



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Andrew Hardwick: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

October 2025

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Summary of evidence	5
Documents	5
Witnesses	5
Decision and reasons	5
Findings of fact	5
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	12
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	14

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

Teacher: Mr Andrew Hardwick

TRA reference: 201108

Date of determination: 9 October 2025

Former employer: Pioneer Academy, Keston, Bromley

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 8 to 9 October 2025, by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Andrew Hardwick.

The panel members were Ms Claire Shortt (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Adrian Meadows (teacher panellist) and Ms Helen Knee (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Graham Miles of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Adam Slack of Capsticks LLP solicitors.

Mr Hardwick was present and was represented by Miss Wendy Hewitt of Counsel.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 12 September 2024.

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

1. Between 29 June 2019 and 21 May 2020, he engaged in online communication with Pupil A on WhatsApp and/or Skype and/or direct message and/or the Discord app, when he knew or ought to have known this was inappropriate.
2. Between 2 February 2020 and 20 July 2020, he engaged in online communication with one or more pupils on Discord and/or Facebook and/or Skype when he knew or ought to have known this was inappropriate.
3. Between 2 February 2020 and 20 July 2020, he communicated with one or more pupils using the Discord App, when he knew or ought to have known that he did not have parental consent.
4. On an unknown date, he allowed one or more pupils to add him on Facebook and/or follow him on Instagram, when he knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.
5. Between 1 August 2018 and January 2020, on one or more occasions, when he knew or ought to have known that it was not appropriate,
 - a. hugged Pupil A;
 - b. hugged Pupil B;
 - c. hugged Pupil C;
 - d. hugged one or more other pupil.
6. By his conduct set out above at allegation 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 and/or 5, he failed to maintain professional boundaries and/or demonstrated overfamiliar behaviour towards one or more pupils.

Mr Hardwick admitted the factual allegations, but he did not admit unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology, anonymised pupil list and list of key people – pages 4 to 5

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 6 to 48

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 49 to 60

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 61 to 343

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 344 to 377

Section 6: Teacher defence bundle – pages 378 to 432

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher Misconduct: Disciplinary Procedures for the Teaching Profession 2020, (the “Procedures”).

Witnesses

Mr Andrew Hardwick.

Decision and reasons

The panel has carefully considered the case and reached a decision.

Mr Andrew Hardwick attained qualified teacher status in 2005, following which he worked as a teacher in a primary school in England until 2007. He then worked in various education roles in settings in Africa and Asia, before returning to England in 2020.

On 1 December 2020, Mr Hardwick commenced employment with an umbrella company of the Pioneer Academy (‘the Academy’) as a flexi-teach teacher. Pioneer Academy is a Multi-Academy Trust with 14 primary schools for pupils aged from 3 to 11. Mr Hardwick was contracted by the umbrella company to work as a supply teacher at schools within the Academy, including a long-term booking at Belvedere Junior School.

On 4 May 2021, Mr Hardwick made an application for a permanent position at Belvedere Junior School. In applying for that role, Mr Hardwick disclosed that whilst previously working at the International School Saigon Pearl (‘ISSP’) in Vietnam, he had undertaken

tutoring outside of working hours and had social media contact with pupils outside of the tutoring time. After this disclosure, the Academy made enquiries of ISSP to obtain clarification of what had happened.

On 22 June 2021 the Academy informed Mr Hardwick that due to a serious safeguarding concern relating to his previous role at ISSP, the offer of a permanent position at Belvedere School was being withdrawn. Mr Hardwick was also informed that he would no longer be used as a supply teacher within the Academy.

On 24 June 2021, the Academy referred Mr Hardwick to the TRA.

The allegations against Mr Hardwick all relate to his employment at ISSP in Vietnam. The Panel were presented with documents from the investigation undertaken by ISSP, including records of interviews of and meetings with Mr Hardwick, meetings with pupils, a meeting with Pupil A's father and social media conversations between Mr Hardwick and Pupil A.

Mr Hardwick admitted the factual allegations against him. In relation to allegations 1 to 4, his admissions were made on the basis that he ought to have known that the specified conduct was inappropriate as distinct from knowing that it was. The panel considered all of the evidence presented, in addition to the admissions made by Mr Hardwick, in order to make factual determinations.

Mr Hardwick did not admit that his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

- 1. Between 29 June 2019 and 21 May 2020, you engaged in online communication with Pupil A on WhatsApp and/or Skype and/or direct message and/or the Discord app, when you knew or ought to have known this was inappropriate.**

The panel noted that Pupil A had been a pupil in Mr Hardwick's class in the 2018/19 school year. He had graduated in the summer of 2019 and moved to another school.

Mr Hardwick said that, towards the end of the summer in 2019, Pupil A had found out Mr Hardwick's Skype account name and the pupil began to message him. Mr Hardwick acknowledged that he should have blocked Pupil A at that point and disclosed the contact that had been made, but he did not do so. Mr Hardwick said that Pupil A's father had asked him to keep in contact with Pupil A. Mr Hardwick said that he thought that he could help by giving Pupil A moral support to aid the pupil's confidence before he started in his next school. Mr Hardwick said that, although Pupil A's father had asked him to

keep in touch with Pupil A, he had not discussed with Pupil A's father how he would do so.

The panel was provided with a record of messages exchanged between Mr Hardwick and Pupil A between 2 February 2020 and 13 May 2020. These messages were exchanged using the Discord app, which is an instant messaging platform. The panel noted that the first message in this exchange of messages came from Mr Hardwick. Mr Hardwick confirmed that he had obtained Pupil A's username and code for the Discord app from Pupil B. The panel noted that some of the messages exchanged between Mr Hardwick and Pupil A related to school - work, including guidance on how Pupil A might answer a maths question. However, many of the messages were not related to school - work and included Mr Hardwick messaging Pupil A when Mr Hardwick was participating in a quiz with other members of staff on more than one occasion. In his oral evidence, Mr Hardwick acknowledged that he had not informed the other members of staff participating that he was communicating with a pupil. He said he was aware that they would not have approved.

The panel noted that, during the investigation, a meeting was held with Pupil A's father. At that meeting, Pupil A's father explained that, in Vietnamese culture, it was common for pupils and teachers to have life-long relationships. At that meeting, Pupil A's father did not express any concern about the contact between Mr Hardwick and Pupil A. However, irrespective of Vietnamese culture, the panel noted that ISSP expected teachers to abide by a Code of Conduct that required them to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils.

The panel also noted that a meeting had been held with Mr Hardwick in 2019 with the headteacher and another member of staff. At that meeting Mr Hardwick was informed that it had been observed that Pupil A was very tactile and overly close to Mr Hardwick. Advice was then given to Mr Hardwick that he should maintain professional distancing and self-report anything inappropriate to keep himself professionally safe. Mr Hardwick had been reminded of this advice subsequently when a later situation occurred regarding a PE lesson and Mr Hardwick and Pupil A being in a classroom alone. The panel recognised that these incidents did not form part of the allegations against Mr Hardwick. However, the panel considered the fact that Mr Hardwick had previously been advised and reminded of the need to maintain professional distancing was relevant.

Mr Hardwick admitted that he had engaged in online communication with Pupil A as alleged when he ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

The panel found allegation 1 proved on the basis that it was satisfied that Mr Hardwick had engaged in online communication with Pupil A on Skype and Discord when he ought to have known this was inappropriate.

2. Between 2 February 2020 and 20 July 2020, you engaged in online communication with one or more pupils on Discord and/or Facebook and/or Skype when you knew or ought to have known this was inappropriate.

Given that allegation 1 related to communications with Pupil A, the panel considered allegation 2 in the context of communications with pupils other than Pupil A.

Mr Hardwick admitted that he had engaged in online communication with pupils commencing on 2 February 2020. He said that he had known that the school would be going into lockdown on 2 February 2020 in response to the covid pandemic and that online learning would commence. He said that he was concerned that pupils would not check the school designated app to access their work. He was conscious of difficulties he had experienced in getting pupils to complete homework previously that year on the school app. He said that he went ahead without thinking through the ramifications and that his sole thought and reason for doing it was that he was afraid that his pupils would fall behind with their work from the start.

Mr Hardwick said that he knew that many of the pupils had Discord accounts, as he had heard them talking about them in the class previously. He said that Pupil B gave him his username and pass number and he connected to that account. Pupil B then gave him the username and pass number of another pupil and from his class. Together those pupils gave him the usernames and pass numbers of other children in his class. Mr Hardwick then set up a group which consisted of 9 pupils and Mr Hardwick. He said that he then used the group chat to post the work the pupils needed to do and answer their questions when they needed help. Mr Hardwick said that he did this out of a misguided sense of wanting the pupils to complete as much of their work as possible. He said that he would be on the group chat from 8am to 4pm each day and then switch off his account.

Mr Hardwick said that there came a point when the school started to use the Zoom app for class calls. He would then post links to the Zoom calls for the pupils to follow. He acknowledged that he should have closed the Discord group at that point and continue only with the school approved Zoom group. He did not do so as he was concerned that the engagement of pupils would drop off. He said that the last communication from him on the Discord group was on 11 May 2020. Mr Hardwick said that he did not speak to senior colleagues about what he was planning to do and they would have told him not to go ahead.

When interviewed in the ISSP investigation, Mr Hardwick admitted that he had also communicated with pupils on Facebook and Skype.

The panel was satisfied that, between 2 February 2020 and 11 May 2020, Mr Hardwick has engaged in online communication with pupils on Discord, Skype and Facebook when he ought to have known this was inappropriate.

The panel found allegation 2 proved on that basis.

3. Between 2 February 2020 and 20 July 2020, you communicated with one or more pupils using the Discord App, when you knew or ought to have known that you did not have parental consent.

Mr Hardwick admitted that he had communicated with one or more pupils as alleged when he ought to have known that he did not have parental consent.

When interviewed as part of the ISSP investigation, Mr Hardwick was asked why parental consent had not been sought by him. He said in response that he could not explain why.

The panel was satisfied that, between 2 February and 11 May 2020, Mr Hardwick had communicated with one or more pupils using the Discord App when he did not have parental consent to do so. The panel was also satisfied that Mr Hardwick knew that he did not have parental consent when he communicated with those pupils.

The panel found allegation 3 proved on that basis.

4. On an unknown date, you allowed one or more pupils to add you on Facebook and/or follow you on Instagram, when you knew or ought to have known that this was inappropriate.

In his written response to the ISSP investigation, Mr Hardwick said that he originally set his Instagram account up not long before a Grade 5 field trip in 2018, which was his first year at the school. His intention was to use it as a method to share photos of the field trip with parents. At that time he had spoken to another teacher to ask if it would be a good idea and was told that it would not be allowed. Mr Hardwick said that he did not use the account or post any pictures to it. He did not delete the account straight away and left it sitting dormant. Mr Hardwick said that the name of the account referred to the Grade 5 class and his name was also linked to it. He said this meant that pupils could search for his name, find the account and request access, which is what happened. He acknowledged that, when pupils requested access to his account, he would accept, as he knew there was nothing on the account and he did not want to disappoint them. He said that he would then remove the pupils sometime later without telling them.

As regards Facebook, Mr Hardwick said that the mothers of some pupils had sent him friend requests on Facebook, which he accepted as it offered an easy way for them to contact him if needed. He said that through their mother's friends lists some pupils found his Facebook account and requested to be friends. Mr Hardwick said that he initially accepted them, as he thought he would be letting them down if he did not. He said that he later removed them as friends without telling them.

The panel was satisfied that Mr Hardwick had allowed one or more pupils to add him on Facebook and follow him on Instagram, when he knew that this was inappropriate.

The panel found allegation 4 proved on that basis.

5. Between 1 August 2018 and January 2020, on one or more occasions, when you knew or ought to have known that it was not appropriate,

- a. hugged Pupil A;**
- b. hugged Pupil B;**
- c. hugged Pupil C;**
- d. hugged one or more other pupil.**

Mr Hardwick admitted that, between the dates specified in the allegation, he had hugged Pupil A, Pupil B, Pupil C and one or more other pupil on one or more occasions.

In his oral evidence, he explained the contexts in which he had hugged the pupils. In relation to Pupil A, he referred to an occasion when Pupil A was visibly upset and he had hugged the pupil in response to a request from the pupil. Mr Hardwick acknowledged that a conversation had taken place on a date in 2019 with the headteacher and another member of staff when it was pointed out that Pupil A was very tactile and overly close to Mr Hardwick. He was then advised to maintain professional distancing. Mr Hardwick said that he had not hugged Pupil A after being given that advice.

Mr Hardwick said that the hugs given to Pupil B and Pupil C did take place after the advice he had been given regarding Pupil A. In relation to Pupil B, he said that this had taken place in circumstances in which the pupil was upset. As regards Pupil C, he said that the hug had taken place at the pupil's graduation when his parents were present. Mr Hardwick said that he may have hugged one or two other pupils, but that this had been prior to the advice that he had been given.

Mr Hardwick admitted that he ought to have known that hugging pupils was not appropriate. The panel found allegation 5 a, b, c and d proved on that basis.

6. By your conduct set out above at allegation 1 and/or 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 and/or 5, you failed to maintain professional boundaries and/or demonstrated overfamiliar behaviour towards one or more pupils.

Mr Hardwick admitted that, in acting as he did in allegations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 he had failed to maintain professional boundaries and demonstrated overfamiliar behaviour towards pupils.

Mr Hardwick said that, on reflection, he recognised the importance of setting and maintaining professional boundaries so as to communicate effectively and safely at all times.

The panel found allegation 6 proved.

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

Having found the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proven 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 considered whether Mr Hardwick’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 10 and 11 of the Advice. The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual’s conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

The panel recognised that the Teachers’ Standards were expressed to be for use in schools in England and, therefore, not directly applicable to Mr Hardwick’s work as a teacher at the ISSP in Vietnam. Mr Hardwick had worked as a teacher in England between 2005 and 2007, but he had subsequently worked abroad in settings in Africa and Asia. Mr Hardwick said that this had caused him to lose sight of the principles and standards expected of him as a teacher. He also said that he had not received safeguarding training in any of the education settings prior to working at the ISSP. Mr Hardwick also gave evidence that the culture in Vietnam was for teachers in Vietnam to have lifelong relationship with pupils. However, despite these cultural differences, the panel noted that ISSP expected teachers to abide by a Code of Conduct that required them to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils. Mr Hardwick confirmed that he had read the Code of Conduct and received some training on this during a school inset day.

The panel also had regard to the fact that the allegations took place in the context of a lockdown due to the covid pandemic. However, the panel also regarded it as significant that the proven conduct took place after Mr Hardwick had been given advice in 2019 about the need to maintain professional distancing.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Hardwick 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 Hardwick was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in relation to the proven conduct in allegations 1 to 6.

In relation to whether Mr Hardwick’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.

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, potentially damaging the public perception.

The panel therefore found that Mr Hardwick's actions in allegations 1 to 6 also 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 maintenance of public confidence in the profession and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Hardwick 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 Hardwick 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 Hardwick in the profession, but was not satisfied that the evidence supported this.

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 Hardwick.

In carrying out the balancing exercise, the panel had regard to the public interest considerations both in favour of, and against, prohibition as well as the interests of Mr Hardwick. 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 the conduct expected of a teacher in relation to maintaining professional boundaries

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

Mr Hardwick's actions were deliberate in that he knew or ought to have known that these actions crossed professional boundaries.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Hardwick was acting under duress.

Mr Hardwick did have a previously good history.

The panel noted that, after returning to England from Vietnam, Mr Hardwick worked as a supply teacher at the Academy for approximately six months without any concerns arising. Furthermore, prior to the allegations coming to light, he had been offered a permanent position at a school within the Academy.

The panel noted that Mr Hardwick has continued to undertake relevant training in child protection, safeguarding and professional boundaries as follows:

- Child safeguarding and protection for teachers - November 2022
- Safeguarding children level 3 – December 2022 – updated 2024
- Safeguarding children internet safety awareness – November 2022 – updated 2024
- Development and restoration plan – December 2024

- Staying safe online assessment – November 2024
- What can you trust assessment? – November 2024
- Radicalisation and extremism assessment – November 2024
- British values – November 2024
- Advanced safeguarding children 2024

The panel felt that this demonstrated Mr Hardwick's insight into his previous gaps in knowledge of safeguarding and his commitment to establishing professional boundaries with pupils.

The panel felt that Mr Hardwick showed remorse and insight in his open and honest evidence to the panel. This was supported by character references.

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, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum and, having considered the mitigating factors that were present, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

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 sanction.

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/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In respect of the Teachers' Standards, the panel records the following:

"The panel recognised that the Teachers' Standards were expressed to be for use in schools in England and, therefore, not directly applicable to Mr Hardwick's work as a teacher at the ISSP in Vietnam. Mr Hardwick had worked as a teacher in England between 2005 and 2007, but he had subsequently worked abroad in settings in Africa and Asia. Mr Hardwick said that this had caused him to lose sight of the principles and standards expected of him as a teacher. He also said that he had not received safeguarding training in any of the education settings prior to working at the ISSP. Mr Hardwick also gave evidence that the culture in Vietnam was for teachers in Vietnam to have lifelong relationship with pupils. However, despite these cultural differences, the panel noted that ISSP expected teachers to abide by a Code of Conduct that required them to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils. Mr Hardwick confirmed that he had read the Code of Conduct and received some training on this during a school inset day."

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a teacher failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In assessing 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 that may 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 Hardwick, 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 makes this observation: "There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries." A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel's comments on insight and remorse, which it sets out as follows: "The panel felt that Mr Hardwick showed remorse and insight in his open and honest evidence to the panel. This was supported by character references." The panel also references a number of pieces of professional development undertaken by Mr Hardwick to support him to better maintain professional boundaries with pupils in the future. In my judgment, this evidence indicates a limited risk of repetition and 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 observes that: "The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher, potentially damaging the public perception." I am particularly mindful of the finding of a teacher failing to maintain proper boundaries in this case and the impact that such a finding may have 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 Hardwick himself. The panel makes the following observations:

"Mr Hardwick did have a previously good history.

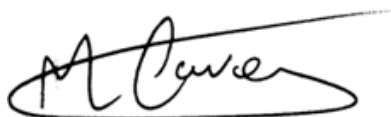
The panel noted that, after returning to England from Vietnam, Mr Hardwick worked as a supply teacher at the Academy for approximately six months without any concerns arising. Furthermore, prior to the allegations coming to light, he had been offered a permanent position at a school within the Academy."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Hardwick 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 noted Mr Hardwick's previous good history, the insight and remorse he has demonstrated, and the contribution he may be able to make to education in the future. I have also given weight to the panel's concluding remarks:

“The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum and, having considered the mitigating factors that were present, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.”

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that, while the misconduct found by the panel was serious, the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Cavey', enclosed within a large, horizontal oval loop.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 13 October 2025

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