



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Ms Leanne Grove: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

October 2025

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

Teacher: Ms Leanne Grove

Teacher ref number: 0159730

Teacher date of birth: 29 May 1981

TRA reference: 22081

Date of determination: 22 October 2025

Former employer: Hazeldene School, Bedford

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 22 October 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Ms Leanne Grove.

The panel members were Mr Richard Young (lay panellist – in the chair), Dr Andrew Harries (lay panellist) and Mrs Georgina Bean (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Delme Griffiths of Blake Morgan LLP Solicitors.

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

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 9 October 2025.

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

1. She stored alcohol in the Headteacher's office when she was not permitted to do so.
2. She stored or had in her possession or under her control alcohol on the School premises, namely:
 - a. In room(s) which were used by SEND pupils,
 - b. In open containers,
 - c. In unlocked cupboards.
3. On or around 1 March 2023, she:
 - a. Brought alcohol onto the School premises when she was not permitted to do so;
 - b. Attended School on a working day when she had consumed alcohol.

Ms Grove admitted the facts of the allegations and that her conduct, as admitted, amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

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

Section 2: Notice of referral, response and Notice of Meeting – pages 7 to 33(b)

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 46 to 52

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 53 to 73

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 74 to 106

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 107

In addition, the panel was presented with two video recordings listed as part of the case documents.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the papers within the bundle, in advance of the hearing and viewed the video recordings.

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

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Ms Grove on 24 September 2025.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

In advance of the meeting the TRA agreed to a request from Ms Grove for the allegations to be considered without a hearing.

The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest.

In this instance, the panel was mindful of the fact that Ms Grove had made various assertions, in her statement dated 24 September 2025, that were not supported by independent evidence. For example, Ms Grove referred to support she had received in relation to her [REDACTED]. The panel considered that it was therefore possible that there was information available that would better inform its decision-making.

However, the panel took into account that Ms Grove had expressly requested a meeting. She had confirmed she had moved on in terms of her career and had no desire to return to teaching. Ms Grove had every opportunity to present any and all information relevant to her case.

Further, Ms Grove had expressly indicated, in her initial response to the TRA, that she did not intend to attend any hearing that may be held.

On balance, the panel therefore determined that it was not necessary or appropriate to direct that the case be considered at a hearing.

The panel proceeded to consider the case. It had regard to all of the documentation presented and it accepted the legal advice provided.

Ms Grove was previously employed as the headteacher of Hazeldene School ("the School"). Ms Grove was in that role from 1 January 2020 until 31 May 2023, when she resigned.

On 2 March 2023, concerns arose in relation to Ms Grove when a teaching assistant discovered a handbag near to Ms Grove's desk, which contained one empty and one unopened can of gin and tonic. Further reports were made regarding Ms Grove's presentation the previous day, 1 March 2023.

These concerns were reported, by the School's assistant headteacher, to the Vice Chair of Governors and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

On 3 March 2023, Ms Grove was suspended from duties at the School and a search was undertaken of her office.

A formal investigation was undertaken leading to a report dated 23 May 2023.

Ms Grove was subsequently referred to the TRA.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

1. You stored alcohol in the Headteacher's office when you were not permitted to do so.

Ms Grove admitted that she stored alcohol in her office, when this was not permitted and she knew that to be the case.

On the basis of Ms Grove's admission, which was consistent with the evidence presented to the panel, albeit the panel was not presented with any written policy addressing the presence of alcohol in the School, it found allegation 1 proved.

2. You stored or had in your possession or under your control alcohol on the School premises, namely:

a. In room(s) which were used by SEND pupils,

b. In open containers,

c. In unlocked cupboards.

Ms Grove admitted particulars 2(a) to (c), specifically that:

- Her office was used for and by SEND pupils.
- Alcohol was stored in open containers within it.
- Alcohol was stored in unlocked cupboards.
- In principle, these matters meant alcohol could have been accessed and consumed by persons using the office, including SEND pupils.

The panel noted in particular the video recordings of Ms Grove's office in which various alcoholic drinks were shown. There was clear and unchallenged evidence that SEND pupils used the room.

On the basis of Ms Grove's admission, which was consistent with the evidence presented to the panel, it found allegations 2(a) to (c) proved.

3. On or around 1 March 2023, you:

a. Brought alcohol onto the School premises when you were not permitted to do so;

b. Attended School on a working day when you had consumed alcohol.

Mr Grove admitted that, on or around 1 March 2023, she brought alcohol onto the School's premises when she was not permitted to do so. Ms Grove also admitted that she was in attendance at the School having consumed alcohol.

No admission was made as to the precise quantity consumed.

The panel noted that in her written submission Ms Grove stated:

"In the weeks proceeding my suspension I admit that I did consume alcohol on the premises - prior to a Governors meeting and after a parents evening. I did this in my office when there were not pupils in school."

On the basis of Ms Grove's admissions, which were consistent with the evidence presented to the panel, it found allegations 3(a) and (b) proved.

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 Ms Grove, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Ms Grove 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
 - 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 also considered whether Ms Grove'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.

However, the panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

In addition, Ms Grove held a position of trust and responsibility as a headteacher and was required to be a role model to other staff and pupils.

It is inappropriate to bring onto, and consume, alcohol within a school environment other than for specific, controlled and appropriate reasons: a large number of alcoholic drinks were located in Ms Grove's office, some opened and some not. This amounted to a breach of her professional obligations, regardless of how much alcohol Ms Grove had consumed.

There were also safeguarding and health and safety concerns given that, on the basis of the evidence available, the panel considered that the possibility of a pupil accessing alcohol was not remote. There was reference to the office occasionally being left unlocked and pupils, particularly when they were distressed, regularly using it. In that regard, Ms Grove showed a distinct lack of judgement. Even the presence of empty drinks being potentially visible to pupils was a matter of concern.

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

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Grove was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Ms Grove'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 Ms Grove's status as a teacher and could potentially damage the public's perception of her.

For these reasons, the panel found that Ms Grove's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely:

- the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; and
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In the light of the panel's specific findings against Ms Grove, which included bringing and retaining alcohol within the School environment where it was potentially accessible to and seen by learners, and consuming alcohol prior to undertaking professional duties which raised obvious questions as to her judgement, there was a broad public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

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

The panel was also 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 Ms Grove was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated. Not least, she was a headteacher in a position of responsibility who was a role model to her staff and pupils.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Ms Grove in the profession.

Ms Grove's abilities as a classroom teacher had not been questioned and she had risen to the position of headteacher, which was indicative of her being well regarded as an educator. She had an otherwise unblemished record. However, whilst there was a public interest element in retaining Ms Grove in the profession, that was not considered to be a particularly strong consideration. There were no character references or testimonials before the panel. Ms Grove's future ambitions were also away from teaching such that she had no present desire to return to the profession and contribute to it.

The panel also considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times.

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

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).

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.

The panel considered the following mitigating factors were present in this case:

- Ms Grove had not been subject to any previous regulatory or disciplinary proceedings. So far as the panel were aware, she had an otherwise unblemished record.
- Whilst Ms Grove had not presented any references or testimonials, she had been appointed as headteacher such that the panel proceeded from the basis that she had contributed to the education sector and ought to be regarded as competent, even if there was no evidence to indicate either element as exceptional.
- Ms Grove had engaged with these proceedings and made full admissions. She was realistic in accepting that her actions amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.
- Ms Grove showed regret and remorse. She also showed some insight, recognising for example that she had *“let down the whole school community”*.
- Ms Grove evidenced a degree of self-awareness in relation to the circumstances that led to her behaviour. [REDACTED].
- [REDACTED]

Whilst Ms Grove alluded to [REDACTED] at the relevant time, the panel had in mind that there was no documentary evidence advanced to support her various assertions. That was also the case in relation to the steps Ms Grove stated had been taken since to remediate her behaviour.

As a result, the panel was only able to consider the extent to which these matters may have mitigated her actions, at the time, and the extent to which the risk of repetition was, now, reduced in speculative terms.

Against that backdrop, the panel first considered whether it would be proportionate to conclude this case with no recommendation of prohibition, considering whether the publication of the findings made by the panel would be sufficient.

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Ms Grove of prohibition.

The panel was, therefore, of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Ms Grove.

In arriving at that conclusion and in addition to the matters set out above, in terms of the public interest considerations and behaviours engaged in this case, the panel took into account that Ms Grove was an experienced practitioner who would, inevitably, have known that her behaviour was inappropriate and wrong. Even if there was no evidence that pupils had sight of, never mind consumed, alcohol, her actions presented obvious risks. Ms Grove did not herself take steps to reduce that risk. Rather, her behaviour was discovered. To that extent her behaviour was reckless. Had her behaviour not been discovered, the panel could not be confident that Ms Grove would have been able to regulate her own behaviour such that it may have continued unabated. That and the potential risk to pupils had not been adequately addressed by Ms Grove.

Against that backdrop, whilst Ms Grove deserves credit for being candid in addressing the triggers for her behaviour and seeking support, absent clear, independent evidence regarding those issues, the panel could not be satisfied that Ms Grove presented no risk of repetition. To that extent, the panel determined that whilst there was some evidence of insight, this was emerging rather than complete.

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.

None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

The Advice also indicates that there are certain other types of cases where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer period before a review is considered appropriate.

None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings either.

The panel concluded that a review period of two years was appropriate and proportionate.

Ms Grove appeared to take responsibility for her actions and evidenced regret and remorse. Whilst her insight was emerging, the panel considered that it was certainly possible that, in time and assuming there was no evidence of repeat behaviours, which would need to be supported by appropriate references and testimonials, it was possible that she would be able evidence that the circumstances and triggers that led to her behaving in this way had been adequately addressed such that there was minimum risk of repetition. At present, there was no evidence before the panel to support that conclusion, both in terms of the issues she was experiencing at the time, as regards the matters that caused her behaviour, and the support and any rehabilitative steps she claimed to have undertaken since.

A period of two years will also allow for further reflection and will afford Ms Grove time and opportunity, should she wish to do so, to take and provide evidence of any rehabilitative steps and demonstrate that she has gained further insight into the nature, effect and implications of her conduct.

In the view of the panel, a period beyond two years would be disproportionate and punitive.

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 Ms Leanne Grove should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of two years.

In particular, the panel has found that Ms Grove 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
 - 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 finds that the conduct of Ms Grove fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Ms Grove, 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:

“In the light of the panel’s specific findings against Ms Grove, which included bringing and retaining alcohol within the School environment where it was potentially accessible to and seen by learners, and consuming alcohol prior to undertaking professional duties which raised obvious questions as to her judgement, there was a broad public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.”

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

“Ms Grove showed regret and remorse. She also showed some insight, recognising for example that she had *“let down the whole school community”*.”

“Ms Grove evidenced a degree of self-awareness in relation to the circumstances that led to her behaviour.”

In particular, I have noted the panel’s assessment that Ms Grove’s insight was emerging rather than complete. In my judgement, the lack of full insight 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:

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding that Ms Grove had stored alcohol on school premises and attended school when she had consumed alcohol, 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 Ms Grove herself. The panel has commented:

“Ms Grove had not been subject to any previous regulatory or disciplinary proceedings. So far as the panel were aware, she had an otherwise unblemished record.”

“Whilst Ms Grove had not presented any references or testimonials, she had been appointed as headteacher such that the panel proceeded from the basis that she had contributed to the education sector and ought to be regarded as competent, even if there was no evidence to indicate either element as exceptional.”

The panel has also noted that:

“Ms Grove’s future ambitions were also away from teaching such that she had no present desire to return to the profession and contribute to it.”

A prohibition order would prevent Ms Grove from returning to teaching in the future. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of her 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 potential risk posed to pupils by Ms Grove's behaviour and the risk of repetition. The panel has said:

"In arriving at that conclusion and in addition to the matters set out above, in terms of the public interest considerations and behaviours engaged in this case, the panel took into account that Ms Grove was an experienced practitioner who would, inevitably, have known that her behaviour was inappropriate and wrong. Even if there was no evidence that pupils had sight of, never mind consumed, alcohol, her actions presented obvious risks. Ms Grove did not herself take steps to reduce that risk. Rather, her behaviour was discovered. To that extent her behaviour was reckless. Had her behaviour not been discovered, the panel could not be confident that Ms Grove would have been able to regulate her own behaviour such that it may have continued unabated. That and the potential risk to pupils had not been adequately addressed by Ms Grove."

"Against that backdrop, whilst Ms Grove deserves credit for being candid in addressing the triggers for her behaviour and seeking support, absent clear, independent evidence regarding those issues, the panel could not be satisfied that Ms Grove presented no risk of repetition. To that extent, the panel determined that whilst there was some evidence of insight, this was emerging rather than complete."

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Ms Grove has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by full insight, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest in order to achieve the intended aims of a prohibition order.

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended a two-year review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"Ms Grove appeared to take responsibility for her actions and evidenced regret and remorse. Whilst her insight was emerging, the panel considered that it was certainly possible that, in time and assuming there was no evidence of repeat behaviours, which would need to be supported by appropriate references and testimonials, it was possible that she would be able evidence that the circumstances and triggers that led to her behaving in this way had been

adequately addressed such that there was minimum risk of repetition. At present, there was no evidence before the panel to support that conclusion, both in terms of the issues she was experiencing at the time, as regards the matters that caused her behaviour, and the support and any rehabilitative steps she claimed to have undertaken since.”

“A period of two years will also allow for further reflection and will afford Ms Grove time and opportunity, should she wish to do so, to take and provide evidence of any rehabilitative steps and demonstrate that she has gained further insight into the nature, effect and implications of her conduct.”

I have considered whether a two-year 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 I agree with the panel that allowing a two-year review period is sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. A two-year review period would enable Ms Grove to develop further insight into her behaviour and to demonstrate that she has taken steps to mitigate the risk of repeating that behaviour should she decide to return to the teaching profession.

I consider therefore that a two-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

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

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

Ms Leanne Grove has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date she 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: 24 October 2025

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