



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Jon Gordon: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

November 2024

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

Teacher:	Mr Jon Gordon
Teacher ref number:	9946320
Teacher date of birth:	12 July 1978
TRA reference:	17839
Date of determination:	26 November 2024
Former employer:	Anglo European School, Essex

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 26 November 2024 by virtual means, to consider the case of Mr Jon Gordon.

The panel members were Mr Jeremy Phillips (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Zabin Chauhan (lay panellist) and Mrs Miranda Norris (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Luisa Gibbons of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Gordon that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Gordon provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted having been convicted of relevant offences. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Ms Kate Baggs of Kingsley Napley LLP or Mr Gordon.

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 16 September 2024.

It was alleged that on 24 February 2022, Mr Gordon was convicted of relevant offences, namely:

1. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 18/12/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1(a)
2. Cause/ Incite Female Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity- Offender 18 Or Over – No Penetration On 25/03/17 – 30/05/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
3. Cause/ Incite Female U16 Engage Sexual Act Offender 18+ Penetrate Anus/ Vagina/ Mouth by Penis/ Body Part On 25/03/17 – 30/05/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
4. Cause/ Incite the Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 02/11/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
5. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 09/05/12 – 13/05/12 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
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9. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 23/09/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
10. Cause/ Incite Male Child U16 Engage Sexual Act Offender 18+ Penetrate Anus/ Vagina/ Mouth By Penis/ Body Part On 24/09/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
11. Cause/ Incite Male Child U16 Engage Sexual Act Offender 18+ Penetrate Anus/ Vagina/ Mouth By Penis/ Body Part On 22/01/12 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
12. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 01/02/12 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)

13. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over - No Penetration On 23/11/11 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
14. Cause/ Incite Male Child under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 07/04/12 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)
15. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 07/04/12 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)
16. Cause/ Incite Male Child under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 01/01/17 – 23/05/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
17. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 01/10/16 – 19/05/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
18. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 10/12/16 – 14/01/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
19. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 22/10/18 – 10/11/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)
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21. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 09/12/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
22. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 22/12/16 – 02/12/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
23. Cause/Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 04/11/18 Sexual Offences Act s10(1)(a)
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27. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 26/10/16 – 03/08/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
28. Cause/ Incite Male Child under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 17/12/16 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)

29. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 14/07/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
30. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 or Over – No Penetration On 27/07/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
31. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 25/08/16 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
32. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 24/11/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
33. Cause/ Incite Male Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity - Offender 18 or Over - No Penetration On 21/01/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10(1)(a)
34. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 01/12/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
35. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 28/04/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
36. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 23/10/18 – 28/10/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 48(1)(a)
37. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 19/05/18 – 20/08/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
38. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 27/07/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
39. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 08/07/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
40. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 17/02/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 48(1)(a)
41. Cause/ Incite Female Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity – Offender 18 Or Over – No Penetration On 27/10/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s10 (1)(a)
42. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 08/12/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1(a)
43. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 08/12/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1(a)
44. Taking Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 23/09/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1
45. Taking Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 24/02/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1

Mr Gordon admitted having been convicted of the above offences and admitted that these were relevant offences.

Preliminary applications

There were no preliminary applications.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and list of key people – pages 3 to 4

Section 2: Notice of referral, response to notice of referral and notice of meeting – pages 5 to 18d

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer's representations – pages 19 to 26

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 27 to 107

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 108 to 109

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

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Gordon on 17 July 2024.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case and reached a decision.

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Gordon for the allegations to be considered without a hearing. The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest. The panel did not determine that such a direction was necessary or appropriate in this case.

Mr Gordon was employed at the Anglo European School as a music teacher. On 7 December 2018, he was arrested on suspicion of two counts of sexual offences. On 7 December 2018, he attended a police interview in which he made no comment. On 20 December 2018, the matter was referred to the Teaching Regulation Agency. On 22 April

2021, he attended a further police interview in which he provided a prepared statement accepting that he was responsible for the online offending that had been attributed to him. The case proceeded to the Crown Court.

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:

On 24 February 2022, Mr Gordon was convicted of the following offences:

- 1. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 18/12/18 Protection of Children Act 1987 s1(a)**
- 2. Cause/ Incite Female Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity- Offender 18 Or Over – No Penetration On 25/03/17 – 30/05/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)**
- 3. Cause/ Incite Female U16 Engage Sexual Act Offender 18+ Penetrate Anus/ Vagina/ Mouth by Penis/ Body Part On 25/03/17 – 30/05/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)**
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- 10. Cause/ Incite Male Child U16 Engage Sexual Act Offender 18+ Penetrate Anus/ Vagina/ Mouth By Pennis/ Body Part On 24/09/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 10(1)(a)**

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37. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 19/05/18 – 20/08/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
38. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 27/07/18 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s48(1)(a)
39. Cause/ Incite The Sexual Exploitation of a Child Aged 13 – 17 On 08/07/17 Sexual Offences Act 2003 s 48(1)(a)
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42. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 08/12/18 Protection of Children Act 1978 s1(a)

**43. Making Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 08/12/18
Protection of Children Act 1978 s1(a)**

**44. Taking Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 23/09/18
Protection of Children Act 1978 s1**

**45. Taking Indecent Photograph or Pseudo-Photograph of Children On 24/02/18
Protection of Children Act 1978 s1**

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Gordon has admitted having been convicted of the above offences.

The panel has matched the details of the offences set out in the allegations to those recorded on the Police National Computer (“PNC”) record. This confirmed that the offences for which Mr Gordon was convicted were those listed in the allegations. The panel noted that this accorded with the sentencing remarks. There was a slight inconsistency in the certificate of conviction in that the breakdown of the various offences differed from that in the PNC record and the sentencing remarks.

Based on the PNC record and the sentencing remarks the panel concluded that there may have been a slight error in the breakdown of offences listed in the certificate of conviction. The panel otherwise accepted the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of the convictions and the facts necessarily implied by the convictions. The panel was satisfied that Mr Gordon had more likely than not been convicted of all of the offences alleged, based on the PNC record, the sentencing remarks, the certificate of conviction and Mr Gordon’s admissions.

The certificate of conviction records that Mr Gordon was sentenced to 8 years’ imprisonment; an indefinite sexual harm prevention order, to sign the sex offenders’ register for life and was automatically disbarred from working with children.

From the transcript of the sentencing hearing, it is apparent that Mr Gordon engaged in online sexual conversations with teenage children, and either the children sent videos or pictures of themselves, or Mr Gordon recorded them without their knowledge. This included one offence of inciting a penetrative sexual act with a child who stated he was 13, and also spelled out that he had mental health problems.

Two aliases were used by Mr Gordon, one of a teenage boy, and one of a teenage girl. Mr Gordon used those aliases depending on the sex of the child he was speaking to, so using a male alias if he was speaking with a girl, and a female alias if he was speaking with a boy. He befriended them on children’s websites, and then asked them to move to Skype. Of the latter offences, there was one instance where Mr Gordon suggested a child travel to meet him.

In total there were over 6500 chat logs found on Mr Gordon’s devices, of which the police determined there were 63 UK based victims and many more international victims, albeit the indictment referred only to the UK victims, alongside the child abuse imagery.

Other indecent images of children were found that had been culled from the web, of children being sexually abused, some as young as five years' old.

Throughout the period of time covered by the indictment, a six year period, Mr Gordon had been a music teacher.

Mr Gordon's devices had software to disguise his location, to remove files from his computer and to his IP address when searching or browsing the dark web.

The panel found the allegations proven.

Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence

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

- ... 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

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 noted that the individual's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and working in an education setting since they demonstrate a sexual interest in children. This is reflected in the order automatically disbaring him from working with children.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offence would have been likely to have had an impact on the safety and/or security of pupils and/or members of the public. There was no evidence of the victims of Mr Gordon being pupils of the school in which he taught, however, given their age, they would have been pupils elsewhere. The judge's sentencing remarks record that Mr Gordon gave no thought to their privacy and how they would feel when they realised that they had been manipulated and lied to. Some of the victims believed themselves to be in a relationship with him.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Gordon's behaviour in committing the offence would be likely to

affect public confidence in the teaching profession, if Mr Gordon was allowed to continue teaching.

The panel noted that Mr Gordon'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 an offence involving sexual activity; sexual communication with a child; and 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 any such activity, including one-off incidents.

The Advice indicates that a conviction for any offence that relates to or involves such offences is likely to be considered "a relevant offence".

The panel considered this to be a very serious case. Mr Gordon was a prolific serial offender who only stopped when he was arrested by the police.

There was no evidence of Mr Gordon's record as a teacher. Even if there had been, the panel would have placed little weight on it, given the nature of Mr Gordon's offending behaviour. The panel noted that Mr Gordon provided a pre-prepared statement to the police at his second interview referring [REDACTED]. The panel could not see that this mitigated to any degree Mr Gordon's actions in committing serious sexual offences against children over a period of six years. The panel also found that the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the conviction was clearly relevant to Mr Gordon's fitness to be a teacher. The panel considered that 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 found that Mr Gordon had been convicted of relevant offences.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of conviction of relevant offences, it was necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order is appropriate, the panel had to consider the public interest, the seriousness of the behaviour and any mitigation offered by Mr Gordon and whether a prohibition order is necessary and proportionate. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have a punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely, the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils; the protection of other members of the public; the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct; and whether prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest.

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious offences demonstrating Mr Gordon's sexual interest in children. The impact of that offending will likely have affected those children involved but also their families and loved ones, and therefore there was also a public interest consideration in relation to the protection of other members of the public.

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

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

Whatever Mr Gordon's abilities as an educator were, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above clearly outweighed any interest in retaining Mr Gordon in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, having preyed upon children for his own sexual gain.

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 (particularly involving vulnerable pupils);

- an abuse of any trust, knowledge, or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- sexual misconduct, for example, involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or 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 KCSIE);
- violation of the rights of pupils;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions or purposeful destruction of evidence, especially where these behaviours have been repeated or had serious consequences, or involved the coercion of another person to act in a way contrary to their own interests;
- collusion or concealment including: lying to prevent the identification of wrongdoing;

The panel noted that it should attach appropriate weight and seriousness to online behaviours including, but not limited to:

- online misconduct;
- facilitating online abuse; or
- facilitating inappropriate relationships.

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

Mr Gordon's actions were deliberate, prolific and conducted over an extended period of time.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Gordon was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation and, in fact, the panel found Mr Gordon's actions to be calculated and motivated.

The panel noted that the Police “MG5” Case Summary contains the pre-prepared statement provided by Mr Gordon during his second interview on 22 April 2021. [REDACTED]. The panel did not consider that this provided any excuse for Mr Gordon’s behaviour.

The panel accepted there have been no previous regulatory findings against Mr Gordon. There was no evidence that he had otherwise demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct or of having contributed significantly to the education sector.

Mr Gordon adduced no statements attesting either to his character or to his teaching ability. The panel noted that a number of statements were before the court at his sentencing hearing, but these were not before the panel to consider.

The MG5 Case Summary states that when Mr Gordon was first interviewed on 7 December 2018, he responded “no comment” to all questions asked. The transcript of Mr Gordon’s sentencing hearing refers to an extensive and long running investigation having subsequently taken place to ascertain who the victims were, and the level of Mr Gordon’s offending.

In his second interview on 22 April 2021, he provided a prepared statement. This stated that he had been given a disclosure document and accepted that *“I started to go online approximately ten years ago. This will be a guess as to when my offending started”* and *“I will have been responsible for all the online sexual offending that is capable of being attributed to me. I am anxious to co-operate fully, but my memory is completely blurred [REDACTED], so I am unable to give a full comment interview.”* The MG5 Case Summary then states that Mr Gordon remained silent through the rest of the interview whilst he was asked an array of questions.

Mr Gordon’s pre-prepared statement stated that following his arrest at the end of 2018, [REDACTED].

Mr Gordon provided a guilty indication and the magistrates’ court which was then followed through with guilty pleas at the plea and trial preparation hearing. His mitigation included that he had completed a 10 hour course from January 2019 to April 2019 to understand “Offending behaviour, compulsive and addictive behaviour, the role of fantasy in internet sexual offending, the impact of the internet sexual offending on sexuality and relationships, victim awareness and empathy as well as relapse prevention.” The mitigation also referred to [REDACTED].

On 24 May 2024, Mr Gordon wrote to the presenting officer to state that he *“will not contest the inevitable decision to prohibit me from further involvement with the teaching profession. I sincerely apologise to everyone affected by my actions and deeply regret the impact they have had.”*

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 Gordon of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Gordon. There could be no other conclusion given the nature and extent of Mr Gordon's offending against 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 2 years.

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 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 his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons; any sexual misconduct involving a child; any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents. Whilst there was no evidence of Mr Gordon having used his professional position to influence or exploit the children, there were two instances where the vulnerabilities of the children would be obvious. The judge noted that instead of giving Mr Gordon pause for thought, he continued in his manipulation and exploitation.

There was no evidence before the panel of the success of any rehabilitation Mr Gordon has engaged in and the panel was unable to assess the risk of repetition. The panel noted that Mr Gordon's offending had continued up to the hours before his arrest and he had not over that prolonged period taken any effective steps to address his behaviour. Mr Gordon has subsequently expressed remorse, although he has not demonstrated what he considers the impact of his actions has been. The panel noted that the court imposed an indefinite sexual harm prevention order and that Mr Gordon is required to sign the sex offenders' register for life.

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 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 a relevant conviction.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Gordon 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

- ... 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

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 was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Gordon, involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) and/or involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a relevant conviction for committing serious sexual offences against children over a period of six years. The

panel considered this to be a very serious case. Mr Gordon was a prolific serial offender who only stopped when he was arrested by the police.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of a relevant conviction, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Gordon and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children/safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, "There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious offences demonstrating Mr Gordon's sexual interest in children. The impact of that offending will likely have affected those children involved but also their families and loved ones, and therefore there was also a public interest consideration in relation to the protection of other members of the public." A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel's comments on insight and remorse, which the panel sets out as follows, "Mr Gordon provided a guilty indication and the magistrates' court which was then followed through with guilty pleas at the plea and trial preparation hearing. His mitigation included that he had completed a 10 hour course from January 2019 to April 2019 to understand "Offending behaviour, compulsive and addictive behaviour, the role of fantasy in internet sexual offending, the impact of the internet sexual offending on sexuality and relationships, victim awareness and empathy as well as relapse prevention." The panel has also commented that "Mr Gordon wrote to the presenting officer to state that he *"will not contest the inevitable decision to prohibit me from further involvement with the teaching profession. I sincerely apologise to everyone affected by my actions and deeply regret the impact they have had."* I have given this element some weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, "The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Gordon's behaviour in committing the offence would be likely to affect public confidence in the teaching profession, if Mr Gordon was allowed to continue teaching." I am particularly mindful of the finding of serious sexual offences involving children in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

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

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

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Gordon himself and the panel said “The panel accepted there have been no previous regulatory findings against Mr Gordon. There was no evidence that he had otherwise demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct or of having contributed significantly to the education sector.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Gordon 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 level of insight. The panel has said, “There was no evidence before the panel of the success of any rehabilitation Mr Gordon has engaged in and the panel was unable to assess the risk of repetition. The panel noted that Mr Gordon’s offending had continued up to the hours before his arrest and he had not over that prolonged period taken any effective steps to address his behaviour. Mr Gordon has subsequently expressed remorse, although he has not demonstrated what he considers the impact of his actions has been.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that “Whatever Mr Gordon’s abilities as an educator were, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above clearly outweighed any interest in retaining Mr Gordon in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, having preyed upon children for his own sexual gain.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Gordon 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 serious circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by full 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.

I have considered the panel's comments "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 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 his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons; any sexual misconduct involving a child; any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents. Whilst there was no evidence of Mr Gordon having used his professional position to influence or exploit the children, there were two instances where the vulnerabilities of the children would be obvious. The judge noted that instead of giving Mr Gordon pause for thought, he continued in his manipulation and exploitation."

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 seriousness of the findings and the lack of full insight.

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 Jon Gordon 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 Gordon 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 Gordon 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.



Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 2 December 2024

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