



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Mark Raven: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

August 2025

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

Teacher: Mr Mark Raven

Teacher ref number: 0321895

Teacher date of birth: 27 July 1966

TRA reference: 23223

Date of determination: 6 August 2025

Former employer: Taunton Preparatory School, Taunton

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 6 August 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Mark Raven.

The panel members were Mrs Michelle Chappell (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Nigel Shock (lay panellist) and Ms Chloe Nash (lay panellist).

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

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Raven that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Raven provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Ms Jane David of Kingsley Napley LLP solicitors, or Mr Raven.

The meeting took place in private and was not recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Raven was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst working as a Teacher of Science at Taunton Preparatory School (“the School”):

1. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, he did not maintain professional boundaries, in that he:
 - a. Exchanged an excessive number of messages on Microsoft Teams with Pupil A which were unprofessional and/or inappropriate in nature;
 - b. Sent Microsoft Teams messages to Pupil A outside of School hours;
 - c. Gifted Pupil A a [REDACTED] and/or a [REDACTED];
 - d. Accepted an [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] from Pupil A;
 - e. Said “what would you like for your birthday?” to Pupil A and/or used words to that effect.
2. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2023, he exchanged messages of an unprofessional and/or inappropriate nature with Pupil B.
3. From on or around [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2024, in respect of his contact with Pupil A and/or Pupil B, he did not refer himself to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
4. His conduct referred to in paragraphs 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 breached professional boundaries.

Mr Raven admitted the facts of the allegations and that his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

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

Section 2: Notice of referral and response – pages 7 to 16

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts – pages 17 to 25

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 26 to 747

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 748 to 749

Section 6: Notice of meeting – pages 750 to 751

The panel also had sight of a separate email chain between Mr Raven and the presenting officer dated 23 April 2025.

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2020, (the “Procedures”).

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

In advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Raven 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 or around 1 September 2007, Mr Raven commenced work at the School.

On or around 1 November 2021, Mr Raven undertook the role of Boarding House Tutor at the School.

Between [REDACTED] 2023, Mr Raven attended a [REDACTED], which Pupil A attended.

Between [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, approximately 2,000 messages were exchanged privately between Mr Raven and Pupil A via the School's Microsoft Teams platform.

On 11 and 12 January 2024, the School received parental concerns referring to "weird" behaviour between Mr Raven and Pupil A.

On 16 January 2024, a meeting was held with Mr Raven to explain the two parental concerns that had been raised around his behaviour.

On 17 January 2024, a search was carried out of School Microsoft Teams messages between Mr Raven and Pupil A. Mr Raven was formally suspended whilst an investigation was undertaken. A meeting was held with Pupil A's parents to explain the concerns, and the allegation was reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer ("LADO").

On 22 January 2024, Mr Raven attended an investigation meeting.

On 31 January 2024, an investigation report was completed.

On 7 February 2024, a disciplinary hearing was held.

On 8 February 2024, Mr Raven ceased employment at the School.

On 16 February 2024, Mr Raven 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. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, you did not maintain professional boundaries, in that you:**
 - a. Exchanged an excessive number of messages on Microsoft Teams with Pupil A which were unprofessional and/or inappropriate in nature;**

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of the School’s investigation report prepared by the School, dated 31 January 2024. The investigation report stated that on 11 January 2024, the School received a parental complaint which outlined behaviours between Mr Raven and a pupil who attended the School as being “weird”. The investigation report also stated that a further complaint was received from another parent, outlining similar concerns, on 12 January 2024. The investigation report explained that, these complaints led to the School reviewing Microsoft Teams messages between Mr Raven and Pupil A within the period from [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2024.

The panel had sight of a table within the investigation report which revealed that in total over this period, Mr Raven had sent 655 messages to Pupil A, [REDACTED]. The panel considered this to be an excessive amount of messages.

During the investigation meeting, Mr Raven was also asked the following question: “How many Teams messages do you think were sent between you and Pupil A between [REDACTED], 2023, and [REDACTED], 2024?”. Mr Raven replied: “Loads.” When asked to give an indication of what he meant by this, Mr Raven stated: “Hundreds.”

The panel had sight of 227 pages of Microsoft Teams messages exchanged between Mr Raven and Pupil A which were sent between [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024. During his investigation meeting, Mr Raven was referred to particular messages that he sent to Pupil A which stated “get here and clean my bike” and “there is some aero here for you”. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “In the black and white of it, that’s a no – it’s not appropriate.” When asked why he had said it is not appropriate, Mr Raven responded: “If someone reads all of this without context then it doesn’t look appropriate. Pupil A and I communicate that way and [Pupil A] knows it’s a joke”.

During his investigation meeting, Mr Raven was also referred to a Microsoft Teams exchange between himself and Pupil A, where Pupil A had asked him to make an excuse to get them out of [REDACTED], and Mr Raven made an excuse that [Pupil A] needed to help him with an [REDACTED]. The panel had sight of these messages in the bundle. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “[Pupil A] would have done [REDACTED] in my room. Yes, I made an excuse for [Pupil A] to get out of [REDACTED] and I have done this for other kids too because they don’t want to be there.”

Further, Mr Raven was referred to a Microsoft Teams exchange where he responded to a message about [REDACTED] and wrote “yuk” and stated that Pupil A did not need to revise the periodic table. The panel had sight of these messages in the bundle, which stated:

- From Mr Raven to Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023 at 20:31: “no need to know that rubbish”
- From Mr Raven to Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023 at 15:26: “yuk, [REDACTED] not good to have in afternoon”.
- From Mr Raven to Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023 at 09:48: “yuk”.

Mr Raven was asked how he thought this looks when he is writing this about other subjects. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “It’s not professional but it was what I thought.”

The panel had sight of notes of a meeting that took place with Pupil A at the School on [REDACTED] 2024. During the meeting, Pupil A was asked to explain when the messages started. Pupil A stated that they could not remember but agreed that it “seemed likely” that it was [REDACTED] on [REDACTED].

Pupil A was also asked why where there so many messages, and the notes record the following response: “Pupil A did not know why there were so many. The content was ‘mainly about [REDACTED] and school stuff and [REDACTED].” Pupil A was then asked how the messages made them feel, the notes state that “Pupil A said that it felt like there was someone who was interested.”

The panel found that the content of the messages was unprofessional and inappropriate. Whilst the panel noted that the content was not sexual in nature, they were overfamiliar and did not relate to school work or home work. The panel had sight of the School’s Code of Conduct, which stated that “All communication with children ... must conform to School policy and be limited to professional matters” and that staff should “only make contact with pupils for professional reasons”. The panel found that the content of Mr Raven’s messages to Pupil A did not conform to the School’s Code of Conduct.

The panel also found that Mr Raven agreeing to help Pupil A get them out of Preparatory class was inappropriate and unprofessional, as it also encouraged Pupil A to be dishonest and to miss these classes. Further, the panel found that Mr Raven made negative comments to Pupil A about other lessons, such as [REDACTED], which was also unprofessional as it undermined other staff members at the School.

Overall, the panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven exchanged an excessive number of Microsoft Teams messages with Pupil A between [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, and that these messages were inappropriate and unprofessional in

nature. In doing so, the panel also found that Mr Raven did not maintain professional boundaries.

The panel found this allegation proven.

1. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, you did not maintain professional boundaries, in that you:

b. Sent Microsoft Teams messages to Pupil A outside of School hours;

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of the School’s investigation report prepared by the School, dated 31 January 2024. The panel had sight of a table within the investigation report which set out the number of messages exchanged between Mr Raven and Pupil A between [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024. The panel noted that the earliest message over this period was sent at 05:59am (in [REDACTED] 2024) and the last message was sent at 10:08pm (in [REDACTED] 2023). The panel considered that these messages were sent outside of School hours.

The panel also had sight of the notes from Mr Raven’s investigation meeting at the School on 22 January 2024. Mr Raven was asked: “Did you only communicate with Pupil A during work time and when Pupil A was clearly a pupil at the School? i.e. did you only message [Pupil A] between the hours of 8.20am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday and 8.20am to 12.30pm on Saturdays during term time?”. In response, Mr Raven stated: “No – I did it outside of that time.”

Mr Raven was then asked why he thought this was appropriate, and Mr Raven responded: “I guess because I was in School during those hours and it was always on a School computer and it was always transparent.” However, the panel noted that [REDACTED] some of Mr Raven’s messages would have been sent to Pupil A whilst they were not on the School premises, [REDACTED], or at home. The panel found that this was inappropriate.

The panel had sight of the School's Code of Conduct, which stated that staff "should avoid contact with pupils outside of School hours wherever possible". The panel found that Mr Raven's communications with Pupil A did not conform to the School's Code of Conduct.

The panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven had sent Microsoft Teams messages to Pupil A outside of School hours. The panel also found that, in doing so, Mr Raven failed to maintain professional boundaries, particularly given that the content of those messages did not relate to school work or professional matters.

The panel found this allegation proven.

1. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, you did not maintain professional boundaries, in that you:

c. Gifted Pupil A a [REDACTED] and/or a [REDACTED];

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was "do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?" Mr Raven circled "yes" in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of a Microsoft Teams exchange between Mr Raven and Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023, which contained the following messages:

- From Mr Raven to Pupil A at 18:02: "haha, yes I did thanks. It has made me smile. Hope you liked the [REDACTED]"

The panel had sight of the notes from Mr Raven's investigation meeting on 22 January 2024. During the meeting, Mr Raven was asked: "Did you give Pupil A a [REDACTED] from your fridge on [their] birthday?". In response to this, Mr Raven stated: "Yes, it was something that I was going to do for everyone. I am Vegan-ish and I had bought one for Pupil K; Pupil K wasn't there so it all fell apart. Pupil A was outstanding [REDACTED] and we wanted to [give] [them] something – so I ended up giving [them] the [REDACTED]." The panel did not find this explanation particularly convincing.

During the meeting, Mr Raven was also asked: "Have you ever given Pupil A or any other student any gifts?". In response to this, Mr Raven stated: "I gave Pupil A a [REDACTED] which I had won; it was a [REDACTED] for [their] [REDACTED]." Mr Raven was then

asked: “How do you think this could have been perceived by other students who didn’t get a gift?”, and Mr Raven responded: “Possible favouritism. I didn’t tell [Pupil A’s] parents that I had given [Pupil A] the [REDACTED].”

The panel also had sight of the notes from Mr Raven’s disciplinary hearing on 7 February 2024. During the hearing, Mr Raven was asked: “Why did you buy Pupil A gifts?”. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “Pupil A had been incredibly outstanding and supportive [REDACTED] and had helped out a lot. We, as a teacher body, said that we needed to reward Pupil A in some way. The [REDACTED] thing was part of that and also coming up to [their] birthday and I thought the [REDACTED] doubles up as a present. The [REDACTED] thing I was going to continue with other kids, but that fell apart.” Mr Raven was then asked: “Teaching body – who was that?” and he named other individuals. Mr Raven was asked “Was the gift presented from the teaching body?”, and Mr Raven stated: “originally I was going to get [Pupil A] a [REDACTED], but it came out as a [REDACTED]”. Further, Mr Raven was asked: “were the others [teaching body] aware of the [REDACTED]?” and he responded: “They would be aware of what we discussed [as in a gift] but not what it was.”

The School then stated to Mr Raven: “I understood from our meeting that it was originally for Pupil K, Pupil K was away so you gave it to Pupil A.” Mr Raven responded: “No, it was bought for Pupil A.”

The panel had sight of the School’s Code of Conduct, which stated that when staff are thinking of giving a gift or a reward, “it should only be provided as part of an agreed reward system”, and that “gifts should given openly and not based on favouritism.” The Code of Conduct also states that: “Decisions regarding entitlement to benefits or privileges such as admission to school trips, activities or classroom tasks must avoid perceptions of bias, grooming or favouritism.” The panel found that Mr Raven’s gifts to Pupil A did not conform with the School’s Code of Conduct as it did give the perception of favouritism.

The panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven gifted Pupil a [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED]. The panel found that in doing so, Mr Raven failed to maintain professional boundaries as it constituted favouritism towards Pupil A.

The panel found this allegation proven.

1. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, you did not maintain professional boundaries, in that you:

d. Accepted an [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] from Pupil A;

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of a Microsoft Teams message in the bundle, from Mr Raven to Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023 at 11:35, which stated: “brill [REDACTED], thank you very much.” [REDACTED]”.

The panel had sight of the notes from Mr Raven’s investigation meeting on 22 January 2024. During the meeting, Mr Raven was asked: “Did Pupil A buy an [REDACTED] for you?” and Mr Raven responded: “I had an [REDACTED] which Pupil A bought for me ...” Mr Raven was also asked: “Has [Pupil A] bought you any other gifts?” and Mr Raven stated: “[Pupil A] gave me a [REDACTED] for the year which was a [REDACTED] one.”

The panel also had sight of the notes from Mr Raven’s disciplinary hearing on 7 February 2024. During the hearing, when discussing the [REDACTED], Mr Raven was asked: “from your point of view in the line of questions I have asked, can you see how this can be perceived, e.g., the messages, the exchange of gifts?”. Mr Raven stated: “So, [Pupil A] bought me a [REDACTED] with Pupil E. It made me giggle. I get lots of things from loads of kids. 7 or 8 kids have given me [REDACTED]. The gifts are not specific between me and Pupil A.”

During the investigation meeting, Mr Raven was asked: “Did Pupil A give you a [REDACTED] for you to eat.” In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “[Pupil A] had just been in [REDACTED] and had given it to me. I suggested [they] take it home and [they] said no that [they] would throw it away. I said you’re not chucking it and I left it for a few days and then I ate it.”

The panel also had sight of a Microsoft Teams exchange in the bundle, between Mr Raven and Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023. Within this exchange, [REDACTED] Mr Raven stated at 13:40: “warm, and it better be lots of [REDACTED] and no [REDACTED]”. There is also a message from Mr Raven to Pupil A at 14:03, which states: “... wheres [sic] my [REDACTED]”, [REDACTED].

The panel had further sight of a Microsoft Teams exchange in the bundle, between Mr Raven and Pupil A on [REDACTED] 2023. Within this exchange, Mr Raven sent a message to Pupil A at 07:44 which stated: “just eating your [REDACTED], thank you”.

[REDACTED]. At 07:45, Mr Raven stated: “just heated it up in the oven in the kitchen, yum yum”.

The panel had sight of the School’s Code of Conduct, which stated that if a member of staff receives a gift from a pupil they should “declare the gift where there is a possibility it could be misconstrued...”.

The panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven had accepted gifts from Pupil A; namely the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]. In doing so, the panel found that Mr Raven failed to maintain professional boundaries, particularly given his overfamiliar relationship with Pupil A.

The panel found this allegation proven.

1. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 and [REDACTED] 2024, in relation to Pupil A, you did not maintain professional boundaries, in that you:

e. Said “what would you like for your birthday?” to Pupil A and/or used words to that effect.

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of a Microsoft Teams message from Mr Raven to Pupil A, on [REDACTED] 2023 at 18:09, which stated: “tell me what you might like for your birthday, maybe i [sic] can get it from staff as thank you for your help/positivity on the [REDACTED]”.

The panel had sight of the School’s Code of Conduct, which stated that staff should “avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar”. The panel found that by referring to getting Pupil A a birthday present, Mr Raven did not confirm to the Code of Conduct.

The panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven sent a message to Pupil A which stated “tell me what you might like for your birthday”. The panel found that the wording used by Mr Raven was to the effect of “what would you like for your birthday?”. The panel found that in doing so, Mr Raven failed to maintain a professional boundary as it was not appropriate for a teacher to discuss getting a birthday present for another pupil.

The panel found this allegation proven.

2. Between on or around [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2023, you exchanged messages of an unprofessional and/or inappropriate nature with Pupil B.

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025. were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of the School’s investigation report prepared by School, dated 31 January 2024. The investigation report stated that on 11 January 2024, the School received a parental complaint which outlined behaviours between Mr Raven and a pupil who attended the School as being “weird”. The investigation report also stated that a further complaint was received from another parent, outlining similar concerns, on 12 January 2024. The investigation report explained that, these complaints led to the School reviewing Microsoft Teams messages between Mr Raven and Pupil B within the period from [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2024.

The panel had sight of a table within the investigation report which revealed that in total over this period, Mr Raven had sent 59 messages to Pupil B, and Pupil B had [REDACTED]. The table also stated that the earliest message sent was at 06:57am (in [REDACTED] 2023) and the latest message was sent at 09:18pm (also in [REDACTED] 2023).

The panel had sight of the notes from Mr Raven’s investigation meeting on 22 January 2024. During the meeting, Mr Raven was asked: “Are there any other students that you think you have a similar relationship with to the one you have with Pupil A”. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “Pupil B – [Pupil B] was off with [REDACTED] and they pinged me a few times and I just wanted to find out if [Pupil B] was ok.”

During the investigation meeting, Mr Raven was also asked: “On the day that you and Pupil A exchanged over 100 messages, there were 37 messages between you and Pupil B. A message said “[REDACTED] need to be careful in temperatures like this” – do you think that is an appropriate message between a student and a teacher?”. In response to this, Mr Raven stated: “I remember, [Pupil B] was in [REDACTED] at the time. I just see it as a bit of a joke and I just take it on the chin.”

The panel had sight of message exchanges between Mr Raven and Pupil B. There is an entry for [REDACTED] 2023 which states: “Pupil B and [REDACTED] Raven exchanges on Teams whilst Pupil B was on [REDACTED].”

It was also recorded in the investigation report that Pupil B was interviewed on 26 January 2024. The notes of the interview state that:

- “Pupil B confirmed that [they] had sent messages to Mr Raven which were not solely about [their] welfare [REDACTED] or schoolwork”;
- “[Pupil B] agreed that the messages between them were a little “chatty””; and
- “[Pupil B] confirmed that [they] had not messaged Mr Raven using any other medium other than Teams and [Pupil B] did not have Mr Ravens personal phone number.”

The panel found that it was more likely than not that Mr Raven did exchange messages with Pupil B. The panel noted that whilst these messages were not sexual in nature, and that the number of messages sent to Pupil B was less than the number sent to Pupil A, the messages were still unprofessional in nature. In particular, the panel noted that the joke that Mr Raven had sent to Pupil B that “[REDACTED] need to be careful in temperatures like this” was more akin to a message that would be sent between friends, rather than a message between a teacher and a pupil. The panel found it was not appropriate or professional to be sending a “joke” of this kind to pupils.

The panel found this allegation proven.

3. From on or around [REDACTED] 2023 to [REDACTED] 2024, in respect of his contact with Pupil A and/or Pupil B, you did not refer yourself to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notes of the investigation meeting that Mr Raven attended on 22 January 2024. During the meeting, Mr Raven stated that he did speak to other staff members [REDACTED] about Pupil A spending a lot of time in his classroom. According

to Mr Raven, the response was that Mr Raven should keep his door open and the Pastoral Officer would “have eyes on it as well”.

The panel had sight of the School’s Code of Conduct, which stated that staff should raise “‘low level’ concerns (those that do not meet the ‘harm’ threshold) regarding an adult working in or on behalf of the school potentially acting in a way that (including self-referral): does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO e.g., being over friendly with children, having favourites ...”. The panel could not find any evidence in the bundle to suggest that Mr Raven followed the Code of Conduct and self-referred to the School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead, in respect of his communications with Pupil A and/or Pupil B.

The panel found it more likely than not that Mr Raven did not refer himself to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in respect of his contact with Pupil A and/or Pupil B.

The panel found this allegation proven.

4. Your conduct referred to in paragraphs 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 breached professional boundaries.

Mr Raven admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of the notice of referral response signed by Mr Raven on 19 February 2025. One of the questions in the form was “do you admit the allegations set out in the enclosed letter?” Mr Raven circled “yes” in response to this question. For the avoidance of doubt, the allegations as set out in the notice of referral letter dated 12 February 2025 were the same as those set out in the notice of meeting dated 28 March 2025.

The panel had sight of the statement of agreed facts signed by Mr Raven on 30 December 2024 where Mr Raven admitted the facts of this allegation.

The panel found that Mr Raven did breach professional boundaries. In particular, the panel found that Mr Raven had sent an excessive number of messages to Pupil A, and also sent some messages to Pupil B, which did not relate to the students’ school work, lesson content or professional matters. The panel also found that some of these messages were sent outside of School hours. The panel found that whilst the content of these messages was not sexual, it was still over-familiar and friendly, which was inappropriate and unprofessional in the context of a teacher-pupil relationship.

The panel also found that Mr Raven exhibited favouritism towards Pupil A by giving them gifts and making reference to purchasing a gift for their birthday. The panel also found that Mr Raven’s conduct was in breach of multiple provisions of the School’s Code of Conduct.

The panel found this allegation proven.

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

Having found all 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 first considered whether the conduct of Mr Raven, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Raven 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach,
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Raven, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”). In particular, the panel found that Mr Raven failed to self-refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in respect of his contact with Pupil A and/or Pupil B.

The panel also considered whether Mr Raven’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

However, the panel considered that Mr Raven’s misconduct was of a serious nature. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Raven exchanged an excessive number of messages with Pupil A which took place over many months, and which were of an unprofessional nature.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Raven 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 Raven was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

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

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Raven'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 Raven was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

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. In particular, the panel noted that parents of other pupils had already raised concerns to the School about Mr Raven's behaviour towards Pupil A.

The panel considered that Mr Raven's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Raven's 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 within the teaching profession.

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of inappropriate communications with children, and a failure to maintain professional boundaries.

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

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 Raven in the profession. Whilst there is some evidence that Mr Raven had ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Raven in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher.

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.

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 Raven.

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, and particularly where there is a continuing risk.

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.

Mr Raven's actions were deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Raven was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation

The panel did not have sight of any evidence which showed that Mr Raven had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. However, the panel also did not see any evidence that showed Mr Raven was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.

The panel noted that Mr Raven had not adduced any evidence in mitigation. The panel considered Mr Raven's level of insight and remorse. The panel noted that Mr Raven had admitted all of the allegations. However, the panel found that there was insufficient evidence in the bundle to demonstrate that Mr Raven had real insight into his behaviour, and that he was remorseful. In particular, the panel found that whilst Mr Raven eventually accepted that his communications were inappropriate, he did attempt to justify his actions by advising that they all took place on the School computer during his working hours. The panel did not find that Mr Raven had demonstrated a real understanding into his behaviour and why it was not appropriate.

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 Raven 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 Raven. The excessive number and inappropriate content of Mr Raven's messages with Pupil A and Pupil B, and his lack of remorse and insight, 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 for it to decide to recommend a review period of the order. The panel was mindful that the Advice states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances, in any given case, that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period.

Shortest 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.

The panel found that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that Mr Raven had insight into his behaviour, or any remorse. As a result, the panel found it could not say with certainty that there would be no current risk of repetition of similar behaviours. At present, the panel found that Mr Raven's behaviour was incompatible with being a teacher. However, the panel noted that Mr Raven admitted the allegations, and that the messages that Mr Raven exchanged with Pupil A and Pupil B were not overtly sexual or predatory in nature. As a result, the panel found that Mr Raven should have an opportunity to learn from his actions, and to return to teaching in the future, should he wish to do so.

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. The panel recommended a review period of 2 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 all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Mark Raven should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 2 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Raven 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach,
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Raven, 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 Raven fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include inappropriate communications with children and a failure to maintain professional boundaries.

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 Raven, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children/safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, "There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of inappropriate communications with children, and a failure to maintain professional boundaries." 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 Raven had not adduced any evidence in mitigation. The panel considered Mr Raven's level of insight and remorse. The panel noted that Mr Raven had admitted all of the allegations. However, the panel found that there was insufficient evidence in the bundle to demonstrate that Mr Raven had real insight into his behaviour, and that he was remorseful. In particular, the panel found that

whilst Mr Raven eventually accepted that his communications were inappropriate, he did attempt to justify his actions by advising that they all took place on the School computer during his working hours. The panel did not find that Mr Raven had demonstrated a real understanding into his behaviour and why it was not appropriate.” In my judgement, the lack of full insight or remorse means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk the future wellbeing of pupils. I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, “the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Raven were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the finding of inappropriate communication with 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 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 Raven himself and the panel comment “The panel did not have sight of any evidence which showed that Mr Raven had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. However, the panel also did not see any evidence that showed Mr Raven was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Raven from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the lack of insight or remorse. The panel has said, “The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Raven. The excessive number and inappropriate content of Mr Raven’s messages with Pupil A and Pupil B, and his lack of remorse and insight, were significant factors in forming that opinion.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that “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. In particular, the panel noted that parents of other pupils had already raised concerns to the School about Mr Raven’s behaviour towards Pupil A.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Raven has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by full insight or remorse, 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 found that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that Mr Raven had insight into his behaviour, or any remorse. As a result, the panel found it could not say with certainty that there would be no current risk of repetition of similar behaviours. At present, the panel found that Mr Raven’s behaviour was incompatible with being a teacher. However, the panel noted that Mr Raven admitted the allegations, and that the messages that Mr Raven exchanged with Pupil A and Pupil B were not overtly sexual or predatory in nature. As a result, the panel found that Mr Raven should have an opportunity to learn from his actions, and to return to teaching in the future, should he wish to do so.”

I agree with the panel and have decided that a 2 year review period is proportionate for the misconduct found proven in this case and to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Mr Mark Raven 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 13 August 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 Raven remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Raven 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 'SABuxcey'.

Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 11 August 2025

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