



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Matthew Hindle: Professional conduct panel hearing outcome

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

September 2025

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

Teacher:	Mr Matthew Hindle
Teacher ref number:	1240566
Teacher date of birth:	11 September 1989
TRA reference:	20990
Date of determination:	26 September 2025
Former employer:	Oulder Hill Leadership Academy, Greater Manchester

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 22 September 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Matthew Hindle.

The panel members were Mrs Bernie Whittle (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Phil Trendall (lay panellist), and Mr Duncan Tilley (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Harry Taylor of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Rosa Bennathan (Counsel – 3 Raymond Buildings), instructed by Kingsley Napley solicitors.

Mr Matthew Hindle was present and was represented by Mr Gurmair Singh (Counsel of JSC Chambers).

The hearing took place in public save that portions of the hearing were heard in private and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 15 April 2025.

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

Whilst working as a Teacher at Tottingham High School and/or Oulder Hill Leadership Academy he:

1. Between approximately 2017 and 2021, failed to maintain proper boundaries and/or engaged in inappropriate conduct with Pupil A whilst she was a pupil and/or after she had left school in that;
 - a) On one or more occasions drove Pupil A home from school;
 - b) Gave Pupil A your personal contact details;
 - c) Exchanged messages with Pupil A;
 - d) In or around October 2018, engaged in a video call with Pupil A during which he asked her to remove her clothes;
 - e) On or around 31 October 2018, kissed and/or engaged in a sexual act with Pupil A;
 - f) Between October 2018 and October 2019, on one or more occasions invited Pupil A to your home;
 - g) Between October 2018 and October 2019, on one or more occasions engaged in intercourse and/or sexual acts with Pupil A.
2. At the time the sexual conduct occurred he was or ought to have been aware that Pupil A was vulnerable;
3. His conduct at paragraphs 1a) – 1g) above was of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated.

Mr Hindle had not submitted a response to notice of proceedings prior to the hearing commencing. At the outset of the hearing, Mr Singh confirmed that Mr Hindle admitted allegations 1a) and 1b). He denied the remainder of the allegations.

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 8

Section 2: Notice of hearing, response – pages 9 to 16

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 17 to 28

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 29 to 419

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the recordings and witness statements referred to above. In respect of the witness statements of Mr Hindle, the panel referred to these as the '9 page statement (undated)' and 'statement of 21 September 2025'. The parties were happy to proceed on that basis.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing. The panel members had also watched the recordings and read Mr Hindle's witness statements before the parties made opening submissions.

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

Witnesses

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

Witness 1

Pupil A - complainant

Witness 3

Witness 4

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

On or around 1 January 2016 Mr Hindle was employed at Tottington High School (“the School”) as a Teacher in charge of Music.

In or around January 2017 Pupil A made a disclosure to Mr Hindle [REDACTED] This disclosure was shared with senior members of staff, including Witness 3. [REDACTED]

In or around April 2017 Mr Hindle drove Pupil A home from a [REDACTED] at the School. At around the same time, Pupil A’s [REDACTED] raised concerns with Witness 1 about the familiarity between Pupil A and Mr Hindle. Witness 1 investigated and concluded that none of the text messages between Pupil A and Mr Hindle were inappropriate.

[REDACTED] Pupil A came off the School’s roll.

On or around 15 April 2019 Mr Hindle left the School and began working at Oulder Hill Leadership Academy (“the Academy”) on or around 23 April 2019.

On or around 1 July 2020 the School received an allegation from a member of the public in relation to Mr Hindle’s conduct whilst he was working at the School. A subsequent investigation was carried out by the Academy.

On 15 July 2022 Mr Hindle resigned from the Academy and on 22 July 2022 the TRA received a referral in relation to allegations made about Mr Hindle’s conduct.

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:

Whilst working as a Teacher at Tottingham High School and/or Oulder Hill Leadership Academy you:

- 1. Between approximately 2017 and 2021, failed to maintain proper boundaries and/or engaged in inappropriate conduct with Pupil A whilst she was a pupil and/or after she had left school in that;**

- (a) On one or more occasions drove Pupil A home from school;**

Mr Hindle admitted this allegation at the outset of the hearing. There were two specific occasions that were referred to in evidence that were not in dispute. In or around January 2017, Mr Hindle drove Pupil A in his car [REDACTED]. In the circumstances, Witness 3 either requested or agreed to Mr Hindle driving Pupil A [REDACTED]. For the purposes of the panel’s deliberations, it did not seem material whether Mr Hindle offered or was asked to drive Pupil A [REDACTED]. The agreed fact was that he drove her. There was a difference of opinion between Mr Hindle and Witness 3 about what the instruction to Mr

Hindle was at the time. [REDACTED] In any event, there appears to be no dispute that Mr Hindle drove Pupil A home.

There was another occasion that was discussed in oral evidence at the hearing. In or around April 2017, Mr Hindle had driven Pupil A home following [REDACTED] at the school. [REDACTED]. There was a discrepancy in respect of who suggested Mr Hindle driving Pupil A home. Pupil A says that Mr Hindle offered to take her home if she received consent from [REDACTED]. Mr Hindle says that it was in fact Pupil A who initiated this and passed him her mobile phone to speak to [REDACTED], who was already on the line. Further, Mr Hindle says that he sought and obtained additional permission from a more senior member of staff who was also present at [REDACTED]. When questioned, Pupil A was unable to recall whether that senior member of staff was present but the panel accepts that another member of staff would have been at [REDACTED]. The panel mentions this for completeness but the material fact remains that Mr Hindle drove Pupil A home, and this was not disputed. Another important fact that was not in dispute was that, on their way from the school to Pupil A's house, Mr Hindle bought food from a McDonald's, a well-known fast food restaurant. In oral evidence, Mr Hindle said that he had not eaten that day. In the panel's view, this is relevant to the allegation because he had not obtained permission to deviate from the agreed route. In his oral evidence, Mr Hindle did not suggest that he had obtained permission from the School and/or Pupil A's [REDACTED] to visit McDonald's. In other words, driving Pupil A home via McDonald's was inappropriate. In any event, the panel is satisfied that driving Pupil A home was inappropriate.

The panel has considered this allegation carefully. It is mindful that Mr Hindle obtained consent from the School and/or Pupil A's parent before driving her home. Mr Hindle also confirmed in oral evidence that he had the appropriate insurance and the panel has been provided with no reason to contradict that. However, obtaining permission to carry out an act does not necessarily make that act appropriate. In light of the facts that the panel has been presented with, and which Mr Hindle has admitted to, the panel find that he failed to maintain proper boundaries and/or acted inappropriately.

For the reasons above, the panel find this allegation proven.

(b) Gave Pupil A your personal contact details;

At the outset of the hearing, Mr Hindle admitted to this allegation. Again, there was no dispute between the witnesses as to how this allegation had arisen. It relates to the incident in January 2017 when Mr Hindle drove Pupil A home. Mr Hindle confirmed in oral evidence that he gave Pupil A his personal mobile number so that she could contact him to confirm she was okay, [REDACTED]. The panel accepts Mr Hindle's account that he was unaware Pupil A had been given [REDACTED]. Drawing on the panel's knowledge, it is common for only limited staff to be aware of [REDACTED]. However, notwithstanding Mr Hindle's evidence about the intention behind this action, the panel

does find that it was inappropriate and was demonstrative of a failure to maintain proper boundaries.

For the reasons above, the panel find this allegation proven.

(c) Exchanged messages with Pupil A;

The panel has been provided with evidence relating to this allegation. Pupil A told the panel that, following Mr Hindle giving her his personal number in or around January 2017, she and Mr Hindle continued to exchange messages until approximately September 2019. The panel were provided with copies/transcripts of these messages. Based on the evidence before the panel, Pupil A and Mr Hindle exchanged both text messages and messages via social media in the relevant period.

It is clear from the evidence that the panel has not been provided with all of the messages between Pupil A and Mr Hindle, but the panel is satisfied that they had exchanged messages, both whilst Pupil A was enrolled at the School and after she had left.

The panel heard oral evidence from Witness 1, who confirmed that in or around April 2017 Pupil A's [REDACTED] had raised concern about the perceived familiarity between Pupil A and Mr Hindle. Witness 1 then conducted an investigation, during which Mr Hindle provided him access to his personal mobile phone. Witness 1 considered the text messages between Pupil A and Mr Hindle and concluded that, although the principle of messaging a student personally was inappropriate, the content was not of significant concern to the School.

The panel also heard oral evidence from Mr Hindle who told the panel that, in respect of the text messages up to around April 2017, he had tried to deflect Pupil A's attempts to engage him in a non-professional conversation. The panel considered this explanation and found that it was plausible for the most part. However, the panel also noted that on 17 February 2017 Mr Hindle sent an unprompted text message to Pupil A which reads:

'Hi, I know I said don't text me. However keep my number, and if you need it on Thursday let me know. Even if it is a text to say [all] clear. There [if] you need as it is holidays and you might not have someone to talk to.'

Mr Hindle did not deny having sent this message. In the panel's view, this message encouraged Pupil A to continue messaging Mr Hindle and was a failure on his part to maintain proper boundaries.

In oral evidence Mr Hindle contested having sent specific messages, namely a message sent to Pupil A on Facebook messenger on or around 4 November 2018 in which the sender sent a username to Pupil A, which she told the panel in evidence was a Snapchat account. Pupil A also explained in oral evidence that the purpose of sending her that

username was so that she could send an indecent image of herself on Snapchat. Mr Hindle's explanation of this message was that his Facebook account had been hacked. He told the panel that he did not recognise the message. He initially denied sending it and then referred the panel to the response he had previously given the police, namely that he believed his account had been hacked. However, the panel was not persuaded by this explanation. There was no evidence before the panel that Mr Hindle's account had been hacked at the material time. Additionally, Mr Hindle accepted to the panel in earlier oral evidence that he had sent the other messages in the continuous thread, which were in the bundle. The panel therefore considered that, on the balance of probabilities, Mr Hindle sent all of the messages shown in evidence, to Pupil A.

In relation to the exchanging of messages with Pupil A whilst she was enrolled at the School, the panel found this conduct to be inappropriate and a clear breach of professional boundaries.

In relation to the exchanging of messages with Pupil A after she had left the School, the panel considered this conduct carefully. At the time of the majority of the messages, being in or around October and November 2018, [REDACTED]. Mr Hindle told the panel in his oral evidence that the relationship which had developed between himself and Pupil A was closer than it should have been. In those circumstances, the panel's view is that continuing to message Pupil A after she had left the School was still inappropriate and, by virtue of that fact, was a failure on Mr Hindle's part to maintain proper boundaries.

For the above reasons, the panel find this allegation proven.

(d) In or around October 2018, engaged in a video call with Pupil A during which he asked her to remove her clothes;

The panel was provided with little evidence on this allegation. It was provided with the transcript from Pupil A's ABE interview with the police in March 2023, as well as the recording itself. It was also provided with the witness evidence of Pupil A and Mr Hindle, who both gave oral evidence at the hearing. In a case where the complainant provides an oral account, and there is a flat denial from the other person concerned and little or no independent evidence, it is commonplace for there to be inconsistency and confusion in some of the detail. Nevertheless, the task of the panel is to consider whether the core allegations are true. The panel considered it appropriate to assess the accounts of each individual carefully. When assessing the credibility of a witness, the panel found it helpful to consider matters such as:

- Whether their witness account remained consistent during the course of giving evidence;

- Whether their witness account remained consistent with what they said on other occasions;
- How inherently probable their evidence was; and
- The extent to which the witness evidence was corroborated or contradicted by contemporaneous evidence to the extent this is available.

The panel found that there were consistent elements in both witnesses' accounts. However, Pupil A had remained largely consistent in her version since the relevant allegations against Mr Hindle were made to the School in approximately April 2021. In contrast, Mr Hindle's account has not remained consistent in all aspects throughout. For clarity, there were times when giving oral evidence in which Mr Hindle offered alternative explanations as to how Pupil A could describe the inside of his house, including its layout, décor and furniture. He did not contest that Pupil A's description was accurate. The panel does not draw inference from Mr Hindle's new alternative suggestions, only raised in this hearing, as it is entirely plausible that these suggestions could have only come to him during the hearing. However, there were other occasions on which Mr Hindle had been inconsistent with his responses. For example, in Mr Hindle's 9-page statement (undated) he states that he had not conversed with Pupil A via social media. That is clearly not consistent with the oral evidence he gave at this hearing, whereby he admitted sending many of the messages that were sent from his Facebook account to Pupil A.

Additionally, the panel found Mr Hindle's version of events about how some of the messages were sent to Pupil A implausible and lacking in credibility. The panel also asked Mr Hindle about other specific messages. For example, in an exchange of messages in which Pupil A tells Mr Hindle she intends to come to his house in the afternoon or evening of 4 November 2018, Mr Hindle replies '*Please don't...*'. However, he then sends a further message saying '*[laughing emoji] I'll be back at 9:30 ish if you want?*'. When asked what he meant by this message, Mr Hindle was not able to give an answer. Notably, he did not suggest that this message had been sent by someone else.

The panel also questioned Mr Hindle on other messages it had been provided with. In particular, there was a message exchange in which Pupil A says that she had control over Mr Hindle. The panel's view of Mr Hindle's responses suggests he believed there was some secret that Pupil A knew, that Mr Hindle did not want shared. This is also a reasonable interpretation based on Pupil A's messages, in which she refers to another 'thing' and says she would not 'do that' to Mr Hindle. The relevant exchange is:

Pupil A – *‘You think I’m joking but I’m not. I have the ultimate power over you [tongue out emoji]’*

Mr Hindle – *The fact you even joke about using that...*

Pupil A – *I’m not on about that? Why would I even do that to you? Why do you even think I would?*

Pupil A – *You really think I’m that horrible of a person. Wow*

Mr Hindle – *Well what Other power do you have over me?*

Pupil A – *Like literally with the whole t-shirt thing the fact that I’m a girl. I just can’t believe that’s what you think of me. You clearly think I’m someone who I’m not.*

Pupil a – *Be mad all you like. Think I’m immature all you like. It was supposed to be a joke. Just like the flirting right?*

Mr Hindle – *You have nothing else to hold over me apart from that, So obviously I will think of that first...*

Pupil A – *Only if you think that that’s something that I’d do. Which I wouldn’t. Ever. I promised you that a million and one times.*

Mr Hindle – *Okay X*

Pupil A – *Please believe me. Please X*

Mr Hindle - *Ok*

Pupil A – *‘Look, I know you don’t want to literally trust me with your life but you have to. And you shouldn’t have an issue with doing so. I don’t know what I can do to make you know that you can. But I swear you can trust me with your life and I would never do anything to hurt you. I just don’t want you to think that I would x’*

Mr Hindle – *‘I do x’*

Pupil A – *‘Are you sure. X’*

Pupil A – *‘I’m sorry x’*

Mr Hindle – *‘Sorry, I’ve been busy teaching and the band. Absolutely nothing wrong X’*

Pupil A – *‘No it’s okay I get it. And I know I just had to say sorry. I don’t want you to be mad or anything. X’*

Mr Hindle – *‘It lasted 30 seconds don’t worry’*

Pupil A – *‘Yeah but it was still there in the first place and it shouldn’t have been x’*

The exchange took place late at night and the conversation continued to discuss each other’s days.

When the panel asked Mr Hindle what it was that he says lasted 30 seconds, Mr Hindle could not provide a response. The panel has considered that these messages were sent some years ago but in the wider context of the other messages, particularly when Mr Hindle was able to recollect the 2017 messages, the panel found Mr Hindle’s lack of substantial response to be unsatisfactory and to lack credibility. In the panel’s view, these messages were reflective of the evidence that Pupil A gave to the panel. This was more persuasive than Mr Hindle’s account, which was in essence a flat denial that many of the allegations occurred.

The panel does not find Mr Hindle’s responses in relation to the aforementioned messages plausible.

The examples referred to have led the panel to conclude that Pupil A’s account is credible. Therefore, the panel accepts that on the balance of probabilities Pupil A’s account is likely to be true in respect of this allegation. There was likely to have been a video call between Pupil A and Mr Hindle and, further, it was more likely than not that Mr Hindle asked Pupil A to remove her clothes during that call.

For the reasons set out above, the panel finds this allegation proven.

(e) On or around 31 October 2018, kissed and/or engaged in a sexual act with Pupil A;

The panel heard evidence from Mr Hindle and Pupil A, both of whom confirmed that by 31 October 2018 Mr Hindle had a “flirtatious” relationship with Pupil A’s [REDACTED]. On 31 October 2018 Pupil A’s [REDACTED] sent a message to Mr Hindle on Facebook messenger. [REDACTED]. She explained that Pupil A’s location was unknown and Mr Hindle offered to try and find her, which the [REDACTED] appeared to be grateful for. It is in this context that Mr Hindle went to find Pupil A. Mr Hindle confirmed in oral and written evidence that he spent some time talking to Pupil A before he drove her home. The panel accepts that Mr Hindle was authorised by Pupil A’s [REDACTED] to find Pupil A and bring her home.

Although the allegation is not specific in terms of whether Mr Hindle allegedly kissed and/or engaged in a sexual act with Pupil A in his car, the panel have interpreted the

allegation to mean '*at any point* on or around 31 October 2018'. In any event, Mr Hindle denies the allegation.

The panel referred itself to the exchange of messages between Mr Hindle and Pupil A that begins from 01:41 on 1 November 2018. Mr Hindle did not deny that he had sent messages to Pupil A at this time. It is clear that this particular topic of conversation begins with a discussion about the mud that Pupil A had left in Mr Hindle's car. The panel can reasonably infer from this exchange that by 01:41 on 1 November 2018 Pupil A had returned home. There is a particular segment of the exchange that the panel has drawn inference from, namely:

Pupil A – *'It's not that easy... I've felt like this for a while*

Pupil A – *'I can still smell you [laughing emoji] your car smells so strong*

Mr Hindle – *'In a bad way?'*

Pupil A – *'Not in the slightest'*

Mr Hindle – *'Night x'*

Pupil A – *'Night x'*

The panel's view is that from this point, the exchange of messages between Mr Hindle and Pupil A is generally more friendly. For the reasons previously stated, the panel considers that Pupil A's evidence is, on balance, more likely to be correct. As such, the panel prefer the evidence of Pupil A in that there was either kissing and/or sexual contact between the two on or around the evening of 31 October 2018.

For the reasons set out above, the panel finds this allegation proven.

(f) Between October 2018 and October 2019, on one or more occasions invited Pupil A to your home;

The panel considered the exchange of messages between Pupil A and Mr Hindle. In oral evidence, Mr Hindle told the panel that at no point had he ever invited Pupil A to his home. The panel accept that it has no contemporaneous evidence which shows Mr Hindle expressly inviting Pupil A to his home. However there is one message dated 4 November 2018 which the panel consider to be Mr Hindle telling Pupil A that he would be home by 9.30pm and she could come to his house when he was back (this is in the wider context of Pupil A initiating the exchange by saying that she would go to his house and wait for him to return). The relevant message reads: *'[laughing emoji] I'll be back at 9:30 ish if you want?'*

The panel also heard evidence from Pupil A, who described the layout and interior features of Mr Hindle's house at the time, including but not limited to bedsheets. In her interview with the police in March 2023, Pupil A described details such as specific photos Mr Hindle had around his house.

In his oral evidence, Mr Hindle suggested that it had been common knowledge that his house had been put up for sale and the estate agents would have put photos of the exterior and interior of his house online. Mr Hindle was not able to say specifically when his house was on the market, notwithstanding he later chose not to sell it, but explained it was likely to be around a year after having started working at the School. His explanation was that the description Pupil A gave could have been based on images she had seen online.

The panel has not been provided with any evidence to dispute that, at some point, Mr Hindle had sought to sell his house. However, drawing on its own knowledge, the panel find it unlikely that such specific details, for example personal photographs, would have been included in the online images.

Pupil A described in detail what bedsheets Mr Hindle had and, in particular, that they had a type of floral pattern. Mr Hindle, having been present throughout the hearing and having heard Pupil A's evidence, did not dispute the description of his house or bedsheets. He told the panel that his bedsheets had glitter on them and it was a running joke in his class that he would have glitter in his beard and/or on his face after having slept in bed.

Of the two accounts, coupled with the aforementioned exchange of messages, the panel did not find Mr Hindle's account credible. On balance, the panel's view is that Pupil A had been to Mr Hindle's house. The message from him dated 4 November 2018 was sufficient for the panel to infer that, on at least one occasion, Mr Hindle had been willing for Pupil A to attend his house. In other words, by Mr Hindle saying when he would return to his house, he was inviting her to be there if she wanted.

For the reasons set out above, the panel finds this allegation proven.

(g) Between October 2018 and October 2019, on one or more occasions engaged in intercourse and/or sexual acts with Pupil A.

Pupil A was consistent in her ABE interview, written witness evidence for this hearing and in her oral testimony to this panel, in the way she had described the bedsheets that Mr Hindle had at the material time. Mr Hindle did not dispute the description of the bedsheets in his witness evidence. He described how it was common knowledge in his class that he had bedsheets that had glitter on them and he would often come into school with glitter in his beard and/or on his face. Mr Hindle described the pattern on the

bedsheets as being 'trees'. On balance, the panel find that Pupil A's explanation is more plausible than Mr Hindle's.

The panel has found that on or around 31 October 2018 Mr Hindle kissed and/or engaged in a sexual act with Pupil A. Similarly to its assessment of that allegation, the panel also considered the messages between the two around that time. For the most part, the messages are not overtly sexual in nature and do not expressly confirm that a sexual act or acts took place between Pupil A and Mr Hindle. However, the panel were particularly concerned by specific series of messages which read:

Pupil A – *'And such as things that younger people tend to have better anyway'*

Mr Hindle – *'.....'*

Pupil A – *'Ew I'm not gonna talk about you and my mum. I'm just not. I told you you hate me'*

Mr Hindle – *'What's better young?'*

Pupil A – *'Why would you do this to me [laughing emoji]. And think about it. You'll get there'*

Mr Hindle – *'Tell me'*

Pupil A – *'Just a body is better young [face palm emoji]'*

Pupil A – *'And when it hasn't had two children'*

Pupil A – *'Or any for that matter'*

Mr Hindle – [REDACTED]

Mr Hindle – *'Prove it'*

Pupil A – *'[rolling eyes emoji]. You actually gonna make me redownload it ugh'*

Mr Hindle – *'[thumbs up emoji]'*

Pupil A – *'Well add then'*

Mr Hindle – *'[thumbs up emoji]'*

Pupil A – *'[thumbs up emoji]'*

Pupil A – ‘Proven’

In his witness testimony, Mr Hindle did not dispute that [REDACTED] might be a username for a Snapchat account. He did, however, deny that he sent this message. The panel found this denial to lack credibility. It accepted that Mr Hindle had reported to the police that he believed his account had been hacked, but noted that this was only after the allegations had been raised by Pupil A. The panel held the view that if Mr Hindle had believed someone had attempted to hack his account, there would be some form of contemporaneous evidence demonstrating this belief. Mr Hindle admitted that the messages that follow the aforementioned conversation were sent by him. The panel therefore find it implausible that he would not have noticed messages sent from his account that were not sent by him. On balance, the panel found that it was Mr Hindle communicating with Pupil A at the material time.

With that finding in mind, the panel drew an inference from the tone of the messages between Pupil A and Mr Hindle. The messages reflected the oral testimony given by Pupil A, namely that a relationship of more than friendship (at least in Pupil A’s mind at the time) was developing. The panel found that the available evidence, including Mr Hindle’s admission of having sent messages from his account, better supported Pupil A’s version of events than it did Mr Hindle’s, who flatly denied this allegation. As such, the panel found that it was more likely than not that Pupil A and Mr Hindle did engage in intercourse and/or sexual acts on one or more occasion between October 2018 and October 2019.

For the reasons set out above, the panel find this allegation proven.

2. At the time the sexual conduct occurred he was or ought to have been aware that Pupil A was vulnerable;

From the oral evidence of Witness 1, Witness 3 and Mr Hindle, there seemed to be no dispute that Pupil A had been identified at different times as a vulnerable person. [REDACTED] Mr Hindle confirmed in oral evidence that he considered Pupil A to be vulnerable because of this. [REDACTED] Notwithstanding the severity of this, it is unclear whether the TRA is alleging that Pupil A ought reasonably to have been deemed a vulnerable person in October 2018 because of events that occurred in 2017. If so, the panel has not been provided with any medical evidence to support this but the panel makes no criticism of either the TRA or Mr Hindle in this respect.

The panel has, of its own volition, considered the evidence available to it in relation to this allegation. [REDACTED] Based on this evidence alone, the panel is satisfied that Mr

Hindle would have reasonably believed that Pupil A was a vulnerable person.
[REDACTED]

For the reasons set out above, the panel finds this allegation proven.

3. His conduct at paragraphs 1a) – 1g) above was of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated.

The panel have felt it necessary to interpret this allegation by assessing whether each individual allegation at 1a) – 1g) was of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated, rather than only treating the allegations all together, for the reasons set out below.

Based on the available evidence, the panel found that neither allegation 1a) nor 1b) were of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated. Neither Pupil A nor any of the TRA's witnesses suggested that Mr Hindle driving Pupil A home was of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated. The panel has also not been able to draw an inference that it was, notwithstanding the panel's finding that the acts were inappropriate and a failure to maintain proper boundaries, which Mr Hindle has accepted in evidence. The panel's rationale for allegation 1b) is the same. The panel accepts Mr Hindle's evidence that, at that time, he gave his personal contact details to Pupil A because he was concerned for her welfare.

In relation to allegation 1c) the panel has not found that the messages were of a sexual nature as there is no overtly sexual content within them. However, the panel notes that it can be appropriate to assess sexual motivation by drawing inference from the surrounding circumstances. In this case, given the panel's findings in relation to allegations 1d) to 1g) above, the panel is satisfied that Mr Hindle's actions in exchanging messages with Pupil A, particularly those messages dated October and November 2018, are demonstrative of seeking sexual gratification and/or a future sexual relationship. The panel noted that the messages from around October 2018 are noticeably more flirtatious than the messages between the two in or around February 2017. For example, Mr Hindle signs his messages off with an 'x'. There are also messages from Pupil A discussing marrying Mr Hindle, and messages in relation to Pupil A's body. In neither case does Mr Hindle attempt to discontinue the conversation or change the subject.

In relation to allegations 1d) to 1g), the panel's view is that these, by their very nature, are of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated.

For the reasons set out above, the panel finds 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 Hindle, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Hindle was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- 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 Hindle, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”).

The panel considered that Mr Hindle was in breach of the following provisions: teachers should safeguard children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties; all staff members should be aware of systems within their school that supports safeguarding.

The panel also considered whether Mr Hindle’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 activity, sexual communication with a child, and any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting any such activity, including one-off incidents was relevant.

The panel noted that the allegation which post-date August 2018 took place outside the education setting. The panel's view is that if Mr Hindle's conduct became known to the School community, it would likely affect his ability to fulfil his teaching role. The panel is of the view that Mr Hindle's behaviour demonstrated a general disregard to his safeguarding obligations and therefore, by extension, brings into doubt his ability to safeguard other pupils. Mr Hindle's relationship with Pupil A began whilst she was enrolled at the School and after only a few months it developed into a sexual relationship whilst she was under 18 years old. The panel found that in the circumstances this behaviour was harmful to Pupil A.

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

In relation to whether Mr Hindle'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 Hindle'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 Hindle was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that the offence of sexual activity, sexual communication with a child, and any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting any such activity, including one-off incidents.

The panel noted that the advice is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that panels consider to be "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute".

The 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 Hindle's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Hindle'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/or 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.

The panel's findings against Mr Hindle included findings that he had provided his personal contact details with Pupil A and had exchanged messages with her both during and after her time at the School and, [REDACTED] he engaged in sexual contact with Pupil A. Further, Mr Hindle had confirmed his view that Pupil A was a vulnerable person. As such, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of an inappropriate relationship with a child.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Hindle were 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 Hindle 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 Hindle in the profession. The panel was presented with little evidence of Mr Hindle's ability as an educator. The panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Hindle 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 Hindle.

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 (particularly involving pupils);
- an abuse of any trust, knowledge, or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- sexual misconduct, 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;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing, or publishing any indecent photograph or image, or indecent pseudo photograph or image, of a child, or permitting such activity, including one-off incidents;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE).

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

There was evidence that Mr Hindle's actions were deliberate. He had admitted in evidence to sending most of the relevant messages to Pupil A. The panel's finding is that this behaviour initiated and further developed their relationship.

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

The panel was not presented with any evidence to show that Mr Hindle had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel was therefore unable to make a finding that his behaviour was out of character.

The panel saw no evidence of formal disciplinary proceedings against Mr Hindle, save for those carried out by the Academy in relation to the allegations before the panel in this hearing.

The panel was presented with little evidence to demonstrate that Mr Hindle was of good character. The panel is therefore unable to make any comment on Mr Hindle's ability as a teacher.

At the outset of the hearing Mr Hindle admitted some of the allegations, namely having driven Pupil A home and having given her his personal contact details. He also admitted that this conduct was inappropriate. Mr Hindle maintained his position, namely that he denied having any sexual contact with Pupil A. The panel has found all allegations against Mr Hindle proven. Mr Hindle's representative submitted that Mr Hindle did not intend to return to the teaching profession and/or work with children because of his experiences at the School and/or the Academy. [REDACTED]

The panel is not satisfied that Mr Hindle has shown insight or remorse into his actions. In evidence Pupil A explained that Mr Hindle had given her his number, had later told her not to message him, then had subsequently messaged her. She said she was confused by this. Given that Pupil A was deemed to be a vulnerable person, the panel found it concerning that Mr Hindle had not recognised the harm that this act alone had caused Pupil A. The panel was provided with limited information and was unable to satisfy itself that there was a reduced risk of Mr Hindle repeating his behaviours.

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 of prohibition for Mr Hindle.

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 Hindle. The serious nature of the behaviours displayed, Mr Hindle's lack of insight and remorse, and the risk of repetition 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.

These include:

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons;
- any sexual misconduct involving a child;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents.

The panel found that Mr Hindle had asked Pupil A to remove her clothes on a video call and that he had engaged in sexual contact with Pupil A. The panel was also presented with evidence that Mr Hindle had asked Pupil A to share an indecent image of herself via Snapchat.

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 decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to 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 Matthew Hindle should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

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

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of engaging in sexual activity with a child.

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

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

“The panel’s findings against Mr Hindle included findings that he had provided his personal contact details with Pupil A and had exchanged messages with her both during and after her time at the School and, within approximately 3 months from Pupil A being removed from the School’s roll, he engaged in sexual contact with Pupil A. Further, Mr Hindle had confirmed his view that Pupil A was a vulnerable person. As such, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of an inappropriate relationship with a child.”

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 has set out as follows:

“The panel is not satisfied that Mr Hindle has shown insight or remorse into his actions. In evidence Pupil A explained that Mr Hindle had given her his number, had later told her not to message him, then had subsequently messaged her. She said she was confused by this. Given that Pupil A was deemed to be a vulnerable person, the panel found it concerning that Mr Hindle had not recognised the harm that this act alone had caused Pupil A. The panel was provided with limited information and was unable to satisfy itself that there was a reduced risk of Mr Hindle repeating his behaviours.”

In my judgement, the lack of insight and 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 has observed:

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding of an inappropriate relationship and sexual activity with a child 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 Hindle himself. The panel has commented:

“The panel was presented with little evidence to demonstrate that Mr Hindle was of good character. The panel is therefore unable to make any comment on Mr Hindle’s ability as a teacher.”

The panel has noted that Mr Hindle’s representative had submitted that Mr Hindle did not intend to return to the teaching profession. However, if Mr Hindle did want to return to the profession in the future, a prohibition order would prevent him 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 seriousness of the misconduct found proven and the lack of insight and remorse. The panel has said:

“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 Hindle. The serious nature of the behaviours displayed, Mr Hindle’s lack of insight and remorse, and the risk of repetition 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.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Hindle 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 insight and 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 that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel's comments that the behaviours in this case include areas where the Advice states that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. The panel has said:

"The panel found that Mr Hindle had asked Pupil A to remove her clothes on a video call and that he had engaged in sexual contact with Pupil A. The panel was also presented with evidence that Mr Hindle had asked Pupil A to share an indecent image of herself via Snapchat."

I have also considered the panel's finding that there was a risk of Mr Hindle repeating his behaviours.

I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found proven, the lack of insight and remorse, and the risk of repetition.

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 Matthew Hindle 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 Hindle 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 Matthew Hindle 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 'D Oatley', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 29 September 2025

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