



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Joshua Roper: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

August 2025

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

Teacher:	Mr Joshua Roper
Teacher ref number:	1673166
Teacher date of birth:	21 February 1995
TRA reference:	21465
Date of determination:	21 August 2025
Former employer:	Sheringham Community Primary School, North Walsham

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 18 to 21 August 2025, by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Joshua Roper.

The panel members were Mr Ian Hylan (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Shabana Robertson (lay panellist) and Ms Katie Dent (lay panellist).

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

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Amalea Bourne of Browne Jacobson solicitors.

Mr Roper was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of hearing dated 12 May 2025 (as amended during the hearing).

It was alleged that Mr Roper was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that, while employed as a class teacher and/or Head of PE at Sheringham Community Primary School ('the School'), he:

1. Engaged in inappropriate contact and/or failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with:
 - a) Child A, by:
 - i) Touching Child A's bottom, on one or more occasions;
 - ii) Referring to Child A as 'Babe';
 - iii) Commenting on Child A's appearance and/or outfits;
 - iv) Contacting Child A via social media;
 - v) Putting 'x' at the end of his messages to Child A;
 - vi) Arranging one-to-one sessions with Child A without seeking appropriate approval from the football association.
 - b) Child B, by:
 - i) Adding Child B on Snapchat;
 - ii) Contacting Child B via social media;
 - iii) Sending Child B photographs of him topless and/or wearing underwear;
 - iv) Touching Child B's back, on one or more occasions;
 - v) Commenting on Child B's appearance and/or outfits.
 - c) Child C, by:
 - i) Adding Child C on Snapchat;
 - ii) Contacting Child C via social media;
 - iii) Sending Child C inappropriate messages, such as 'are you wearing your lucky thong' and 'next time you tie up your laces just bend over in front of me', or messages to this effect.

2. His conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1a and/or 1b and/or 1c:
 - a) Demonstrated a lack of insight into previous concerns raised relating to inappropriate communication with a child in or around 2017;
 - b) Was conduct of a sexual nature and/or was sexually motivated.

Mr Roper admitted the allegations in part, as set out in the response to the notice of hearing, dated 5 June 2025. In light of the fact that Mr Roper was not in attendance, the panel noted the responses to the allegations as set out in Mr Roper's witness statement dated 8 July 2025.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Anonymised pupil list – page 5

Section 2: Notice of hearing, response and correspondence request form – pages 7 to 20

Section 3: TRA witness statements – pages 22 to 85

Section 4: TRA documents – pages 87 to 270

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 272 to 311

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

- Finalised updated applications bundle;
- Mr Roper's application regarding jurisdiction; and
- Emails from Mr Roper, two versions of one email and email received by the panel dated 17 August 2025.

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.

Witnesses

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

Child A, [REDACTED]

Child B, [REDACTED]

Witness D, [REDACTED]

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 Roper commenced employment at Sheringham Community Primary School on 3 January 2018.

In 2017, a safeguarding concern was raised to the Football Association (“FA”) as Mr Roper had allegedly been texting a 15-year-old girl messages that could have been deemed inappropriate.

On 1 August 2017, the FA were advised that following a LADO meeting on 18 July 2017, the concerns were recorded as unsubstantiated. In respect of the allegation, Mr Roper was asked to re-apply for a criminal record check, complete a new safeguarding children workshop and be monitored for the next three months whilst he continued as a trainee teacher.

On 25 July 2017, Mr Roper completed a learning and reflection form, and the matter was closed with the FA on 18 January 2018.

In July 2022, Child A raised concerns about Mr Roper to two senior players and a manager at [REDACTED] Football Club, relating to text communications. Following Child A’s disclosure, Child B, Child C and Child D, who had all been coached by Mr Roper, came forward with similar concerns.

The concerns were reported to the FA on 25 August 2022 by the Norfolk CFADSO.

Child A alleged that Mr Roper had engaged in inappropriate conversations with her about her outfits and appearance and that he had put “*kisses*” at the end of his messages. She stated that Mr Roper had also touched her bottom on more than one occasion whilst they were setting up for training sessions.

Child B reported that Mr Roper had invited three of the players, including herself, to be friends on Snapchat. She reported that initially she and Mr Roper would send each other images of their pet cats and talk about football. Child B reported that then these messages progressed to Mr Roper sending images of himself topless which showed his underwear.

Child C reported that Mr Roper had sent her messages on Snapchat that were sexually based, such as *“guess you must’ve been wearing a lucky thong today”*.

The matter was referred to the DBS on 22 November 2022 and was received by the TRA on 27 January 2023.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

You are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that, while employed as a class teacher and/or Head of PE at Sheringham Community Primary School (‘the School’), you:

1. Engaged in inappropriate contact and/or failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with:

a) Child A, by:

i) Touching Child A’s bottom, on one or more occasions;

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child A, who stated that Mr Roper was her coach from when she was [REDACTED] years old. She stated that, whilst she was in the [REDACTED] football team, Mr Roper would ask her to attend training 30 minutes early [REDACTED] so that she could help him set up. Child A stated that this involved taking equipment out of a big green container, and that when they would go into the container he would touch her bum and sometimes the lower front part of her body. She stated that on occasions he would just brush past her when touching her but other times it would last a little longer.

The panel considered the notes from the football club’s meeting on 14 August 2022, attended by officers of the football club. The panel noted that Child A’s account was consistent with her witness statement.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that at no time did he touch Child A’s bottom. Mr Roper stated that the date of the allegation (March 2022) was just weeks away from the team’s [REDACTED], and so he had openly invited all players to arrive to training early to practice penalties and corners to help them prepare. He stated that the majority of the players chose to attend the training early, with many arriving before or at the same time as Child A. Mr Roper stated that there would have always been other players and parents present at the time that Child A alleged the touching took place.

The panel considered the oral evidence from Child A and noted that Child A was a credible and consistent witness. In Child A's oral evidence she stated that Mr Roper would touch her on the bottom multiple times and that this would often be when she was picking up football equipment. Child A stated that Mr Roper would touch her on the bottom and sometimes at the front in her private area and that he would do this as he brushed past which Child A considered was to make it look accidental. Child A stated that this would sometimes happen when they were in the green container unloading or loading the football equipment which made her feel uncomfortable. Following the report, the football club installed a camera in this area.

The panel considered Mr Roper's written evidence and Child A's written and oral evidence and preferred Child A's account on the balance of probabilities. The panel considered that Mr Roper had created opportunities to touch Child A and that Child A had appeared as a credible and believable witness who was able to specifically recall various examples of Mr Roper inappropriately touching her.

The panel found that Mr Roper had touched Child A's bottom on more than one occasion and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child A.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(i) proven.

ii) Referring to Child A as 'Babe';

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation, but to the extent that he referred to Child A as "*babe*" due to a genuine slip of the tongue.

The panel had sight of some screenshots of the messages Mr Roper had sent Child A.

The panel noted the following messages in particular:

- "*haven't called you b...for a while ahah*"
- "*You gotta behave remember. Babe*"

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child A, who stated that Mr Roper had called her "*babe*" when messaging her directly on Heja, which was a social media application used by Mr Roper. She stated that Mr Roper had also called her "*babe*" during an [REDACTED] training session. Child A submitted that another player also heard this and they laughed it off as, although it made Child A feel uncomfortable, they did not want to embarrass Mr Roper. She stated that Mr Roper said he had mixed her up with [REDACTED], but she stated that this did not make sense as she did not look like her and they have different hair colours. Child A stated that [REDACTED] at the time played in the ladies' team on [REDACTED], so he could not have got them confused as he alleged.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that, whilst coaching one evening, he referred to Child A as “babe” due to a genuine slip of the tongue. He stated that [REDACTED] was also training and he simply said “*can you please pick up the cones babe*”, thinking that he was talking to [REDACTED]. Mr Roper stated that he did not realise Child A was behind him, and at the time they both found it funny, and also embarrassing.

Mr Roper acknowledged in his written statement that, following the incident described above, he then brought it up in some messages to Child A but not in a way to call her “*babe*”, but to repeat what he honestly thought to be a shared joke.

The panel considered the oral evidence of Child A who the panel found to be a credible and consistent witness. Child A stated that Mr Roper had called her “*babe*” in order to get her attention during a training session and that she found this strange as she was [REDACTED] years old at the time and this made her feel uncomfortable.

The panel noted that there were examples of Mr Roper using this terminology in messages with Child A and that it was more likely than not on the balance of probabilities that Mr Roper used the term “*babe*” in person.

The panel found that Mr Roper had referred to Child A as “*babe*” and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child A.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(ii) proven.

iii) Commenting on Child A’s appearance and/or outfits;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation, but to the extent that he did this as “*banter*” or as “*a joke*.”

The panel had sight of a collection of screenshots showing messages between Mr Roper and Child A.

The panel noted the following messages that Mr Roper had sent Child A:

- “*Ahaha oh I was gonna say surely you have a bikini or something*”
- “*His eyes are almost as nice as yours ;) haha*”
- “*Well done today and thanks for the help at the end! I needed it today [laughing emoji]. See you did your hair too [winking sticking tongue out emoji, sticking tongue out emoji.]*”
- “*Did you have to wear your short shorts? [2 laughing face emojis].*”

- “You were wearing them when I saw you walking [2 laughing face emojis].”
- “Ahaha not those short shorts [laughing face emoji] lot of leg...haha”
- “I wasn’t complaining...hahah” [...] “Or looking [eyes emoji and 2 laughing face emojis].”
- “Just a peek [eyes emoji]” followed by a [peach emoji].

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child A, who stated that Mr Roper made direct contact with her via social media and would ask her things such as what she wore to bed.

Child A stated that Mr Roper would comment on her appearance, and one time when he saw her walking the dogs he messaged her to tell her that she looked good in short shorts, and that he had looked at her bum. She stated that there was another time where Mr Roper asked her if she was wearing a bikini to the beach.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who admitted that there were occasions where he would comment on Child A’s appearance and/or outfits. Mr Roper stated that these comments were referring to jokes.

Regarding the comment about Child A wearing layers to bed, Mr Roper stated that this was said to bring up a joke that Child A made with others that she would wear lots of layers in bed and be covered by many blankets. He stated that the comment was made to continue the ongoing banter and was not intended as a sexual comment in any way. Mr Roper stated that he also made the comment about wearing a bikini to share a joke that Child A made to others in her team, that she would never wear a wetsuit as it would make her “bald”.

In respect of the comment about Child A’s hair, Mr Roper stated that this was after a match day where a photographer had been present and Child A joked to everyone that she had not done her hair.

Mr Roper stated that the comment about Child A’s “short shorts” was in relation to an ongoing joke between Child A and the rest of the team as Child A would “clown around” at training and pull her shorts up to her waist to make the others laugh.

The panel did not consider Mr Roper’s explanations to be plausible and considered that the tone of the messages and the emojis that were sent to Child A by Mr Roper to be inappropriate and added to a deeper intent and meaning which was more than just an innocent joke.

The panel considered the oral evidence of Child A who the panel found to be a credible and consistent witness. The panel noted that Child A stated in her oral evidence, that she remembered Mr Roper making a comment about her short shorts and that she was either [REDACTED] years old at the time. Child A stated that this made her feel uncomfortable and led to her not wearing shorts when she was walking her dog in case Mr Roper saw her. Child A also stated that Mr Roper had commented on her wearing a bikini and on her having done her hair at a football training session. Child A stated that this made her feel uncomfortable, self-conscious and that she wanted to give up football.

The panel found that Mr Roper had commented on Child A's appearance and/or outfits and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child A.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(iii) proven.

iv) Contacting Child A via social media;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation.

The panel also noted that Child A submitted in her written statement that Mr Roper had contacted her directly through social media and that she recognised that this was wrong because all contact should be made within a group chat with parents rather than directly to players. Child A recalled that Mr Roper had contacted her via the Heja platform and that he had also continued to message her via Instagram. Child A also stated that Mr Roper contacted her privately via the football team Twitter account. The panel noted the screenshots in the bundle between Child A and Mr Roper confirming that there had been contact via social media.

The panel noted that Child A knew the contact on the Twitter account was from Mr Roper because the sender knew things about the football team which only Mr Roper would know.

The panel also noted the oral evidence from Child A who confirmed that, as far as she was aware, Mr Roper was the only one with access to the team Twitter account. The panel noted that Witness D also believed that only Mr Roper had access to the club Twitter account and that, as soon as he realised that this was the case, he centralised all the club accounts.

The panel found that Mr Roper had contacted Child A via social media platforms and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child A.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(iv) proven.

v) Putting 'x' at the end of your messages to Child A;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation.

The panel had sight of a collection of screenshots showing messages between Mr Roper and Child A.

The panel noted the following messages that Mr Roper had sent Child A:

- *“Ahaha oh really? [eyes emoji] [laughing face emoji] x”*
- *“Let me know how it goes!! Good luck. Night x”*

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child A, who stated that Mr Roper made direct contact with her via social media. Child A stated that when she was [REDACTED] years old, she messaged Mr Roper, with her mum’s permission and whilst her mum watched her, about [REDACTED]. She stated that Mr Roper continued to message her on Instagram after this, and eventually he messaged her privately on Heja when she was [REDACTED] years old.

Child A stated that the messages that Mr Roper sent directly to her on Heja started off as conversations about football and just general conversation, and then progressed to more inappropriate content.

Child A submitted that Mr Roper would sometimes put “x” at the end of his messages, and would always message her after training and matches which was around five times a week.

Child A stated that Mr Roper started to message her on Twitter when she was around [REDACTED] years old, in addition to holding conversations with her on Heja. She stated that when sending her messages on Twitter he would do this from the football team Twitter account.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that the use of “x” at the end of his messages to Child A was nothing more than a salutation. He stated that at the time he signed off most of his messages to most people in this way and never meant the “x” to symbolise a “kiss”.

The panel noted that Child A gave oral evidence confirming that she interpreted the “x” in the messages to be a kiss and that she found this inappropriate because, as a coach herself, she would not message players with kisses. However, Child A stated that she did respond to Mr Roper with an “x” on occasion because she did not want to be blunt and so as not to seem unfriendly.

The panel found that Mr Roper had put “x” at the end of his messages to Child A and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child A.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(v) proven.

vi) Arranging one-to-one sessions with Child A without seeking appropriate approval from the football association.

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child A, who stated that Mr Roper would ask her to attend training early on [REDACTED] evenings so that she could help him set up.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, where he set out that there were never any one-to-one sessions and that the “*meetings*” referred to were to help set up for training. He stated that Child A would often turn up a matter of minutes earlier than the others and if there was ever an invite to set up he would extend this to all players and only when he was confident that there would be other teams training at the same time.

The panel considered the oral evidence of Child A who confirmed that Mr Roper had suggested that she attend training earlier on one occasion [REDACTED] and that Mr Roper had said that she could bring other people. Child A brought [REDACTED] to this session. Child A stated that Mr Roper had mentioned this on Heja as a private message.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness D who stated that he did not consider a player attending early to set up for training to be the same as a one-to-one session and that there was no authorisation process for arranging one-to-one sessions because these did not officially exist. The panel also noted that Mr Roper had suggested that Child A could bring others to the additional training.

In light of the above, the panel did not find that Mr Roper had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Child A in respect of his conduct above. Although Mr Roper had sought to arrange for Child A to attend training earlier to help with setting up, this was not a one-to-one session. Further, the session that Mr Roper asked Child A to attend was not a one-to-one session because Mr Roper had said Child A could bring others and Child A attended with [REDACTED]. The panel also noted that there was no authorisation or approval process from the FA for one-to-one sessions as confirmed by Witness D “*they are not a thing*”.

The panel found allegation 1(a)(vi) not proven.

b) Child B, by:

i) Adding Child B on Snapchat;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation.

The panel noted in Mr Roper's written statement that he had admitted to having added Child B on Snapchat and that he used this to message friends and people he coached.

The panel noted that there was a screenshot showing that Child B had a message from Mr Roper to be opened on Snapchat.

The panel found that Mr Roper had added Child B on Snapchat and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child B.

The panel found allegation 1(b)(i) proven.

ii) Contacting Child B via social media;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted this allegation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child B, who stated that Mr Roper was the assistant manager at the football club and she would see him twice a week.

Child B stated that shortly after joining the club, she received a Snapchat friend request from Mr Roper. She stated that she was quite confused by this as coaches would not normally communicate with players in this way.

Child B submitted that Mr Roper started messaging her via Snapchat, and initially this would be about how well she had done or played, and sometimes a discussion about their pet cats.

Child B stated that Mr Roper would send messages and images (including images of him topless) quite frequently, and at least on a weekly basis. She stated that she did not always reply to them, but he would often send her them after a training session or match day.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that he would converse with Child B about football and the performances she had put in at training or matches, but did not recall having any conversations with Child B about any topics other than football.

Mr Roper stated that he asked for Child B's Snapchat, as at the time Snapchat was becoming popular and he used it to speak to his friends and people he coached.

The panel also noted that there was a screenshot of a Facebook messenger message between Child B and Mr Roper and that Mr Roper had sent Child B a happy birthday message in 2016 with "xxxx".

The panel found that Mr Roper had contacted Child B via social media and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child B.

The panel found allegation 1(b)(ii) proven.

iii) Sending Child B photographs of you topless and/or wearing underwear;

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child B, who stated that she and Mr Roper would message via Snapchat, and that over time she sent him some pictures of her cat and he sent some pictures of his cat. She stated that the images that Mr Roper would send got progressively odd, in that Mr Roper would send her pictures of his cat but he would be topless in the background.

Child B stated that Mr Roper then started sending her pictures of just him topless and in his underwear, and sometimes his cat would be somewhere in the picture.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, where he set out that he has not seen any of the images Child B is referring to and although he did recall sending an image of his cat, he had no recollection of what he could have been wearing.

The panel noted the contemporaneous evidence from Child B notifying the football chairman at the time that she had received topless photographs from Mr Roper. The panel found Child B to be a credible, consistent and reliable witness and her oral evidence was consistent with her written statement. The panel also noted that in Child B's oral evidence she recalled noting that in one of the photographs she could see Mr Roper's brand of underwear and the panel felt that was a specific detail which added weight to her recollection of events. The panel also noted that Mr Roper had acknowledged at the time that he could have been topless in a photograph which he had sent Child B.

The panel considered the notes from the FA's investigation, within which Mr Roper admitted that "*Potentially, I might have on a couple of occasions*" when he was asked if he had sent any other images of himself topless or in his underwear, with or without the cat.

The panel also noted that there was evidence that Mr Roper had messaged Child B via Snapchat and that the main use of this was to send photographs which disappeared unless a screenshot was taken. In Child B's oral evidence she explained that she did not screenshot the message because this would have notified Mr Roper and she did not want him to know that she had taken a screenshot.

The panel found that Mr Roper had sent Child B photographs of himself topless and/or wearing underwear and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child B.

The panel found allegation 1(b)(iii) proven.

iv) Touching Child B's back, on one or more occasions;

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child B, who stated that Mr Roper would stand really close to her, and sometimes he would touch her back. She submitted that it felt like he was overly close to her.

Child B stated that there were times that the team would have talks whilst they were all huddling and she recalled two occasions when Mr Roper stood next to her and put his hand on her lower back. She stated that she recalled another time when she was doing her laces, and he put his hand on her lower back which wasn't necessary. Child B stated that she felt the physical contact was quite a conscious effort from Mr Roper and that other coaches occasionally would put their hands on players' shoulders or upper back as part of a huddle.

The panel noted that in Mr Roper's interview with the FA he had denied this allegation and had stated that his "*hands would never touch anything inappropriate at all. Certainly, not in view of anybody else, I would always be really careful.*" The panel found this comment to be particularly concerning given that there was no plausible or satisfactory explanation for Mr Roper's actions concerning Child B.

The panel noted that in Child B's oral evidence she recalled Mr Roper intentionally coming over to her when she was tying her laces and he bent down to touch her lower back. Child B believed that this was not an accident and that there was no reason for Mr Roper to touch her lower back, which made her feel very uncomfortable. The panel found Child B to be credible and consistent in her recollection of events.

The panel found that Mr Roper had touched Child B's back on more than one occasion and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child B.

The panel found allegation 1(b)(iv) proven.

v) Commenting on Child B's appearance and/or outfits.

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation. The panel also noted that Mr Roper did not provide an alternative plausible explanation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child B, who stated that Mr Roper would send messages commenting on her appearance and say things about how good she looked. These comments were always in between football related comments such as *“you played well”*.

Child B stated that Mr Roper also said things to her in person, and recalled that one time Mr Roper had told her she looked good in shorts. In Child B’s oral evidence she also confirmed that Mr Roper had commented on her hair looking nice. The panel also noted that these comments were similar in tone and content to the comments made by Mr Roper towards Child A which were found proven.

The panel found that Mr Roper had commented on Child B’s appearance and/or outfits and had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Child B in respect of his conduct above.

The panel found allegation 1(b)(v) proven.

c) Child C, by:

i) Adding Child C on Snapchat;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted allegation 1(c)(i).

The panel noted that Child C was not in attendance and therefore could not be cross-examined on her evidence. The panel also noted that Mr Roper was not present to give oral evidence and to be cross-examined. However, the panel considered the appropriate amount of weight to attach to Child C’s hearsay evidence.

The panel noted that there was evidence by way of a screenshot in the bundle that Mr Roper had asked Child C for her Snapchat and that this was corroborated by Child B’s evidence.

The panel found that Mr Roper had added Child C on Snapchat and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child C.

The panel found allegation 1(c)(i) proven.

ii) Contacting Child C via social media;

The panel noted that Mr Roper admitted allegations 1(c)(ii).

The panel noted that Child C was not in attendance and therefore could not be cross-examined on her evidence. The panel also noted that Mr Roper was also not present to give oral evidence and to be cross-examined. However, the panel considered the appropriate amount of weight to attach to Child C’s hearsay evidence.

The panel considered the written statement of Child C, who stated that Mr Roper was the assistant coach for the women's football team. She stated that she and Mr Roper had a lot of mutual friends from outside of the football club, and so they followed each other on Instagram which she didn't find weird because they had a lot of mutual friends.

Child C stated that she and Mr Roper started to speak over Instagram, and Mr Roper sent her a message asking for her Snapchat. She stated that she gave her Snapchat to him and he added her on there first.

The panel considered the email Child C sent to Witness D on 31 August 2022, providing a statement for the FA's investigation. The panel noted that in this statement Child C stated that Mr Roper sent her sexual based messages on Snapchat, and that one message that stuck with her was *"guess you must've been wearing a lucky thong today"*.

The panel considered the oral evidence of Child B who confirmed that Mr Roper had also contacted Child B on Twitter and the panel saw a screenshot of a message confirming this to be the case. The panel found Child B to be a credible, reliable and consistent witness.

The panel found that Mr Roper had contacted Child C via social media and that this amounted to inappropriate contact and/or a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Child C.

The panel found allegation 1(c)(ii) proven.

iii) Sending Child C inappropriate messages, such as 'are you wearing your lucky thong' and 'next time you tie up your laces just bend over in front of me', or messages to this effect.

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel noted that Child C was not in attendance and therefore could not be cross-examined on her evidence. The panel also noted that Mr Roper was also not present to give oral evidence and to be cross-examined. However, the panel considered the appropriate amount of weight to attach to Child C's hearsay evidence.

The panel considered the written statement of Child C, who stated that initially, she and Mr Roper would just talk on Snapchat about football or the games, but then Mr Roper started to make random inappropriate comments.

Child C stated that one comment made by Mr Roper had stuck in her head and was *"guess you must've been wearing your lucky thong today, followed with 'yeah I could tell' [winking emoji]."*

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Child B, who stated that she was friends with Child C and knew that Mr Roper had sent sexualised images to her.

Child B stated that she had seen some of the messages that Mr Roper had sent to Child C and that he had said that Child C looked good in them. Child B also stated that she had received a message from Child C about receiving “*nudes*” from Mr Roper, and which the panel saw by way of a screenshot. Child B confirmed that she had not seen these images or the images that Child C had sent back.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that he denied sending such messages. He stated that he did message Child C on Snapchat, but did not send her messages of this nature.

The panel noted that Child B had stated in her oral evidence that she had discussed with Child C the fact that she had received inappropriate messages from Mr Roper. Although the panel noted that Child B did not see the messages, the panel considered that Child B and Child C had discussed Mr Roper sending nudes and therefore it was more likely than not, on the balance of probabilities, that Mr Roper had sent inappropriate messages such as “*are you wearing your lucky thong.*” However, the panel was not provided with sufficient evidence of Mr Roper having sent a message saying “*next time you tie up your laces just bend over in front of me.*” Nevertheless, the panel found that Mr Roper had sent Child C inappropriate messages.

The panel found that Mr Roper had sent inappropriate messages or messages to the effect of those listed above and had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Child C.

The panel found allegation 1(c)(iii) proven.

2. Your conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1a and/or 1b and/or 1c:

a) Demonstrated a lack of insight into previous concerns raised relating to inappropriate communication with a child in or around 2017;

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the chronology of events and evidence in determining this allegation. The panel noted that with regard to the conduct provided at 1(b), this did not amount to a lack of insight regarding Child B as this conduct preceded the previous concerns which had arisen during the summer of 2017 regarding inappropriate communications with a child. The panel therefore considered this allegation in respect of Child A and Child C only.

The panel considered the FA summary form. The form set out the case referred to the FA on 29 June 2017, stating that Mr Roper had allegedly text young girls late in the evening and engaged in some conversations that could be seen as inappropriate.

The form set out that at a strategy meeting held in respect of the allegation, it was agreed that the FA would ask Mr Roper to re-apply for a criminal record check, complete a new safeguarding children workshop and be monitored for the next three months whilst he continued as a trainee teacher.

The panel considered Mr Roper's learning and reflection form dated 25 July 2017, where he set out that he realised what he had done wrong, stated that he will not engage in private one-on-one conversations with anyone under the age of 18 and that his lessons have been learned. The panel considered that Mr Roper had disregarded a number of the points in his own learning and reflection form.

The panel considered that by messaging Child A and Child C via social media, it was evident that Mr Roper had not changed his behaviour following the concerns raised in 2017. The panel noted that Mr Roper had committed the same type of misconduct that had been investigated in 2017, and that as a result of the 2017 investigation he should have reasonably known that his behaviour was inappropriate.

The panel found that Mr Roper's conduct as found proven at allegation 1(a) and 1(c) demonstrated a lack of insight into previous concerns raised relating to inappropriate communication with a child in or around 2017.

The panel therefore found allegation 2(a) proven in respect of allegations 1(a) and 1(c).

b) Was conduct of a sexual nature and/or was sexually motivated.

The panel noted that Mr Roper denied this allegation.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper and noted that he denied any kind of sexually motivated behaviour.

The panel's attention was drawn to section 78 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and to the cases of *Sait v The General Medical Council [2018]*, *Basson v General Medical Council [2018]* and *The General Medical Council v Haris [2021]* by the legal adviser.

The panel considered whether the conduct was sexually motivated. It noted that in *Basson* it was stated that, "[a] sexual motive means that the conduct was done either in pursuit of sexual gratification or in pursuit of a sexual relationship".

The panel was also mindful of the Court of Appeal's conclusion in *Haris*. The court found in that case that, "[i]n the absence of a plausible innocent explanation for what he did, the facts spoke for themselves. A sexual motive was plainly more likely than not; I would go so far as to say that that inference was overwhelming."

As set out above, the panel found that Mr Roper had sent inappropriate messages to Child A, Child B and Child C, and had inappropriately touched Child A and Child B.

The panel particularly noted that Mr Roper had touched Child A's bottom and front private area and Child B's lower back; had sent images to Child B where he was topless; had commented on Child A's outfits and appearance; and had referred to Child C wearing a "*lucky thong*".

The panel considered that such conduct was inherently sexual in nature and that there was an absence of any plausible alternative explanation.

The panel went on to consider whether Mr Roper's conduct, as found proven, was sexually motivated. The panel considered that touching Child A and Child B and messaging Child B images of him topless, was sexually motivated. The panel concluded that there was no evidence of any other plausible innocent explanation for such conduct.

The panel considered that in Mr Roper's messages he had often used suggestive and inappropriate emojis which had added a sexual element to his messages. The panel also noted the frequency of Mr Roper's messages. The panel noted the fact that Child B had stated in her oral evidence that she was scared the messaging would escalate to more sexual messaging. The panel considered the impact that Mr Roper's conduct had had on all those involved in making them feel uncomfortable and that they couldn't wear certain clothing or be alone with Mr Roper.

The panel found that Mr Roper's conduct as found proven at allegation 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c) was conduct of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated.

The panel therefore found allegation 2(b) proven.

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

Having found the majority 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 Roper, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Roper 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; and
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- 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 Roper, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education ("KCSIE").

The panel also considered whether Mr Roper'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 the offence of sexual communication with a child was relevant.

The panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting. Despite this, the panel felt that Mr Roper's conduct was relevant to his position as a teacher in that he had been inappropriately communicating with school age children via social media and had inappropriately touched two children. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Roper had failed to maintain an appropriate professional boundary with Child A, Child B and Child C whilst he was placed in a position of trust as their football coach.

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

In relation to whether Mr Roper'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 Roper'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 Roper was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that the offence of sexual communication with a child was relevant.

The panel noted that, in 2017, a member of the public brought concerns to the school where Mr Roper was undertaking his teacher training. The concerns raised were regarding Mr Roper's inappropriate behaviour and the panel considered that this had clearly had an impact on the community.

The panel was troubled that Mr Roper indicated that he had a strong understanding of safeguarding and had received training from both the FA and by way of his teacher training. However, despite the training and the previous investigation, he continued to conduct himself in an inappropriate way. The panel considered that this conduct had undermined public confidence in a fundamental way and that his actions had had a serious impact on the children involved.

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 Mr Roper's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Roper'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; 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 light of the panel's findings against Mr Roper, which involved contacting children via social media and sending inappropriate messages including topless images, touching Child A's bottom and front private area, touching Child B's lower back and therefore failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Roper 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 Roper 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 Roper in the profession. Whilst there is evidence that Mr Roper had some ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Roper 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 Roper.

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;
- abuse of position or trust...;

- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position; and
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour as shown by the repeated nature of the behaviour.

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 Roper's actions were not deliberate. On the contrary, the panel considered that Mr Roper's conduct was deliberate and repetitive in nature.

There was no evidence that Mr Roper was acting under any duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation.

Mr Roper did provide some evidence to the FA that he had contributed to the education sector. However, he did not provide evidence of having contributed significantly or exceptionally to the teaching profession. The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character due to the repeated behaviours over a significant period of time.

The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that, as a coach he had the duty to serve as a role model. He stated that he regretted the impact his behaviours have had on those around him, and that he understands the importance of safeguarding children and not blurring boundaries.

Mr Roper stated that he has taken many hours for self-reflection to try and understand how his good intentions went wrong. He apologised for his short fallings as a coach and stated that he has removed himself from social media and no longer uses it for messaging. The panel considered that Mr Roper's comments in his self-reflection were not convincing as he had repeated these behaviours following his earlier self-reflection and training, indicating that he had not shown meaningful insight into his conduct. The panel noted that Mr Roper reiterated the same or similar learnings from his conduct in 2017.

Mr Roper stated that teaching is his passion and he would have an enormously positive impact if he could continue as a teacher.

The panel had sight of various letters and cards Mr Roper had received from parents and pupils whilst teaching. Although the panel noted that Mr Roper had provided some evidence as to his teaching ability, the panel did not consider that Mr Roper had provided evidence of having made an exceptional contribution to the teaching profession.

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 Roper 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 Roper. The repetitive and serious nature of Mr Roper's actions were a significant factor in forming that opinion. The panel was not provided with sufficient evidence as to Mr Roper's insight into his actions and was not therefore satisfied that Mr Roper's actions would not be repeated in the future. 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.

One of these includes:

- any sexual misconduct involving a child.

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.

The panel considered that, whilst the behaviour found proven was serious as it involved sexual misconduct involving a child, the behaviour was not at the most serious end of the scale in terms of sexual misconduct and there was an opportunity for Mr Roper to seek to redeem himself and provide insight and remorse into his conduct.

The panel gave serious consideration to recommending prohibition with no review period. However, the panel considered that Mr Roper could seek to demonstrate insight into his previous conduct and provide reassurances as to his future risk of repetition. The panel noted that over five years had elapsed between the time of the initial conduct which resulted in a LADO referral and some of the proven allegations. The panel therefore

considered that Mr Roper required a further extended period of time in order to demonstrate meaningful insight and remorse into his actions and behaviour to meet the interests of the public. The panel also considered that this would give Mr Roper an opportunity to demonstrate insight and put into practice some of his own self-reflections.

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 an 8-year review period.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found 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 1(a)(vi). I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Roper 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; and
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- 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 Roper 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 Roper fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include findings of sexual misconduct, inappropriate messages and failure to maintain professional boundaries with children.

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 Roper, 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 light of the panel's findings against Mr Roper, which involved contacting children via social media and sending inappropriate messages including topless images, touching Child A's bottom and front private area, touching Child B's lower back and therefore failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and the protection of other members of the public." A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel's comments on insight and remorse, which the panel sets out as follows, "The panel considered the written statement of Mr Roper, who stated that, as a coach he had the duty to serve as a role model. He stated that he regretted the impact his behaviours have had on those around him, and that he understands the importance of safeguarding children and not blurring boundaries." The panel has also commented that "Mr Roper stated that he has taken many hours for self-reflection to try and understand how his good intentions went wrong. He apologised for his short fallings as a coach and stated that he has removed himself from social media and no longer uses it for messaging." I have therefore given this element some weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, "the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Roper was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession." I am particularly mindful of the finding of sexual misconduct

and failure to maintain profession boundaries 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 Roper himself and the panel comment “The panel had sight of various letters and cards Mr Roper had received from parents and pupils whilst teaching. Although the panel noted that Mr Roper had provided some evidence as to his teaching ability, the panel did not consider that Mr Roper had provided evidence of having made an exceptional contribution to the teaching profession.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Roper 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 limited insight shown. The panel has said, “The panel considered that Mr Roper’s comments in his self-reflection were not convincing as he had repeated these behaviours following his earlier self-reflection and training, indicating that he had not shown meaningful insight into his conduct. The panel noted that Mr Roper reiterated the same or similar learnings from his conduct in 2017.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding that “The panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting. Despite this, the panel felt that Mr Roper’s conduct was relevant to his position as a teacher in that he had been inappropriately communicating with school age children via social media and had inappropriately touched two children. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Roper had failed to maintain an appropriate professional boundary with Child A, Child B and Child C whilst he was placed in a position of trust as their football coach.”

I have also given considerable weight to the following “The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character due to the repeated behaviours over a significant period of time.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Roper 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 an 8 year review period.

I have considered the panel's comments "The panel considered that, whilst the behaviour found proven was serious as it involved sexual misconduct involving a child, the behaviour was not at the most serious end of the scale in terms of sexual misconduct and there was an opportunity for Mr Roper to seek to redeem himself and provide insight and remorse into his conduct."

The panel has also said "The panel gave serious consideration to recommending prohibition with no review period. However, the panel considered that Mr Roper could seek to demonstrate insight into his previous conduct and provide reassurances as to his future risk of repetition. The panel noted that over five years had elapsed between the time of the initial conduct which resulted in a LADO referral and some of the proven allegations. The panel therefore considered that Mr Roper required a further extended period of time in order to demonstrate meaningful insight and remorse into his actions and behaviour to meet the interests of the public. The panel also considered that this would give Mr Roper an opportunity to demonstrate insight and put into practice some of his own self-reflections."

In this case I disagree with the panel on the recommended review period. Although in the panel's view Mr Roper "could" seek to demonstrate insight into his previous conduct and provide reassurances as to his future risk of repetition and that this would give Mr Roper the "opportunity" to demonstrate insight and self-reflection, in my view the panel have given insufficient weight to the repetitive nature of the misconduct found proven. Mr Roper had committed the same type of misconduct that had been investigated in 2017, and that as a result of the 2017 investigation he should have reasonably known that his behaviour was inappropriate.

I have also taken into account that "The panel was troubled that Mr Roper indicated that he had a strong understanding of safeguarding and had received training from both the FA and by way of his teacher training. However, despite the training and the previous investigation, he continued to conduct himself in an inappropriate way. The panel

considered that this conduct had undermined public confidence in a fundamental way and that his actions had had a serious impact on the children involved.”

In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the seriousness of the findings involving sexual misconduct with a child, and the limited insight or remorse shown, which in my view indicates the risk of repetition could be far greater.

I have decided it is not in the public interest to agree a review period and I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

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

Mr Joshua Roper 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', with a stylized, cursive script.

Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 26 August 2025

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