



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Reece Morgan: Professional conduct panel hearing outcome

Panel decision and reasons

March 2025

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Preliminary applications	6
Summary of evidence	7
Documents	7
Witnesses	7
Decision and reasons	8
Findings of fact	9
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	28
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	31

Professional conduct panel hearing decision and recommendations

Teacher:	Mr Reece Morgan
Teacher Ref Number:	3862401
Teacher Date of Birth:	05 February 1992
TRA reference:	19240
Date of determination:	27 March 2025
Former employer:	Seaford College, West Sussex

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 14 October 2024 to 17 October 2024 and 4 March 2025 to 6 March 2025 and 27 March 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Reece Morgan.

From 14 October 2024 to 17 October 2024, the panel members were Mr Adnan Qureshi (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Alan Wells (former teacher panellist) and Mrs Kate Hurley (teacher panellist).

On 4 March 2025 to 6 March 2025, Mr Alan Wells (former teacher panellist) was replaced by Ms Amanda Godfrey (teacher panellist). The panel consisting of Mr Adnan Qureshi, Mrs Kate Hurley and Ms Amanda Godfrey convened again on 27 March 2025.

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Francesca Poole of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Lee Bridges of Kingsley Napley LLP Solicitors.

Mr Morgan was present and was represented by Ms Anna Chestnutt of Lincoln House Chambers.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 13 October 2023.

It was alleged that Mr Morgan was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that:

1. Whilst employed by Seaford College, Mr Morgan failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil A, in that:
 - a) Between in or around 18 June 2019 and 4 July 2019, Mr Morgan exchanged one or more inappropriate email conversations with Pupil A;
 - b) On one or more occasions between January and July 2019, Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A was inappropriate and / or personal and / or intimate, in circumstances where Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.
 - c) On or after 18 June 2019, Mr Morgan contacted Pupil A's personal email address on one or more occasions using his personal email address, in circumstances where he knew or ought to have known that this breached the Staff Code of Conduct.
 - d) On one or more occasions between January and July 2019, in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct, Mr Morgan used one or more of the nicknames set out at i. to viii. for himself and / or Pupil A when emailing Pupil A:
 - i. [REDACTED]
 - ii. 'Reece'
 - iii. 'Reemo'
 - iv. 'The Morganator'
 - v. [Redacted - Nickname 1]
 - vi. 'Reem'
 - vii. 'Big Morge'
 - viii. [REDACTED]
 - e) On or around 7 July 2019, Mr Morgan cycled to Pupil A's house to drop off a textbook and/ or attempted to hug Pupil A, in circumstances where he was provided with instructions on 5 July 2019 to not stay in contact with the pupils he had helped.
2. Mr Morgan failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil B, in that:
 - a) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil B was inappropriate and / or personal and / or intimate in

circumstances where he knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

- b) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, Mr Morgan contacted Pupil B using Instagram and/ or WhatsApp, in circumstances where he knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.
 - c) In or around August 2019, Mr Morgan met with Pupil B for a coffee and / or went for a walk on the beach and / or hugged Pupil B, in circumstances where he knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.
 - d) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, Mr Morgan flirted with and/ or intimated that a relationship was possible with Pupil B, in circumstances where he knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.
3. Between 5 July 2019 and 24 February 2020, Mr Morgan failed to disclose his communications with Pupil B to Colleague A and / or Colleague B.
4. Mr Morgan's conduct set out in allegation 1(a)-(e):
- a) was sexually motivated;
 - b) demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A.
5. Mr Morgan's conduct set out in allegation 2(a)-(d):
- a) was sexually motivated;
 - b) demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil B.

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 1a, 1c, 1d, 2b, 2c, and 3.

In respect of allegation 1b, Mr Morgan admitted that his contact with Pupil A was inappropriate and / or personal, but denied that it was intimate.

In respect of allegation 1d, Mr Morgan admitted that he dropped off a textbook at Pupil A's house, but denied that he attempted to hug Pupil A.

In respect of allegation 2a, Mr Morgan admitted that his contact with Pupil B was inappropriate and / or personal, but denied that it was intimate.

Mr Morgan denied allegations 2d, 4a, 4b, 5a and 5b.

Mr Morgan accepts that the allegations admitted amount to unacceptable professional conduct. Mr Morgan accepts that the allegations admitted bring the profession into disrepute.

Preliminary applications

The panel considered an application from the teacher's representative for the late admission of a document, namely a testimonial from Mr Morgan's [REDACTED] running to three pages. The panel noted that there was no objection from the presenting officer to the admission of the document. The panel considered it would be fair to admit the evidence as it may reasonably be considered to be relevant to the issues raised in the papers and/or to go towards Mr Morgan's character. The panel noted that the document was hearsay evidence, however concluded it was a sufficient safeguard for a hearsay warning to be given before the panel's determination on the facts. The panel were satisfied that any imbalance caused to the presenting officer in being unable to cross-examine the witness could be addressed by the panel's decision in due course as to what weight it should attach to the evidence. Accordingly, the panel decided to admit the document.

An application was made at the end of the teacher's case for the admission of two pdfs containing emails between Mr Morgan and Mother A (the mother of Pupil A) and Father A (the father of Pupil A) dated 7 August 2019 and 13 August 2019. The panel noted that the emails were clearly relevant to the timeline of the events and to issues raised in the examination of Mother A and Mr Morgan, and was particularly relevant to the credibility of Mother A. The panel however considered that it would be unfair to admit the evidence in circumstances where Mother A was unable to comment upon them. The panel therefore decided to admit the documents on the condition that Mother A could be recalled to give evidence as to the content of the emails. Once the panel were satisfied that Mother A would be recalled, the panel decided to admit the documents.

A further application was made at the end of the Teacher's case for the admission of a letter from Mr Morgan's [REDACTED]. The presenting officer objected to the application on the grounds that it would not be fair to admit the evidence as it was not admissible on the grounds that it contained what appeared to be 'expert opinion' on Mr Morgan's character. The teacher's representative and the presenting officer agreed instead to deal with this document by way of an agreed fact to be read as part of Mr Morgan's case. An agreed fact was thereby provided to the panel [REDACTED].

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

- Section 1: Chronology and anonymised pupil list – pages 4 to 6
- Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 7 to 9
- Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 10 to 132
- Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 133 to 341

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

- A testimonial from Mr Morgan's [REDACTED] – pages 342 to 344
- Two pdfs containing emails between Mother A and Father A and Mr Morgan dated 7 August 2019 and 13 August 2019 – pages 345 to 346

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2018, (the "Procedures").

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called by the presenting officer:

Witness 1 - Colleague B

Witness 2 - Mother A

Mr Morgan also gave evidence.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Morgan was employed at Seaford College (the “School”) in September 2017 as a teacher of English with Classics and Latin. In 2019, Mr Morgan resigned from his role to take up a new job in Japan. Mr Morgan was employed by the School until 31 August 2019.

On 5 September 2019, a meeting was held between Pupil A, Mother A and the School’s designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) in respect of concerns around Mr Morgan’s behaviour towards Pupil A. On 24 September 2019, Mother A provided the School with a number of emails between Mr Morgan and Pupil A. The School made a referral to the LADO and the case was handed to the police for investigation. The police reported that the criminal threshold was not reached, but requested that the School investigate the matter.

On 31 January 2019 an interview was held with Mr Morgan. A second interview was held with Mr Morgan on 11 February 2020 upon Mr Morgan’s request.

On 7 October 2019, Pupil B disclosed an alleged relationship with Mr Morgan to a member of staff, who in turn reported the matter to the DSLs, including Colleague A. On 12 February 2020, further concerns were raised by a staff member in relation to Mr Morgan’s behaviour with another pupil, Pupil B. On 24 February 2020, Colleague B held an interview with Pupil B. Separately, on the same day, the School held an interview with Mr Morgan.

Following the investigation, the matter was referred to the TRA.

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. Whilst employed by Seaford College, you failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil A, in that:

(a) Between in or around 18 June 2019 and 4 July 2019, you exchanged one or more inappropriate email conversations with Pupil A;

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 1(a).

The panel had before them in the bundle in excess of 40 emails dated between 18 June 2019 and 4 July 2019 between Mr Morgan and Pupil A.

The panel considered the wording of the allegation and the nature of the word 'inappropriate'. The panel took into account the nature, frequency and timing of the emails, noting many took place late in the evening. The panel noted that whilst some emails referred to academic work, the overwhelming purpose of the emails was not academic. The panel noted that academic references were often masquerading attempts to facilitate a deeper connection with Pupil A that went beyond what would be expected in a teacher-pupil relationship. The panel also noted that Mr Morgan had made personal comments about Pupil A on a number of occasions, using language such as 'sweet' to describe her. The panel were particularly conscious that the nature of the messages became increasingly more inappropriate over time. To provide an example of this, the panel noted that the earliest email before them was dated 18 June 2019 at 16.44 from Mr Morgan to Pupil A which read *"Hi Are you out for Friday's double lesson...? Best regards Mr. Morgan"*. The panel noted that the last email they had before them on 4 July 2019 at 00.19 from Mr Morgan to Pupil A read *'No need to thank me for what comes so naturally! [REDACTED] Do please badger your parents in terms of preliminary dates – I'll come at the drop of a hat but it would be nice to have some idea of what they're after. Sleep tight, [REDACTED]. Reece P.S. [REDACTED]*

The panel paid specific regard to references made by Mr Morgan to his relationship with Pupil A, describing them as a *'dynamic duo'* and making comments such as *'I'm very intrigued as to what your Reece will look like'* and *'Reece is a tenacious fucker. He's not going to let you just disappear and he will fight to keep you around. You don't need any more conversations to establish your significance in my life, so just deal with the fact that you're stuck with me.'*

The panel considered the email conversations on the whole and concluded that, on balance, Mr Morgan exchanged one or more inappropriate email conversations with Pupil A. The panel therefore found allegation 1(a) proven.

(b) On one or more occasions between January and July 2019, your contact with Pupil A was inappropriate and / or personal and / or intimate, in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this was not appropriate.

Mr Morgan admitted this allegation, but denied that his contact with Pupil A was intimate.

In considering this allegation 1(b), in addition to the panel's findings of fact set out at 1(a) above, the panel also considered the additional evidence of Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A between January and July 2019.

The panel had before it a screenshot of two messages from Mr Morgan's Instagram account dated 6 July at 3.07pm and of which reads *'Hey you –[REDACTED] I'm cycling out for lunch at The Red Lion on Monday so I'll pop AVftB through your door then; I'll send you what to focus on after that for neeking prep.'* *'Looking forward to it :)'[sic]* Whilst the panel did not have the year that this message was sent, the panel understood in the context of the evidence that this was sent on 6 July 2019.

A screen shot of a message from Mr Morgan which reads *'Lovely to see you as ever, [REDACTED] however briefly, A quick reminder: Focus on stage directions above all else; masculinity as portrayed by Marco/Rodolpho (end of Act One and start of Act Two are perfect for that); Catherine's 'leaking'/sublimation of urges; as extension, read 'Tragedy of the Common Man' online and get ready to discuss its significance. If you're feeling fruity, please learn Killer Mike's verses from 'Oh my Darling (Don't Cry)' – keen to push your lyricism and it's a nice intro to metrical splits. Have an amazing time with'*

The panel noted that they might not have had a full copy of this message before them.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan accepted that he had sent these messages over Instagram to Pupil A.

The panel also heard evidence from Mother A and Mr Morgan about Mr Morgan's conduct at a School event known as [REDACTED] which took place [REDACTED] during the day and into the evening. The panel heard from Mr Morgan that at this event, Mr Morgan had given Pupil A a gift [REDACTED] outside the boarding house where Mr Morgan resided. This evidence was corroborated by Mother A, who recalled Pupil A sharing with her in the car on the way home from the event that she had been invited back to the boarding house by Mr Morgan and had been given a gift by Mr Morgan outside the boarding house. Mother A accepted in cross examination that Pupil A may not have been directly invited to the boarding house but that this may have been inferred. Mother A stated that Pupil A had been left feeling awkward about the event and hadn't known whether she should have been following Mr Morgan up to his room. The panel

were mindful that they had not heard from Pupil A, and that no reason was given for Pupil A's non-attendance. However, whilst the panel noted that this was hearsay evidence, it was not the sole or decisive evidence of Mr Morgan giving a gift [REDACTED] to Pupil A at the boarding house. The panel noted that this was supported by Mr Morgan's oral evidence which was tested on cross-examination, and Pupil A's statement to the police which noted that Mr Morgan took Pupil A back to the boarding house and asked her 'up to his room' which she declined, following which Mr Morgan went and got [REDACTED] which he gave to her. The panel considered whether it would be fair to admit the hearsay evidence in light of the other supporting and consistent evidence before them and concluded that the evidence of Pupil A and Mother A was broadly consistent in that both described that Pupil A had followed or was invited back to the boarding house. The panel therefore found on balance that Pupil A had gone to the boarding house where Mr Morgan gave her a gift [REDACTED].

Mr Morgan denied that giving Pupil A [REDACTED] was an intimate act. However, the panel considered the nature of the incident, specifically that the gift was given at the boarding house where Mr Morgan resided and away from the rest of the crowd at [REDACTED]. Mr Morgan could not recall whether he had invited Pupil A back to the boarding house or if she had followed him there to give it to her. The panel found the giving of a gift in these circumstances in this location to be deeply personal, such that it was intimate. The panel noted that whilst Mr Morgan may not have felt that this act was intimate, that teachers ought to be mindful of how gift giving of this sort could have been viewed by Pupil A.

The panel heard from Mr Morgan that he had hugged Pupil A at [REDACTED] in front of her parents, as she had been crying as Mr Morgan was leaving the School to move to Japan. Mr Morgan gave evidence that this had been in front of Mother A and Father A. The panel noted that Mother A had not mentioned that Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A at [REDACTED] in her evidence, but that when asked by the teacher's representative in cross examination whether the only time Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A was at [REDACTED], Mother A responded "no". The panel noted that Mother A had given evidence that an alleged hug took place outside Family A's home on Sunday 7 July 2019. The panel noted that Mother A's denial that the hug at [REDACTED] was the only hug was in light of Mother A's evidence that an *additional* hug that took place outside Family A's home. As a result, the panel found on balance that Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A at [REDACTED]. The panel noted that Mr Morgan had given evidence that Pupil A had been crying as Mr Morgan was leaving. Whilst the panel found on balance that the hug took place in front of Mother A and Father A, the panel did not feel that this made the hug appropriate. The panel found on balance that in the context of the messages, the gift giving and Pupil A's emotional reaction to Mr Morgan leaving, the hug was inappropriate and personal in nature.

In respect of the alleged hug that took place outside of Family A's home, the panel noted that Mr Morgan had denied that this hug took place at all. The panel were mindful that whilst Mother A had given evidence that at the time of Mr Morgan's attendance at Family A's home, Mother A was on the landing where she could not be seen listening to and observing Pupil A at the door. Mother A accepted that she had not seen the hug take place between Pupil A and Mr Morgan due to her position on the landing. Mother A saw Pupil A move, but she did not see a hug or Mr Morgan's arms around the back of Pupil A. Mother A described Pupil A's reaction to the incident, specifically that Pupil A had been very upset and had told her mother that a hug had taken place and that Mr Morgan was sweaty and had lingered and that she had felt repulsed. The panel noted that Mother A had faced extensive questioning on whether she had seen the hug. The panel noted that whilst Mother A had given evidence that she strongly believed her daughter and that she was sure that the hug had taken place, Mother A had not gone so far as to say she had seen the hug. The panel found Mother A to be a credible witness.

The panel were mindful therefore that the evidence that the hug took place was hearsay, as it was information shared by Pupil A with Mother A, and the panel had not heard from Pupil A. The panel did however play close scrutiny to the evidence and noted that Mother A had spoken to Pupil A immediately after Mr Morgan had attended Family A's home. The panel also noted that Mother A's evidence was not the sole or decisive evidence of the hug. The panel had before them evidence of Pupil A's report to the police of the event, which described the hug in the same terms as Mother A's evidence to the panel, namely that Mr Morgan was sweaty and that Pupil A had felt that she had to hug him and that he did not let go for some time. The panel noted this evidence was compatible with factors presented in other evidence, and were therefore content with its reliability. The panel therefore considered on balance that it would be fair to admit the evidence. The panel took into account that this evidence was hearsay when attributing weight to the evidence. The panel weighed this evidence up against Mr Morgan's oral evidence, in which he denied that the hug had taken place at all. Whilst the panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted that a hug had taken place on another occasion [REDACTED] the panel noted that Mr Morgan was keen to establish that this had taken place in front of Mother A and Father A. The panel therefore considered Mr Morgan felt that there was a difference between contact with a pupil in front of witnesses and contact with a pupil in a more private setting. The panel preferred the evidence of Mother A and the Police record of Pupil A's interview included in the bundle. The panel therefore decided on balance that Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A outside Family A's home on Sunday 7 July 2019.

The panel heard from Mr Morgan that he had identified with Pupil A and that he had felt an overwhelming need to keep her safe. Mr Morgan accepted that he was close to Pupil A, and that although his intentions were to support Pupil A, that his contact with Pupil A had become inappropriate and personal.

The panel noted that they had already found allegation 1(a) proven, and on this basis alone, the panel had found that Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A was inappropriate. The panel also noted that they had found many of Mr Morgan's emails to Pupil A to be personal in nature.

When considering the word intimate, the panel noted that Mr Morgan denied that his contact with Pupil A was intimate. The panel noted that Mr Morgan's evidence was that he felt that the word intimacy had a sexual dimension. Mr Morgan denied pursuing a sexual relationship with Pupil A. However, the panel did not consider the word intimate to be synonymous with the word sexual. The panel found intimate to mean personal and private in nature.

The panel considered their findings of fact in relation to Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A, including the messages, gift giving and the hug outside Family A's home. The panel found on balance that Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A had been inappropriate, personal and intimate. When considering the hug at [REDACTED], the panel felt that this was distinguishable from the hug outside Family A's home that the panel believed to be intimate. Whilst the panel felt that the hug at [REDACTED] was inappropriate and personal in nature, as the hug took place in the presence of Pupil A's parents, the panel did not feel that it was 'private' in nature and did not therefore find on balance that the hug at [REDACTED] was intimate.

The panel were mindful of Mr Morgan's admission that he had acted inappropriately and noted that he had accepted that this was the case throughout his evidence. The panel noted that Mr Morgan had given evidence that with hindsight he had known that his contact was inappropriate.

In addition, when considering inappropriateness, the panel also had regard to the Staff Code of Conduct, specifically the following paragraphs:

'2. It is understood that there may be times when physical conduct may be necessary between student and teacher – for example a sports teacher or a specialist performing arts teacher may need to touch a pupil to demonstrate correct technique. There must be, however, no unnecessary physical contact.'

Teachers and staff must be wary of physical contact that might be misinterpreted by a student, especially in "one to one" situations or circumstances in which a student might have a physical aversion to being touched.'

10. When speaking to pupils on a one to one basis staff should try to avoid rooms with closed doors (and windows in doors should always be kept clear). Depending on the circumstances it may be good practice to have another member of staff present or nearby. There should always be another member of staff within calling distance. Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position'

with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

11. Teachers and staff should not, as a rule, entertain students in their homes, although there are occasions when this might be acceptable for academic, pastoral or social reasons. Teachers and staff should not entertain students individually in their homes and if they do so careful thought must be given to which rooms might be appropriate. It would never be acceptable for a teacher or member of staff to allow a student into their bedroom.

“13. It is acceptable for teachers and students to communicate when necessary on College matters by email, telephone and text, but such communications must be:

a. Only made through College property and using the College email address except in an emergency

b. Restricted to what is necessary on College business

c. Appropriate

d. Professional

e. Take heed of the guidelines offered above with regard to language, and

f. Only consist of form and content, which a parent or Deputy Head would regard as acceptable.

Staff and teachers must not have current students as ‘Friends’ on their social networking sites nor should they agree to be ‘Friends’ on students’ social networking sites. Social networking sites are not an appropriate way of staff and teachers to communicate with students or vice versa. Texting should only be used when other forms of communication are not possible.”

The panel noted that Mr Morgan remained employed by the School until 31 August 2019 and that as a teacher at the School, Mr Morgan would have, or at the very least ought to have, been aware of the Staff Code of Conduct. The panel also noted that Mr Morgan had accepted that messaging Pupil A on Instagram was in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct. The Panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan was aware of the Staff Code of Conduct, or at the very least, ought to have been aware of the Staff Code of Conduct. The panel therefore concluded on balance that Mr Morgan’s contact with Pupil A as found proven was in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct and consequently that Mr Morgan ought to have known that it was inappropriate.

Additionally, the panel heard from Colleague B that he had sent Mr Morgan an email on 5 July 2019 instructing him not to stay in contact with pupils. The panel had before them an email dated 5 July 2019 which corresponded with Colleague B’s evidence. The panel

noted that Mr Morgan had responded to Colleague B's email on the same day, noting that *"if any Seaford pupils do come seeking help, I'll get in touch with you and [Colleague A] straight away"*. The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan had been provided with instructions on 5 July 2019 not to stay in contact with pupils he had helped. The panel found Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil A post 5 July 2019 to be in breach of this instruction.

The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that his contact with Pupil A as found proven was not appropriate.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(b) proven.

(c) On or after 18 June 2019, you contacted Pupil A's personal email address on one or more occasions using your personal email address, in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this breached the Staff Code of Conduct.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan admitted allegation 1(c). The panel had sight of a wealth of email correspondence between Mr Morgan and Pupil A. The panel noted its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1(a). Whilst Pupil A's and / or Mr Morgan's email addresses were often redacted throughout the copies of the email correspondence before the panel, the panel noted Mr Morgan's admission that he had contacted Pupil A's personal email address using his own personal email address. Mr Morgan gave evidence that this had not always been intentional, and that he had used his personal phone to access his work emails and therefore he had not always taken note of which email account he had been using to contact Pupil A.

The panel had regard to an email from Mr Morgan to Pupil A on 29 June 2019 at 19:44 which included the following statement *'Evening you, (Again a shift in distance but your mum has a point – my school email will be deleted at some point so might as well make the jump)'*. The panel understood this to mean that Mr Morgan had intentionally shifted from using his school email address to his personal email address.

Additionally, the panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted that he used his personal email address to continue contacting Pupil A. The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan had contacted Pupil A's personal email address on one or more occasions using his personal email address.

The panel had a copy of the Staff Code of Conduct before them, and paid specific regard to paragraph 13 as set out at allegation 1(b).

As considered above in relation to allegation 1(b), the panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted that messaging Pupil A on Instagram was in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct. Whilst the wording of the allegation relates to contacting Pupil A using personal email addresses, and not via Instagram, the Panel therefore found on balance that Mr

Morgan was aware of the Staff Code of Conduct, or at the very least, ought to have been aware of the Staff Code of Conduct.

Taking into account the panel's findings in relation to allegation 1(a) and 1(b), specifically that on or after 18 June 2019, Mr Morgan had contacted Pupil A's personal email address on one or more occasions using his personal email address, the panel found allegation 1(c) proven.

(d) On one or more occasions between January and July 2019, in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct, you used one or more of the nicknames set out at i. to viii. for yourself and / or Pupil A when emailing Pupil A

- i. [REDACTED]
- ii. 'Reece'
- iii. 'Reemo'
- iv. 'The Morganator'
- v. [Nickname 1]
- vi. 'Reem'
- vii. 'Big Morge'
- viii. [REDACTED]

Mr Morgan admitted this allegation.

The panel reviewed the emails before them and found Mr Morgan had used all of the nicknames set out at i. to iv, and vi to viii. on at least one occasion. The panel did not find evidence of Mr Morgan using v. [REDACTED – Nickname 1] and vi. Reem.

The panel noted that under paragraph 13(c), (d), (e) and (f) of the Staff Code of Conduct, communications between teachers and students were required to be *'appropriate', 'professional', 'take heed of the guidelines offered above with regard to language', and 'only consist of form and content, which a parent or Deputy Head would regard as acceptable'*. In light of the panel's findings at 1(a) and (b), the panel found on balance that the use of nicknames breached all of the paragraphs 13(c), (d), (e) and (f). In respect of language, at paragraph 8 of the staff code of conduct *'Teachers and staff must not swear, ridicule, verbally abuse students, gossip, discuss third parties or engage in salacious conversations. Such conduct can lead to misunderstandings or cause confusion in roles with undesirable consequences. In general teachers and staff ought to refrain from using student's nicknames.'* The panel found that the use of nicknames breached this provision and further lead to misunderstanding and caused confusion in respect of Mr Morgan's role.

On the basis of the nicknames found proven, the panel found on balance that these were in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct. The panel therefore found allegation 1(d) proven.

(e) On or around 7 July 2019, you cycled to Pupil A's house to drop off a textbook and/ or attempted to hug Pupil A, in circumstances where you were provided with instructions on 5 July 2019 to not stay in contact with the pupils you had helped.

Mr Morgan admitted this allegation, but denied that he attempted to hug Pupil A.

The panel heard from Colleague B that he had sent Mr Morgan an email on 5 July 2019 instructing him not to stay in contact with pupils. The panel had before them an email dated 5 July 2019 which corresponded with Colleague B's evidence. The panel noted that Mr Morgan had responded to Colleague B's email on the same day, noting that *"if any Seaford pupils do come seeking help, I'll get in touch with you and [Colleague A] straight away"*. The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan had been provided with instructions on 5 July 2019 not to stay in contact with pupils he had helped.

The panel had regard to the Instagram messages Mr Morgan had sent Pupil A, noting that on 6 July 2019, Mr Morgan had written *"I'm cycling out for lunch at The Red Lion on Monday so I'll pop AVftB through your door then;" [sic]*. The panel note above their findings in respect of the hug that took place on 7 July 2019, specifically that the panel found on balance that Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A outside Family A's home after dropping off a book with Pupil A. The panel noted that this was only two days after Mr Morgan received instruction not to contact pupils. The panel therefore found on balance that on or around 7 July 2019, Mr Morgan cycled to Pupil A's house to drop off a textbook and/or attempted to hug Pupil A, in circumstances where he was provided with instructions to not stay in contact with the pupils he had helped and had acknowledged these instructions on 5 July 2019.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(e) proven.

2. You failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil B, in that:

(a) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, your contact with Pupil B was inappropriate and / or personal and / or intimate in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 2(a), but denied that his contact with Pupil B was intimate.

The panel had regard to a statement in the bundle from a teaching staff member to the designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) at the School, one being Colleague A. This set out that on 7 October 2019, Pupil B had informed the teaching staff member that she had kept in touch with Mr Morgan following his departure from the School after the end of summer term in 2019. The teaching staff member explained that Pupil B had disclosed that she had been having a relationship with Mr Morgan and that he was going to visit her at Christmas. The teaching staff member notes that approximately 40 minutes after their initial conversation, Pupil B returned to the teaching staff member to show them a message they had just received from Mr Morgan where he had written that they (being

Pupil B and Mr Morgan) needed to be careful about managing meeting up as the 'P.H' are trying to find out if he still had contact with students at the School. The teaching staff member's notes state that they believed that P.H. meant the Pink House (this being the School's pastoral care hub).

The panel also had regard to a statement of Colleague B that, on 12 February 2020, further information was passed to Colleague B about Pupil B and that on 24 February 2020, both Pupil B and Mr Morgan were interviewed separately.

The panel had regard to a set of notes which were undated and unsigned but were provided by way of exhibit to Colleague B's statement as the 24 February 2020 note from the interview with Pupil B. These set out that Pupil B had emailed Mr Morgan at the end of summer term to say goodbye and to wish him luck with his move to Japan. Pupil B had stated that Mr Morgan had responded wishing to continue communication, and the two had kept in touch. Pupil B had stated to Colleague B that Mr Morgan had intimated that he wanted to engage in a relationship and that the two had been for a coffee and walk on the beach around the time results came out, following which Mr Morgan had attended Pupil B's house to speak to her mother to address Pupil B's mother's concerns about Pupil B entering **into** a relationship with Mr Morgan. Pupil B confirmed that she had shared a hug with Mr Morgan and that communications had continued following Mr Morgan's departure to Japan. Pupil B had confirmed that the pair had flirted and intimated that a relationship was a possibility but ultimately contact was broken off in December, before a natural relationship could take place.

The panel acknowledged the notes dated 7 October 2019 and 24 February 2020 of conversations with Pupil B were both hearsay, and that they had not had the opportunity to question Pupil B upon the content set out therein. The panel were not provided with a reason as to why Pupil B could not attend to give evidence to the panel, however the panel noted that the absence of a good reason did not automatically result in the exclusion of the evidence. The panel noted however that neither note was the sole or decisive evidence before them, as they had before them both notes detailing two separate conversations by two different members of staff with Pupil B on different dates, both of which were largely consistent, as well as Mr Morgan's own evidence of the contact between them. The panel noted that whilst they had not heard from Pupil B, they had heard evidence from Colleague B who undertook the interview with Pupil B on 24 February 2020 who gave evidence to the panel that the contents of the notes were an accurate reflection of Pupil B's disclosures to Colleague B. The panel paid specific regard to the consistency between Pupil B's accounts in both the disclosure to the teaching staff member on 7 October 2019 and to Colleague B on 24 February 2020. The panel weighed up the factors and considered that it would be fair to admit the evidence, specifically the notes dated 7 October 2019 and 24 February 2020, in all the circumstances. The panel took into account that the evidence was hearsay when applying the weight they attributed to this evidence.

The panel noted that they did not have before them any messages between Pupil B and Mr Morgan. The panel noted however that Mr Morgan had accepted that he had been messaging Pupil B around this time and that the messaging had been daily.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan had confirmed both in his interview with the School and in oral evidence that he had continued to communicate with Pupil B via Instagram following his departure from the School. Mr Morgan accepted that he had met Pupil B and gone for a coffee and a walk on the beach. Mr Morgan accepted that following this encounter, he had hugged Pupil B.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan and Pupil B's evidence appeared to differ, in that Mr Morgan had denied that a physical or intimate relationship was intimated and that Mr Morgan had given evidence that it was Mr Morgan who had ended the relationship. Mr Morgan's evidence was that his relationship with Pupil B was nothing more than a friendship. Mr Morgan gave evidence that Pupil B was a very helpful friend [REDACTED].

The panel heard evidence from Mr Morgan that he had believed that Pupil B [REDACTED] Pupil B was therefore a student at the School at the time of her contact with Mr Morgan over Instagram. The panel found it hard to believe that Mr Morgan had not known that Pupil B was still a pupil of the School given that the pair had been in daily contact.

The panel also noted that Mr Morgan's oral evidence was at odds with Mr Morgan's interview with Colleague B on 24 February 2020, whereby Mr Morgan had said that he had thought that Pupil B had left the School, so he didn't think to mention her when he had been asked by Colleague B if he had any contact with any other students. The panel noted that at this point, Mr Morgan had not said he had thought she was [REDACTED] just that he thought she had left the School. The panel took this into account when considering Mr Morgan's credibility.

The panel concluded that on balance, Mr Morgan had begun messaging Pupil B in the weeks that followed her final term [REDACTED] in July 2019, despite the instruction from Colleague B on 5 July 2019 to refrain from contacting pupils of the School. The panel took into account their own knowledge of the teaching profession and the requirement to ensure that relationships with pupils were appropriate. The panel found on balance that it was inappropriate contact for Mr Morgan to have communicated with Pupil B on a daily basis, to have met up with her on her own and to have attended Pupil B's home to alleviate her parent's concerns that their relationship was inappropriate. The panel noted that as a previous teacher at Pupil B's School, Mr Morgan remained in a position of trust and that the power imbalance between Mr Morgan and Pupil B was such that the conduct described was inappropriate, and that Mr Morgan ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

The panel noted that Pupil B had told Colleague B that she was in touch with Mr Morgan every day until September and that the contact '*got less*' after this, '*maybe twice weekly*' until Pupil B broke things off in December. Although the panel noted that Mr Morgan's evidence was that he broke off the contact in November, the panel were mindful that in any event, the relationship ended shortly after it was disclosed to the School by Pupil B on 7 October 2019. The panel felt that this indicated that Mr Morgan had known that his conduct had been inappropriate and that this had been a weighing factor in the termination of the relationship.

The panel further considered whether the conduct was personal and / or intimate. The panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted that the conduct was personal. As to whether or not the conduct was intimate, the panel noted that Mr Morgan had, as with allegation 1(b) denied this allegation on the basis that intimate meant sexual. The panel were mindful that they did not have copies of the messages between Mr Morgan and Pupil B and that they had little evidence of the content of those messages. The panel noted that Mr Morgan's evidence and Pupil B's evidence as to the nature of those messages differed, noting that Mr Morgan gave evidence that Pupil [REDACTED] and Pupil B's evidence was that the messages were akin to 'keeping in touch', 'flirting' and that Mr Morgan had intimated that a relationship was possible.

The panel adopted their earlier definition of the term intimate, and noted that despite the evidence as to the nature of the messages differing, Mr Morgan had accepted that he had messaged with Pupil B almost daily between the period of a few weeks after the summer holidays up to December. Although the panel did not have copies of the messages between Mr Morgan and Pupil B before them, they considered that communication on that level of frequency and whether or not [REDACTED] or intimating that a relationship was possible, the content was both private and personal in nature. The panel concluded that there was sufficient evidence for them to find on balance that Mr Morgan's conduct had been intimate.

When considering whether Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate, the panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted this allegation. Whilst the panel noted Mr Morgan's evidence that he had not known Pupil B was still a student at the School, the panel found that the relationship as accepted had initiated whilst Mr Morgan was still employed as a teacher and at best, in the days following the end of Pupil B's final [REDACTED] term. The panel noted that Mr Morgan had been asked not to contact pupils at the School, and that despite Mr Morgan's belief that Pupil B was no longer a pupil at the School, on balance, the panel took into account their own experience of the teaching profession and noted that Mr Morgan ought to have known that contact with a former pupil of this sort in circumstances where Mr Morgan remained in a position of power would be inappropriate.

The panel therefore found on balance that on one or more occasions Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil B was inappropriate and / or personal and / or intimate, in circumstances where he knew or ought to have known it was inappropriate.

The panel therefore found allegation 2(a) proven.

(b) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, you contacted Pupil B using Instagram and/ or WhatsApp, in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

Mr Morgan accepted allegation 2(b).

The panel noted their findings in respect of 2(a), specifically that the notes from the teaching staff member's discussions with Pupil B on 7 October 2019 and Colleague B's interview with Pupil B dated 24 February 2020. Both notes stated that Pupil B had said that Mr Morgan and Pupil B had kept in touch over messaging applications, and the panel noted that Mr Morgan had accepted in oral evidence that he had exchanged messages with Pupil B almost daily.

Within the notes dated 24 February 2020, Pupil B stated that communications '*normally took place over Instagram although sometimes a whatsapp call*'. The panel therefore found on balance that on one or more occasions between July and December 2019 that Mr Morgan had contacted Pupil B using Instagram and/or WhatsApp.

The panel noted that they had heard evidence from Colleague A that Pupil B remained a pupil of the School in the academic year 2019/20. The panel found on balance that Mr Morgan's contact with Pupil B via Instagram and WhatsApp was therefore inappropriate, as he had been asked on 5 July 2019 not to communicate with pupils of the School.

The panel noted their findings in respect of allegation 2(a), specifically that Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that his contact with Pupil B had been inappropriate. The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that communicating with Pupil B as found proven was inappropriate.

The panel found on that basis, allegation 2(b) was also proven.

(c) In or around August 2019, you met with Pupil B for a coffee and / or went for a walk on the beach and / or hugged Pupil B, in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 2(c).

The panel noted their findings in respect of the evidence of Mr Morgan and Pupil B set out above at 2(a) and 2(b). The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan had met with Pupil B for a coffee and a walk on the beach, following which Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil B. The panel noted Mr Morgan's acceptance that he ought to have known

that this was inappropriate and further noted their findings in respect of allegation 2(a) and 2(b) above, specifically that Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that his contact with Pupil B had been inappropriate.

The panel therefore found on balance that as Mr Morgan was still employed by the School at the time he met with Pupil B, that Mr Morgan knew or ought to have known that meeting up with Pupil B for a coffee and a walk on the beach and engaging in a hug with Pupil B was inappropriate.

The panel therefore found allegation 2(c) proven.

(d) On one or more occasions between July and December 2019, you flirted with and/ or intimated that a relationship was possible with Pupil B, in circumstances where you knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

Mr Morgan denied allegation 2(d).

The panel had regard to the notes of a teaching staff member's notification to the designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) at the School, one being Colleague A in the bundle dated 7 October 2019. The panel noted that Pupil B had disclosed that she had been having a relationship with Mr Morgan and that he was going to visit her at Christmas.

The panel also had regard to a set of notes dated 24 February 2020 which detail an interview between Colleague B and Pupil B, whereby Pupil B told Colleague B that the messages between Pupil B and Mr Morgan 'became more personal and flirtatious' and that Mr Morgan had intimated that he wanted to engage in a relationship with Pupil B.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan denied this allegation and had given oral evidence that he had not flirted with Pupil B and that there was no intention of a relationship with Pupil B from his side.

In respect of whether Mr Morgan flirted with Pupil B, the panel noted that they did not have before them the messages between Mr Morgan and Pupil B. The panel were mindful that Pupil B had only mentioned that the messages were flirtatious in the conversation with Colleague B dated 24 February 2020, and that the note of 7 October 2019 did not make reference to flirting or flirtatious messages. The panel therefore could not find on balance that Mr Morgan had flirted with Pupil B.

In respect of whether Mr Morgan intimated that a relationship was possible with Pupil B, the panel noted that both the notes of 7 October 2019 and 24 February 2020 contained disclosures from Pupil B that her and Mr Morgan were either having a relationship or that Mr Morgan had intimated that a relationship was possible. The panel noted that they had dealt with the admissibility of the notes at allegation 2(a) above, and found these to be admissible.

Although Mr Morgan denied in his oral evidence that a relationship had been intimated, the panel had regard to Mr Morgan's acceptance that he was in daily contact with Pupil B. The panel noted that when questioned by Colleague B on 24 February 2020, Mr Morgan had accepted that he had been to visit Pupil B's parents *'to level it all out'*, noting that *'I thought it would be suspect to carry on without doing so, so I went to see them. We spoke to the parents to acknowledge that there is a chemistry there, but not a forbidden fruit thing'*. The panel felt that Mr Morgan's actions in visiting Pupil B's parents demonstrated that he knew that his contact with Pupil B intimated that a relationship was possible and inappropriate. The panel noted that Mr Morgan ought to have known that his actions and contact with Pupil B as found proven may lead Pupil B to believe that a relationship would be possible. The panel therefore found on balance that Mr Morgan had intimated that a relationship was possible with Pupil B. The panel further considered that Mr Morgan had accepted that he had met with Pupil B in person for a walk on the beach and a coffee, and that he further had continued daily correspondence with her from the beginning of the summer break to around November / December. The panel concluded that on balance, that Mr Morgan ought to have been aware that these factors also intimated that a relationship was possible with Pupil B.

The panel noted their findings in respect of allegation 2(a), specifically that Mr Morgan remained in a position of power and that Mr Morgan had been instructed by Colleague B on 5 July 2019 not to contact pupils of the School following the end of term. The panel took into account their experience in the teaching profession and concluded Mr Morgan ought to know that intimating that a relationship was possible with Pupil B was inappropriate, in light of the power imbalance between Pupil B and Mr Morgan.

The panel therefore found allegation 2(d) proven.

4. Your conduct set out in allegation 1(a)-(e):

(b) demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 4(b).

The panel noted their findings in respect of allegation 1(a)-(e), specifically in relation to the inappropriate nature of Mr Morgan's conduct. The panel found on balance that Mr Morgan's conduct set out in allegation 1(a)-(e) demonstrated elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil A.

The panel therefore found allegation 4(b) proven.

5. Your conduct set out in allegation 2(a)-(d):

(b) demonstrates elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil B.

Mr Morgan accepted allegation 5(b).

The panel noted their findings in respect of allegation 2(a)-(d), specifically in relation to the inappropriate nature of Mr Morgan's conduct. The panel found on balance that Mr Morgan's conduct set out in allegation 2(a)-(d) demonstrated elements of building an inappropriate relationship with Pupil B.

The panel therefore found allegation 5(b) proven.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you not proven, for these reasons:

3. Between 5 July 2019 and 24 February 2020, you failed to disclose his communications with Pupil B to Colleague A and / or Colleague B.

Mr Morgan admitted allegation 3.

The panel referred to its findings that the messaging between Mr Morgan and Pupil B commenced around the end of term, when Pupil B was in her final year at the School.

The panel noted that when interviewed about his contact with Pupil A on 31 January 2020 and 11 February 2020, Mr Morgan failed to disclose his communications with Pupil B to Colleague B. The panel noted that on 31 January 2020, Mr Morgan was asked whether he had communicated with any pupils at the School since leaving the School. Mr Morgan provided a list of pupils, but did not identify Pupil B as a pupil with whom he had contacted. On 11 February 2020, Mr Morgan was asked if he had anything further to add. Again, Mr Morgan failed to disclose his communications with Pupil B.

The panel noted that on 24 February 2020, Mr Morgan was interviewed by Colleague B in respect of his communications with Pupil B. During this interview, Mr Morgan accepted that he had communicated with Pupil B.

The panel took into account the wording of the allegation, specifically that between 5 July 2019 and 24 February 2020, Mr Morgan failed to disclose his communications with Colleague A and / or Colleague B.

The panel found that as Mr Morgan had disclosed his communications on 24 February 2020, the panel could not find this allegation proven.

4. Your conduct set out in allegation 1(a)-(e):

(a) was sexually motivated;

Mr Morgan denied allegation 4(a).

The panel noted that they did not have any evidence before them of sexual motivation.

The panel recognised that, even in the absence of any direct evidence, it had to consider whether sexual motivation could be inferred from all of the circumstances of the case.

Whilst the panel had found Mr Morgan's conduct in allegation 1(a)-(e) to be inappropriate and/or personal and/or intimate, there was no surrounding evidence from which it could be inferred or deduced that Mr Morgan had any sexual motivation in respect of the conduct found proven regarding Pupil A.

The panel noted that the emails between Mr Morgan and Pupil A had no sexual undertones. Whilst the panel found that Mr Morgan had hugged Pupil A on two occasions, and had given a gift of [REDACTED] to Pupil A, that there was nothing inherently sexual about these incidents. The panel were concerned by Mr Morgan's use of personal contact details, however, did not find this in itself was sufficient evidence for the panel to find on balance that Mr Morgan's conduct was sexually motivated.

The panel therefore found allegation 4(a) not proven.

5. Your conduct set out in allegation 2(a)-(d):

(a) was sexually motivated;

Mr Morgan denied allegation 5(a).

The panel noted that they did not have any evidence before them of sexual motivation.

The panel recognised that, even in the absence of any direct evidence, it had to consider whether sexual motivation could be inferred from all of the circumstances of the case.

Whilst the panel had found Mr Morgan's conduct in allegation 2(a)-(d) to be inappropriate and/or personal and/or intimate, there was no surrounding evidence from which it could be inferred or deduced that Mr Morgan had any sexual motivation in respect of his conduct regarding Pupil B. Although the panel found that Mr Morgan had intimated that a relationship was possible, the panel noted Mr Morgan's evidence that there was no sexual motivation to his behaviour. The panel considered the evidence of Mr Morgan who had considered his conduct to be inappropriate in hindsight, [REDACTED]. Whilst the panel were concerned by Mr Morgan's behaviour, the panel found that in the absence of the messages they did not have sufficient evidence to conclude on balance that Mr Morgan's conduct towards Pupil B as found proven was sexually motivated.

The panel therefore found allegation 5(a) not proven.

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

Having found a number of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers, which is referred to as “the Advice”.

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

- *Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by*
 - *treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position*
 - *having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions*
- *Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, 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 Morgan amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Morgan in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches to statutory guidance in particular Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”) and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel also considered whether Mr Morgan’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual’s conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

The panel noted that some of the behaviour found proven took place outside the education setting. The panel paid specific attention to how Mr Morgan’s conduct led to pupils being exposed to or influenced by his behaviour in a harmful way. The panel noted

Mother A's evidence that Mr Morgan's conduct had caused Pupil A to experience confusion and upset. Further, the panel were mindful that Mr Morgan's reliance on Pupil B [REDACTED] in circumstances where Pupil B understood that a relationship was possible, had the potential of causing Pupil B harm.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Morgan amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr Morgan was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

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

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Morgan's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice. As set out above in the panel's findings as to whether Mr Morgan was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

The panel noted that the advice is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that panels consider to be "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute". The panel noted that Mr Morgan's conduct in forming inappropriate relationships with Pupils A and B was conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute as parents place trust in teachers, particularly that parents expect that teachers should observe proper boundaries with their pupils in order to prevent harm from arising. The panel considered the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives, and found that Mr Morgan's conduct as found proven undermined the safeguarding and welfare of Pupil A and Pupil B. The panel also considered that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way they behave, and found that Mr Morgan's conduct did not display behaviours in keeping with that of a teacher.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher. The panel considered that the teacher's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher. For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Morgan actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Morgan, which involved findings of conduct including building inappropriate relationships with students, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of building 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 Morgan was 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 Morgan was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr Morgan in the profession. Whilst there is evidence that Mr Morgan had impact as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Morgan in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he sought to exploit his position of trust.

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 noted that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position of trust should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest.

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

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 were relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils); and
- 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 Morgan's actions were not deliberate.

The panel noted that they had heard some evidence from Mr Morgan as to [REDACTED] at the time of the conduct found proven. [REDACTED]. The panel also noted that at the time of the conduct found proven, Mr Morgan was working towards his PGCE alongside teaching at the School and living in the boarding house which he had found very difficult to balance with his teaching and pastoral role. However, despite this, there was no evidence to suggest that Mr Morgan was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Morgan demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct, or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character.

The panel did not see any evidence that showed Mr Morgan was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.

The panel heard some evidence of Mr Morgan's good character, including evidence from Colleague B, [REDACTED] that Mr Morgan was fully involved with sport at the School and offered pastoral care to many students. Whilst Mother A had also stated in her

witness statement that Mr Morgan was a good teacher and Pupil A had improved under him, the panel noted that no references were provided from any colleagues or parents that could attest to Mr Morgan abilities as a teacher.

The panel noted that Mr Morgan had some insight into his actions, specifically as he had admitted many of the allegations against him. The panel also noted that Mr Morgan had been very emotional during examination, and had given evidence that in hindsight he could see how his actions towards Pupil A as admitted was incorrect and improper and that he felt horrible. Similarly, Mr Morgan gave evidence that his conduct towards Pupil B as admitted was horrible and that he wished he could apologise for it. The panel felt Mr Morgan recognised the impact his actions had on Pupil A and Pupil B.

However, the panel were concerned that Mr Morgan's conduct as found proven involved very similar conduct on two occasions, specifically forming inappropriate relationships with two pupils, Pupil A and Pupil B. The panel expressed concern that Mr Morgan's conduct may have continued had the relationships not been disclosed to the School or the parents.

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 Morgan 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 Morgan. The seriousness of the conduct and the risk of repetition was a significant factor in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

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

The Advice indicates that there are certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

The Advice also indicates that there are certain other types of cases where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer period before a review is considered appropriate. None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

As referred to above, the panel considered that Mr Morgan's conduct warranted prohibition particularly given that his behaviour had been repeated. However, the panel understood that Mr Morgan had been [REDACTED] and the panel considered that a review period of two years would be appropriate to ensure that any risk of repetition is mitigated.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period of two years.

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 some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, including allegation 3, 4(a) and 5(a). I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Reece Morgan should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of two years.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, 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 Morgan, 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 Morgan fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are serious as they involved findings of conduct including building inappropriate relationships with students

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 unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Morgan, 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, "In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Morgan, which involved findings of conduct including building inappropriate relationships with students, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of building 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 the panel sets out as follows, "The panel noted that Mr Morgan had some insight into his actions, specifically as he had admitted many of the allegations against him. The panel also noted that Mr Morgan had been very emotional during examination, and had given evidence that in hindsight he could see how his actions towards Pupil A as admitted was incorrect and improper and that he felt horrible. Similarly, Mr Morgan gave evidence that his conduct towards Pupil B as admitted was horrible and that he wished he could

apologise for it. The panel felt Mr Morgan recognised the impact his actions had on Pupil A and Pupil B.” I have therefore given this element 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 considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Morgan was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the finding involving building inappropriate relationships with pupils 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 unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Morgan himself and the panel comment “The panel heard some evidence of Mr Morgan’s good character, including evidence from Colleague B, [REDACTED] that Mr Morgan was fully involved with sport at the School and offered pastoral care to many students. Whilst Mother A had also stated in her witness statement that Mr Morgan was a good teacher and Pupil A had improved under him, the panel noted that no references were provided from any colleagues or parents that could attest to Mr Morgan abilities as a teacher.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Morgan 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. The panel has said, “the panel were concerned that Mr Morgan’s conduct as found proven involved very similar conduct on two occasions, specifically forming inappropriate relationships with two pupils, Pupil A and Pupil B. The panel expressed concern that Mr Morgan’s conduct may have continued had the relationships not been disclosed to the School or the parents.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that “Whilst there is evidence that Mr Morgan had impact as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr

Morgan in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he sought to exploit his position of trust.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Morgan 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 a 2 year review period.

I have considered the panel’s comments “the panel considered that Mr Morgan’s conduct warranted prohibition particularly given that his behaviour had been repeated. However, the panel understood that Mr Morgan had been [REDACTED] and the panel considered that a review period of two years would be appropriate to ensure that any risk of repetition is mitigated.”

I agree with the panel and have decided that a 2 year review period is appropriate in this case to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

This means that Mr Reece Morgan is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children’s home in England. He may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 02 April 2027, 2 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr Morgan remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Morgan has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Buxcey', with a horizontal line underneath.

Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 31 March 2025

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