



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Angus Blackmore: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

January 2025

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

Teacher: Mr Angus Blackmore

Teacher ref number: 0622273

Teacher date of birth: 13 November 1963

TRA reference: 17320

Date of determination: 7 January 2025

Former employer: Beechview Academy, High Wycombe

Introduction

A professional conduct panel ('the panel') of the Teaching Regulation Agency ('the TRA') convened on 7 January 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Angus Blackmore (17320).

The panel members were Mr Paul Millett (lay panellist), Ms Jane Gotschel (teacher panellist – in the chair) and Ms Sarah Daniel (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Rebecca Utton of Birketts LLP solicitors.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Blackmore that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Blackmore provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Mr Callum Heywood of Browne Jacobson, Mr Blackmore or any representative for Mr Blackmore.

The meeting took place in private by way of a virtual meeting.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 21 October 2024.

It was alleged that Mr Blackmore was guilty of having been convicted of a relevant offence, in that he was convicted at Aylesbury Crown Court, on 31 July 2023 of one or more counts of:

1. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017
2. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017
3. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017
4. Sexual assault of female child under 13 on 14 June 2018
5. Engage in sexual communication with a child on 14 June 2018

Mr Blackmore admitted the facts of allegations 1 to 5 and that his behaviour amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence, as set out in the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Blackmore on 1 September 2024.

Preliminary applications

Whilst there were no preliminary applications, ahead of the meeting, the panel had been provided with further documentation namely: a full certificate of conviction as the one provided in the bundle was incomplete; a signed letter from Mr Blackmore confirming receipt of Notice of Meeting and agreeing to waive the relevant notice period; and an email from HMP Leyhill, dated 2 January 2025, enclosing the signed letters from Mr Blackmore.

The documents subject to the application had not been served in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.20 of the 2018 Procedures. Therefore, the panel was required to decide whether the documents should be admitted under paragraph 4.25 of the 2018 Procedures.

The panel considered the additional documents were relevant as they would assist the panel in determining the issues at the meeting. Accordingly, the documents were added to the bundle. The panel also determined it was in the interests of justice to proceed, notwithstanding the shorter than required period of notice for the meeting.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

- Section 1: Notice of referral and response – pages 4 to 21

- Section 2: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer submissions – pages 23 to 28
- Section 3: TRA documents – pages 30 to 70
- Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 73 to 74

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following: a full certificate of conviction; a signed letter from Mr Blackmore confirming receipt of Notice of Meeting and agreeing to waive the relevant notice period; and an email from HMP Leyhill, dated 2 January 2025, enclosing the signed letters from Mr Blackmore, at pages 75 to 93 of the bundle.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the meeting and the additional documents admitted by the panel.

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Blackmore on 1 September 2024, and subsequently signed by the presenting officer on 18 September 2024.

Decision and reasons

The panel carefully considered the case and reached the following decision and reasons:

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Blackmore 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 determined that such a direction was not necessary or appropriate in this case.

Mr Blackmore was employed as a headteacher at Beechview School from April 2016 to June 2019. Prior to that he was deputy head teacher at Hamilton Academy (together ‘the Schools’).

Mr Blackmore was charged with the offences as set out above in June 2020, and was convicted of the offences in Aylesbury Crown Court on the 31 July 2023.

Mr Blackmore was sentenced in respect of the offences on the 8 September 2023.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

- 1. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017**
- 2. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017**
- 3. Sexual assault of female child under 13 between 01 September 2015 – 18 July 2017**
- 4. Sexual assault of female child under 13 on 14 June 2018**
- 5. Engage in sexual communication with a child on 14 June 2018**

The panel considered the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Blackmore on the 1 September 2024. In that statement of agreed facts, Mr Blackmore admitted allegations 1 to 5 and further admitted that the facts of the allegations amounted to conviction of a relevant offence. Notwithstanding this, the panel made a determination based on the facts available to it.

The panel noted page 8 of the Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers ('the Advice') which states that where there has been a conviction at any time, of a criminal offence, the panel will accept the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of both the conviction and the facts necessarily implied by the conviction, unless exceptional circumstances apply. The panel did not find that any exceptional circumstances applied in this case.

The panel had been provided with a copy of the certificate of conviction from Aylesbury Crown Court, dated 30 October 2024, which detailed that Mr Blackmore had been convicted on 31 July 2023 of 4 counts of assault on a girl under 13 by touching and 1 count of engaging in sexual communication with a child. In respect of the convictions, Mr Blackmore was sentenced to a total period of imprisonment of 54 months. In addition, he was made the subject of a Sexual Harm Prevention Order for an indefinite period, made subject to notification requirements for the rest of his life and ordered to pay a victim surcharge in the sum of £120.

On examination of the documents before the panel and the admissions in the signed statement of agreed facts, the panel was satisfied that the facts of allegations were proven.

Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence

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

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher Misconduct: The Prohibition of Teachers, which is referred to as 'the Advice'.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Blackmore in relation to the facts it found proved involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that by reference to Part 2, Mr Blackmore 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
- 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 Mr Blackmore's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting, as he had regularly and repeatedly sexually assaulted two vulnerable pupils at the Schools in which he had taught and/or been a deputy headteacher and then a headteacher.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offence could have had an impact on the safety or security of pupils and/or members of the public.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Blackmore's behaviour in committing these offences could undoubtedly affect public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. His conduct ran counter to what should have been at the very core of his practice as a teacher with a duty of care towards children. By virtue of his role as a senior leader, Mr Blackmore was in a high position of trust and responsibility in relation to the pupils whom he assaulted. He significantly abused that position.

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

This was a case involving multiple offences of sexual activity with a child and sexual communication with a child, which the Advice states is more likely to be considered a relevant offence.

The panel found that the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the conviction was relevant to Mr Blackmore's ongoing suitability to teach.

The panel further noted that in the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Blackmore, he admitted the facts amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence. Notwithstanding his admission, the panel, having considered all the evidence before it, was satisfied that Mr Blackmore had been convicted 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 should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have punitive effect.

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

In the light of the nature of the offences for which Mr Blackmore was convicted, there was an extremely strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public. His actions raised significant public and child protection concerns given the serious findings of inappropriate relationships with children.

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

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

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

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations both in favour of, and against, prohibition as well as the interests of Mr Blackmore. The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proved. In the list of such behaviours, those that are relevant in this case are:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- the commission of a serious criminal offence, including those that resulted in a conviction or caution, paying particular attention to offences that are 'relevant matters' for the purposes of The Police Act 1997 and criminal record disclosures.
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- any abuse of any trust, knowledge or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- sexual misconduct, for example, involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- 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);

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors.

Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

There was no evidence that Mr Blackmore's actions were not deliberate. The panel found Mr Blackmore's actions to be not only deliberate but also calculated.

There was no evidence that Mr Blackmore was acting under extreme duress.

There was no evidence presented that Mr Blackmore demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both personal and professional conduct and had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel took account of His Honour Judge Cooper's sentencing remarks at paragraph G page 38 of the bundle, "*You clearly have been a charismatic and effective teacher. You were capable of bringing insight and technique into the classroom; confidence to the parents. You were able to bring sound and effective leadership in the staffroom in two schools that required a real degree of consistent leadership,...*". The panel did not, however, view this mitigated against the seriousness of his actions for which he had been convicted.

The panel noted that there was a lack of remorse and insight by Mr Blackmore. In this regard, the panel noted His Honour Judge Cooper's sentencing remarks at paragraph F page 39 of the bundle, "*when it comes to remorse, there is no remorse at all that I can detect in you. The conduct of your trial demonstrated that not only did you try to protect yourself during the offending phase by telling each child they mustn't report you during the trial phase, but that you were willing to try to deflect the blame elsewhere for your conduct.*"

The panel considered a letter from Mr Blackmore to the TRA dated 31 January 2024. The panel concluded that the content of this letter did not provide any mitigation as to his offending behaviour nor any insight or remorse on the part of Mr Blackmore. Indeed, his reference in the letter to gaining the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) qualification which he asked to be taken into consideration, served only to highlight how he had failed completely to discharge the duties expected of him in this role.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings was sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Blackmore 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 Blackmore. The nature of the offences combined with the length of prison sentence and indefinite Sexual Harm Prevention Order were significant factors in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

The panel went on to consider whether or not it would be appropriate to recommend that a review period of the order should be considered. The panel was mindful that the Advice states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances, in any given case, that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would militate against the recommendation of a review period. These behaviours include serious sexual misconduct, such as where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons and any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel found that Mr Blackmore was convicted of multiple counts of sexually assaulting a female child under 13 and engaging in sexual communication with a child.

The panel found Mr Blackmore's actions to be calculated and the most serious in nature. Both children, who were the victims of his actions, were vulnerable in their own way and Mr Blackmore seriously exploited his position of trust as a senior leader. The panel took particular note of the sentencing remarks by His Honour Judge Cooper at page 36 paragraph G and page 37 paragraph A of the bundle, *"I look at culpability and harm and dealing first with culpability, there are plainly multiple elements of the highest culpability for the behaviours that I've described. Firstly, abuse of trust. As a teacher, as a senior teacher and as a senior teacher with safeguarding responsibilities, you were trusted by parents, trusted by your colleagues, trusted by the child in each case to behave appropriately, and you've betrayed every element of that trust. Secondly, grooming. This adds to your culpability because the situation in which these offences could take place could not happen overnight. Each victim was the subject of a grooming process before your offending ever was crystallised into touching. Third, there was deliberate isolation of each of your two victims. You successfully isolated both children..."*

The panel further noted in His Honour Judge Cooper's sentencing remarks imposing a reduced sentence of 54 months, at paragraph G page 39 and paragraphs A to C page 39 of the bundle, that if it were not for the impact of delays in the case a *"sentence of five and a half years would not be too long, it would be just and proportionate to the totality of your offending."*

The Advice also indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer review period. The panel found none of these behaviours to be relevant.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate in all the circumstances for the prohibition order to be recommended without 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 Angus Blackmore should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Blackmore 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
- 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 Blackmore 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 Blackmore fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a teacher having been convicted of 4 counts of assault of children and 1 count of engaging in sexual communication with a child leading to a sentence of a total period of imprisonment of 54 months.

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 Blackmore, 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 nature of the offences for which Mr Blackmore was convicted, there was an extremely strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public. His actions raised significant public and child protection concerns given the serious findings of inappropriate relationships with children."

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 records as follows:

"The panel noted that there was a lack of remorse and insight by Mr Blackmore. In this regard, the panel noted His Honour Judge Cooper's sentencing remarks at paragraph F page 39 of the bundle, "*when it comes to remorse, there is no remorse at all that I can detect in you. The conduct of your trial demonstrated that not only did you try to protect yourself during the offending phase by telling each child they mustn't report you during the trial phase, but that you were willing to try to deflect the blame elsewhere for your conduct.*"

The panel considered a letter from Mr Blackmore to the TRA dated 31 January 2024. The panel concluded that the content of this letter did not provide any mitigation as to his offending behaviour nor any insight or remorse on the part of Mr Blackmore. Indeed, his reference in the letter to gaining the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) qualification which he asked to be taken into consideration, served only to highlight how he had failed completely to discharge the duties expected of him in this role.”

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel notes that:

“The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Blackmore’s behaviour in committing these offences could undoubtedly affect public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. His conduct ran counter to what should have been at the very core of his practice as a teacher with a duty of care towards children. By virtue of his role as a senior leader, Mr Blackmore was in a high position of trust and responsibility in relation to the pupils whom he assaulted. He significantly abused that position.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a head teacher being convicted for offences involving the sexual assault of two vulnerable pupils in this case and the very negative impact that such a finding is likely to 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 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 Blackmore himself. The panel notes the following:

“There was no evidence presented that Mr Blackmore demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both personal and professional conduct and had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel took account of His Honour Judge Cooper’s sentencing remarks at paragraph G page 38 of the bundle, “*You clearly have been a charismatic and effective teacher. You were capable of bringing insight and technique into the classroom; confidence to the parents. You were able to bring sound and effective leadership in the staffroom in two schools that required a real degree of*

consistent leadership, . . .". The panel did not, however, view this mitigated against the seriousness of his actions for which he had been convicted."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Blackmore 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 very serious nature of the misconduct found by the panel. I have also noted the lack of evidence that Mr Blackmore has developed true remorse for and insight into his actions.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Blackmore 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.

In doing so, the panel has referred to the Advice as follows:

"The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would militate against the recommendation of a review period. These behaviours include serious sexual misconduct, such as where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used his professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons and any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel found that Mr Blackmore was convicted of multiple counts of sexually assaulting a female child under 13 and engaging in sexual communication with a child."

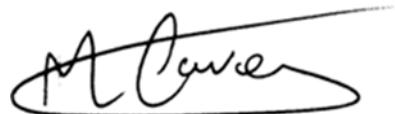
I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period would not be sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the extremely serious nature of the misconduct found, which in my judgment constitutes behaviour fundamentally incompatible with working as a teacher, as well as the lack of evidence of either insight or remorse.

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

This means that Mr Angus Blackmore 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 Blackmore 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 Blackmore 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 in a thin oval border.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 13 January 2025

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