



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Kieran Taylor: 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 Kieran Taylor
Teacher ref number:	0252121
Teacher date of birth:	31 March 1976
TRA reference:	19908
Date of determination:	17 January 2025
Former employer:	Beechcroft St Pauls CofE Primary School, Dorset

Introduction

A professional conduct panel ('the panel') of the Teaching Regulation Agency ('the TRA') convened on 17 January 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Kieran Taylor.

The panel members were Ms Geraldine Baird (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Shabana Robertson (lay panellist) and Mr Tom Snowdon (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Samantha Cass of Birketts LLP solicitors.

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

The meeting took place in private by way of a virtual meeting and was not recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 9 January 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Taylor was guilty of having been convicted of a relevant offence, in that he was sentenced at Dorset Magistrates Court on 22 October 2021 for the following offences:

1. One count of making indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph of children
30/01/2020
2. Two counts of making indecent photograph or pseud-photograph of children on
24/02/2016 – 16/03/2021
3. One count of possession of extreme pornographic images – of intercourse/ oral
sex with dead/alive animal on 17/03/2021

Mr Taylor admitted the facts of allegations 1, 2 and 3 and that his behaviour amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence falling short of the standards of behaviour expected of a teacher, as set out in the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Taylor on 5 September 2024.

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, anonymised pupil list and list of key people – pages 3 to 4
- Section 2: Notice of referral, response and notice of meeting – pages 5 to 21
- Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 22 to 28
- Section 4: TRA documents – pages 29 to 38
- Section 5: Documents from the police – pages 39 to 54

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

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Taylor on 5 September 2024 and subsequently signed by the presenting officer on 9 October 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 Taylor for the allegations to be considered without a hearing. The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest. The panel did not determine that such a direction was necessary or appropriate in this case.

On 22 October 2021 Mr Taylor was convicted at Dorset Magistrates Court in respect of 4 charges. The 4 charges included 3 counts of indecent images of children and 1 count of possession of extreme pornographic images.

The matter was referred to the TRA on the 23 March 2021.

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. One count of making indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph of children 30/01/2020**
- 2. Two counts of making indecent photograph or pseud-photograph of children on 24/02/2016 – 16/03/2021**
- 3. One count of possession of extreme pornographic images – of intercourse/ oral sex with dead/alive animal on 17/03/2021**

The panel considered the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Taylor on 5 September 2024. In that statement of agreed facts, Mr Taylor admitted allegations 1 to 3 and further admitted that the facts of the allegations amounted to a 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 convictions and the facts necessarily implied by the convictions, 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 Bournemouth Crown Court, dated 27 July 2023, which detailed that Mr Taylor had been convicted on 19 November 2021 of 3 counts of making indecent photographs/pseudo photographs of a child and 1 count of possessing extreme pornographic images of intercourse/oral sex with a dead/alive animal. In respect of the convictions, Mr Taylor was sentenced to a 3-year community order, a rehabilitation requirement of 60 days, a sexual harm prevention order, ordered to sign the sexual offenders register and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £60.

The panel noted that Mr Taylor pleaded guilty to the offences.

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

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position;
 - Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
 - Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others...; and
 - not undermining...the rule of law...

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel noted that the individual's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and/or working in an education setting.

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

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Taylor's behaviour in committing the offence/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. Mr Taylor's 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.

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

This was a case involving an offence of 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, which the Advice states is more likely to be considered a relevant offence.

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

The panel further noted that in the statement of agreed facts, signed by Mr Taylor, 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 Taylor 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 panel's findings against Mr Taylor, which involved convictions and a sentence of imprisonment for serious sexual offences involving children, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public. His actions raised obvious and significant public and child protection concerns, as was clearly recognised by the court when imposing sentence.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Taylor 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 Taylor was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

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

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

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;

- the commission of a serious criminal offence, including those that resulted in a conviction or caution, paying particular attention to offences that are 'relevant matters' for the purposes of The Police Act 1997 and criminal record disclosures.
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- sexual misconduct, for example, involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting such activity, including one-off incidents;
- failure to act on evidence that indicated a child's welfare may have been at risk e.g. failed to notify the designated safeguarding lead and/or make a referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies when abuse, neglect and/or harmful cultural practices were identified;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- violating of the rights of pupils;
- actions or behaviours that undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; or that promote political or religious extremism. This would encompass deliberately allowing the exposure of pupils to such actions or behaviours, including through contact with any individual(s) who are widely known to express views that support such activity, for example by inviting any such individuals to speak in schools;
- 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; and
- collusion of concealment including:
 - failure to challenge inappropriate actions, defending inappropriate actions or concealing inappropriate actions; and
 - encouraging others to break rules.

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

There was no evidence that Mr Taylor's actions were not deliberate, and the panel noted that the actions of Mr Taylor took place over a significant period of time.

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

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

The panel noted the sentencing report, that set out Mr Taylor was of good character and stated that he had [REDACTED].

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

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

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Taylor. The serious nature of Mr Taylor's actions for which he was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment (albeit suspended) along with the fact that these were actions taken over a significant period of time involving vulnerable young children 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. One of these behaviours includes any activity

involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child. The panel found that Mr Taylor was responsible for serious criminal misconduct relating to acts against vulnerable young children and the conduct was repetitive in nature over a significant period of time which indicated that a review period was not appropriate in the circumstances.

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 considered 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 provisions for a review period.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

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

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position;
 - Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
 - Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others...; and
 - not undermining...the rule of law...

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Taylor involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of a relevant conviction for making indecent photographs or pseudo photographs of children and possessing extreme pornographic images.

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

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children and safeguard pupils. The panel has observed:

“In the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Taylor, which involved convictions and a sentence of imprisonment for serious sexual offences involving children, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public. His actions raised obvious and significant public and child protection concerns, as was clearly recognised by the court when imposing sentence.”

A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

The panel has not commented on whether Mr Taylor has shown insight and remorse but has noted that Mr Taylor pleaded guilty to the offences of which he was convicted. The panel also noted that the sentencing report set out that “Mr Taylor was of good character and stated that he had [REDACTED].

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel has observed that “public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Taylor was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the finding of a relevant conviction for making indecent images of 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 Taylor himself. The panel has commented that “There was no evidence that Mr Taylor demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both personal and professional conduct and had contributed significantly to the education sector.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Taylor 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 finding that Mr Taylor’s conduct was relevant to his on-going suitability to teach. The panel has commented:

“The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Taylor. The serious nature of Mr Taylor’s actions for which he was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment (albeit suspended) along with the fact that these were actions taken over a significant period of time involving vulnerable young children were significant factors in forming that opinion.”

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

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

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

“The Advice indicates that there are behaviours that, if proved, would militate against the recommendation of a review period. One of these behaviours includes any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child. The panel found that Mr Taylor was responsible for serious criminal misconduct relating to acts against vulnerable young children and the conduct was repetitive in nature over a significant period of time which indicated that a review period was not appropriate in the circumstances.”

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, the serious nature of the offences of which Mr Taylor was convicted mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession.

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 21 January 2025

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