 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;
- failure to act on evidence that indicated that a child's welfare may have been at risk;
- 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;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;
- concealment of inappropriate actions or purposeful destruction of evidence, especially where these behaviours have been repeated, and encouraging 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.

The panel considered that the following mitigating factors were present in this case:

- Mr Rizvi had a previous good history. There was no evidence that he had been subject to any previous regulatory or disciplinary proceedings.
- Mr Rizvi provided a number of character references and testimonials, which depicted him in positive terms. They spoke very highly in terms of his teaching practice. The panel did however note that not all of the testimonials were signed, nor was it clear what information the authors had been provided with by Mr Rizvi.
- Mr Rizvi had made a positive contribution to the School and the teaching profession by creating the 'Quinone7' chemistry channel on various social media platforms through which he provided online chemistry resources. He told the panel that these resources were being used by other teachers at the School.

- Mr Rizvi had suffered significant health problems both at the time of the allegations and subsequently. The panel was provided with medical evidence to support this.
- [REDACTED]
- There has been no repetition of the same or similar conduct in the period since Mr Rizvi left the School.
- These proceedings have been ongoing since 2023. This would undoubtedly have had a personal impact on Mr Rizvi and his family, [REDACTED].
- There was no evidence presented to the panel that Mr Rizvi's conduct directly impacted learners, given that there were no witness statements from Pupil A and Person B.
- Mr Rizvi engaged fully in these proceedings. He gave oral evidence to the panel and subjected himself to questions.
- Mr Rizvi has shown limited insight, regret and remorse.

Weighed against these matters, the panel considered that there were some aggravating factors present, including:

- Mr Rizvi's actions amounted to a breach of the Teachers' Standards.
- His conduct raised serious concerns and involved an exchange of numerous messages.
- Whilst Mr Rizvi has demonstrated some insight, this was limited to the allegation he admitted. He sought to blame Pupil A for sending "baiting" messages and did not recognise that [REDACTED] or that, as a teacher, he had responsibility for safeguarding her welfare. The regret and remorse Mr Rizvi expressed to the panel was largely for himself and the impact on his career, rather than for Pupil A. At no time has he apologised to Pupil A or the School for his behaviour.
- Mr Rizvi's actions were deliberate. He did not admit to exchanging the message set out at Schedule A (a) with Pupil A on 7 August 2022 until presented with the messages during the investigation meeting on 3 November 2022.
- Once his actions were discovered, Mr Rizvi went to significant lengths to conceal them to prevent the identification of wrongdoing.

- Mr Rizvi had five years of experience as a teacher, including at middle leadership level, and therefore he must have known about his safeguarding responsibilities and duties.
- His actions had the potential to impact on learners.

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 Rizvi of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate in this case. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Rizvi. The behaviour found proved was extremely serious as it involved numerous sexual communications with Pupil A, including images of naked or semi-naked unidentified people and multiple references to massages. In his evidence Mr Rizvi told the panel that in the exchange with Pupil A she had expressed to him concern that [REDACTED]. She was clearly reaching out to Mr Rizvi for support in a time of need, which the panel felt increased the seriousness of this case and the vulnerability of Pupil A. It considered that Mr Rizvi had exploited her vulnerability.

With the exception of allegation 1 Schedule A (a), Mr Rizvi denied the allegations against him and has shown no acknowledgment of the impact of his behaviour on Pupil A. The panel noted that in his final submissions Mr Rizvi continued to state that Pupil A's messages had been "baiting" and that he was the vulnerable one, and not the student. As Mr Rizvi had shown limited insight into the effects of his inappropriate behaviour, the panel could not be assured that it would not be repeated in the future and therefore he remains a risk to children.

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 Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would indicate that a review period should not be recommended.

These behaviours include:

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. 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 their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons;
- any sexual misconduct involving a child.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate. Mr Rizvi's conduct involved numerous sexual communications with Pupil A. In the panel's view, his behaviour was entirely incompatible with being a teacher. As such, it decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provision 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 unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Rizvi 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.

- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a teacher engaging in communications with a pupil that were sexually motivated, including sending pictures of naked people.

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 unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Rizvi, 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 that:

“There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the protection of pupils, given the panel’s finding that Mr Rizvi had engaged in numerous sexual communications with Pupil A. As Pupil A’s teacher, Mr Rizvi was trusted by Pupil A, and was supposed to keep her safe.”

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:

“Whilst Mr Rizvi has demonstrated some insight, this was limited to the allegation he admitted. He sought to blame Pupil A for sending “baiting” messages and did not recognise that [REDACTED] or that, as a teacher, he had responsibility for safeguarding her welfare. The regret and remorse Mr Rizvi expressed to the panel was largely for himself and the impact on his career, rather than for Pupil A. At no time has he apologised to Pupil A or the School for his behaviour.”

In my judgement, the lack of evidence of full 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 observes that:

“The Advice indicates that where a teacher is found by a panel to have displayed behaviours associated with any of the offence types shown in the list that begins on page 12, but was not convicted of an offence, a panel is likely to conclude that those behaviours would amount to conduct that would bring the profession into disrepute. The Advice further indicates that misconduct outside the education setting will be considered relevant if the conduct displayed is of a serious nature and would likely have a negative impact on the public’s perception of the individual as a teacher, therefore bringing the teaching profession into disrepute. Both were applicable in this case, with the relevant offence type being sexual communication with a child.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a teacher engaging in sexually motivated communications with a child in this case and the serious, negative impact that such a finding may have on the reputation of the profession.

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

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, 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 Rizvi himself. The panel notes that:

“Mr Rizvi had made a positive contribution to the School and the teaching profession by creating the ‘Quinone7’ chemistry channel on various social media platforms through which he provided online chemistry resources. He told the panel that these resources were being used by other teachers at the School.”

The panel also record having had the benefit of seeing a number of character references and testimonials depicting Mr Rizvi in positive terms and attesting to the quality of his teaching practice. However, the panel also notes that not all of the testimonials were signed, nor was it clear what information the authors had been provided with by Mr Rizvi.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Rizvi 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 both the very serious nature of the misconduct found, which involved sexually motivated communications with a child, and the panel's comments concerning the lack of full insight and/or remorse on Mr Rizvi's part.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Rizvi has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by full remorse and insight, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

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

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

In doing so, the panel has made reference to the Advice which indicates there are behaviours that, if proved, mean a review period should not be recommended. These behaviours include any sexual misconduct involving a child.

I have considered the panel's concluding comments:

"The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate. Mr Rizvi's conduct involved numerous sexual communications with Pupil A. In the panel's view, his behaviour was entirely incompatible with being a teacher. As such, it decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provision for a review period."

I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate response to the misconduct found in order 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, which in my judgment is fundamentally incompatible with working as a teacher, and the lack of evidence of full insight or remorse on Mr Rizvi's part which raises the risk of repetition and consequent harm to pupils.

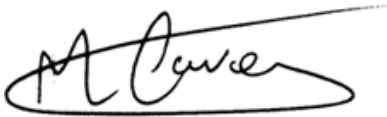
I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

This means that Mr Sayyad Rizvi 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 Rizvi 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 Rizvi has a right of appeal to 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: 20 November 2024

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