



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Mark Rowley: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

November 2025

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

Teacher: Mr Mark Rowley

Teacher ref number: 9446523

Teacher date of birth: 23 June 1969

TRA reference: 21177

Date of determination: 5 November 2025

Former employer: Hazel Wood High School, Bury

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 5 November 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Mark Rowley.

The panel members were Ms Antonia Jackson (teacher panellist – in the chair), Dr Lee Longden (former teacher panellist) and Ms Janette McCormick (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Nicoletta Czajkowska of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Zahra Evans of Capsticks LLP solicitors.

Mr Mark Rowley was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 16 July 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Rowley was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a teacher at Hazel Wood High School ("the School"):

1. Between approximately May 2022 and October 2022 he:

- a) Gave Pupil A his personal mobile phone number and / or email;
- b) Exchanged one or more of the text messages with Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A, as set out in Schedule 1.
- c) Exchanged one or more of the emails with Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A, as set out in Schedule 2.
- d) Discussed personal matters with Pupil A relating to his [REDACTED];
- e) Wrote and/ or gave a handwritten letter to Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A, as set out in Schedule 3.
- f) Made one or more of the comments to and / or about Pupil A, as set out in Schedule 4;
- g) Sent and / or tagged Pupil A in a TikTok video of himself;
- h) Contacted and / or followed Pupil A on social media;
- i) Encouraged contact between him and Pupil A to continue through talking, texting and meeting in person;

2. His conduct as may be proven at Allegation 1 was sexually motivated;

3. On one or more occasions he:-

- a) encouraged and / or requested Pupil A to destroy correspondence;
- b) deleted his correspondence with Pupil A when he knew and / or was aware that his conduct in respect of Pupil A was being investigated;

4. In or around June 2022 he influenced and / or attempted to influence Pupil A's account to the Police;

5. His conduct was dishonest as may be proven at allegations 3 and/or 4 in that he was attempting to prevent the School and/or Police uncovering the full extent of his conduct with regards to Pupil A.

6. He failed to report / and or take any reasonable steps to report:

- a) That he considered Pupil A was attracted to you;
- b) That he had provided Pupil A with advice unrelated to your profession;
- c) That Pupil A sent photographs of herself to him;

Schedule 1

- 1. "I had 1 hr and u ghost me!"
- 2. "Can't believe that I've had to delete every photo and vid Uv sent me this week"
- 3. "Question/ serious one- have u grown to like me more overtime, by talking/texting?"
- 4. "Just want to say my feelings don't change"
- 5. "We should have been continuing our juicy conversation from a couple of nights ago. Felt like we really moved forward then-a big leap forward."
- 6. "Can't believe u dn't swim! Do u want me to teach u?"
- 7. "Not gonna lie – really miss u – at least seeing u etc"
- 8. "Uv just told me ur finished so that I think ur nakes! Temptress"
- 9. "Ur right it's still warm- so led on bed nearly naked."
- 10. In response to Pupil A stating that they are in a towel, "Show us that then"
- 11. "Shower lovely- felt a presence? Like someone was watching me? Closed my eyes under the shower and felt someone squeeze my bum!! Strange."

Schedule 2

- 1. "Why are you treating me like a piece of shit? Not angry with you but REALLY upset and disappointed that you can't talk to me."
- 2. "Can honestly say that NOBODY has ever treated me like this. You are making me feel worthless."
- 3. "I know this situation is hard, especially at your age, but treating me like this is not nice and is completely different from the [redacted] that I have grown to love."

4. "2 wks ago you were saying that u loved me (no I don't think we are in a relationship- in the sense of BF/GF) so you can see how this is confusing."
5. "In terms of OUR RELATIONSHIP- I was under the impression, coz u told me , that u were comfortable with me that you could talk to me about ANYTHING."
6. "Yes I do love you- don't think of that in a sexual sense, I genuinely wanted us to stay in touch etc."
7. "I did not fall in love with you texting on TT- any feelings I have for you developed over time."
8. "if you flirt so much ur gonna get urslef and others into some serious shit. As I have found out."
9. "Well congratulations for really fucking my life up!"
10. "If I'm labelled what your calling me then I don't think I could live with the shame of being something that I'm not. Don't think I could let me [REDACTED]."

Schedule 3

1. "I am going to miss you massively"
2. "You are a very special person"
3. "The lingering looks, the smiles and the pouting (I noticed) on the front row all suggested how you felt and wanted to be noticed (you were!)"
4. "You wanted to display how much you liked me, but didn't want to say it in words"
5. "You really just wanted to be the centre of my attention"
6. "Let me just say that I have never developed a relationship with a pupil (not even 5% of what has happened here) that has impacted me in this way."
7. In reference to a drawing of Pupil A, "Meant to be beautiful eyes and tasty lips!"

Schedule 4

1. sex goddess
2. attractive
3. getting [REDACTED]
4. does not have a job anymore

5. your [REDACTED] aren't speaking to you anymore
6. what do police have to do with my feelings
7. dreamt about kissing Pupil A all over [her] body
8. dreamt about cuddling with no clothes on
9. dreamt about being in [Pupil A's] bedroom
10. dreamt about having sex with [Pupil A]
11. If you don't tell anybody no one will know
12. Looked nice

Mr Rowley partially admitted the allegations in his response to the Notice of Referral dated 15 May 2024. Following this, the matter was referred back to the investigation stage by the TRA. Certain allegations that had been denied were subsequently removed. A revised Notice of Referral was issued on 17 February 2025, setting out the current allegations. Mr Rowley did not respond to this notice by either admitting or denying the particulars. The panel noted that no new allegations were introduced in the revised Notice.

In his response to the Notice of Hearing, submitted on 2 August 2025, Mr Rowley answered the question "Do you admit the allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings?" with: "No – most of it is ... taken out of context, some of it yes." This form did not require a response to each individual allegation. Mr Rowley also submitted an accompanying email providing his account and attached additional WhatsApp conversations with Pupil A, but again did not specifically admit or deny any particular allegation. In responding to the hearing bundle by email on 9 October 2025, Mr Rowley expressed that the account of Pupil A contained "lots of inaccuracies".

Given Mr Rowley's absence from the hearing and the equivocal nature of his prior admissions, the allegations were treated as not fully admitted.

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 60

Section 3: Statement of Agreed Facts – pages 61 to 68

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency Witness Statements and Exhibits – pages 69 to 324

Section 3: Other Relevant Teaching Regulation Agency Documents – pages 325 to 520

Section 6: Teacher documents – pages 521 to 528

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing. The panel also viewed the TikTok video provided.

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 A – [REDACTED];

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Rowley was employed as a teacher at Hazel Wood High School (“the School”) since 1 September 2013. He was suspended from the School on 22 June 2022. Mr Rowley resigned from his post on 29 September 2022. During the [REDACTED] school year, Pupil A was in [REDACTED] at the School.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

The panel found the following particulars of the allegations against you, for these reasons:

1. Between approximately May 2022 and October 2022 you:

a) Gave Pupil A your personal mobile phone number and / or email;

Witness A and Witness B provided exhibited evidence of Mr Rowley providing a piece of paper with his contact information containing his mobile number and personal email address to Pupil A, along with a handwritten letter.

This is further supported by the evidence of email exchanges and text messages between Mr Rowley and Pupil A, as exhibited by Witness A. This was provided by Pupil A and extracted through a police download of Mr Rowley's mobile phone.

Mr Rowley has admitted the sharing of personal mobile number, email and subsequent contact via those methods with Pupil A, in his police interview and in his email to the TRA on 2 August 2025.

The panel found this allegation proven.

b) Exchanged one or more of the text messages with Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A as set out in Schedule 1.

The panel considered the evidence exhibited to the witness statements of Witness A and Witness B of text messages between Mr Rowley and Pupil A, which contain all of the messages set out in Schedule 1.

The panel noted Mr Rowley admitted in his first police interview that he had sent messages to Pupil A. Mr Rowley was interviewed by the police again on 4 October 2022, following the download of his phone. During this second interview, Mr Rowley was questioned regarding the text messages obtained from his mobile phone, which included majority of the comments contained in Schedule 1. Mr Rowley admitted to sending those text messages but stated they were friendly banter, not sexual.

The panel also had regard to the account of Pupil A given to the police in which she stated that she exchanged text messages with Mr Rowley.

The panel found this allegation proven.

c) Exchanged one or more of the emails with Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A as set out in Schedule 2.

The panel considered the evidence exhibited to Witness A's witness statement of email exchanges between Pupil A and Mr Rowley provided to the police by Pupil A. All of the comments in Schedule 2 are contained in the provided emails.

In addition, Mr Rowley admitted to exchanging emails with Pupil A in his email to the TRA dated 2 August 2025 where he stated, "Further contact, in August 2022 was initiated by her as we both went on holidays-it was only after that she returned that she completely changed and we exchanged emails (as exhibited)."

The panel found this allegation proven.

d) Discussed personal matters with Pupil A relating to your [REDACTED];

The panel considered the evidence exhibited to Witness A's witness statement showing email exchanges with Pupil A and Mr Rowley provided to the police by Pupil A.

In an email from Mr Rowley to Pupil A on 28 August 2022, he stated "[REDACTED]"

The panel found this allegation proven.

e) Wrote and/ or gave a handwritten letter to Pupil A which included comments to and/or about Pupil A as set out in Schedule 3.

The letter containing all of the comments from Schedule 3 is exhibited to the witness statements of Witness A and Witness B. Mr Rowley admitted to writing the letter in his police interview. In Pupil A's account to the police, she stated that Mr Rowley gave her the letter when he was alone in the classroom, he asked her to put it in her pocket and not show anyone.

The panel found that in addition to the comments contained in Schedule 3, there are other comments in the letter to and about Pupil A that were inappropriate.

The panel found this allegation proven.

f) Made one or more of the comments to and / or about Pupil A as set out in Schedule 4

The panel considered the account provided by Pupil A during her recorded video interview with the police. In that interview, Pupil A disclosed all of the comments set out in Schedule 4, with the exception of one.

The remaining comment, that Pupil A was "attractive", originated from Mr Rowley's police interview on 24 June 2022, during which he admitted to finding Pupil A attractive. In the same interview, Mr Rowley also admitted to calling Pupil A "sex goddess", although he stated this was intended as a joke.

The panel noted that the evidence for all but two of the comments in Schedule 4 was solely derived from Pupil A's account to the police. As Pupil A did not give oral evidence, the Panel carefully considered the credibility and weight of her account, which was presented in transcript form from the police video recorded interview. The panel found her account to be credible.

In assessing the weight to be given to this evidence, the panel took into account that two of the comments were admitted by Mr Rowley during his police interview. It also noted that Mr Rowley had not denied the remaining comments, although he was not questioned about them, as his interview pre-dated Pupil A's disclosure.

The panel further considered the sexual content of text messages and emails obtained from Mr Rowley's mobile phone, as well as material provided by Pupil A. These additional sources supported the reliability of Pupil A's account.

The panel found this allegation proven.

g) Sent and / or tagged Pupil A in a TikTok video of yourself;

The panel viewed the TikTok video in which Mr Rowley is seen making various facial expressions, including licking his lips and pouting, set to the song 'Laid' by James.

The panel considered Pupil A's account, provided during her recorded police interview, in which she stated that Mr Rowley created a TikTok account using a username she had jokingly used for him. She described how he followed her, asked her to follow him back, and then began messaging her via the platform.

The panel also noted that Mr Rowley admitted during his police interview to uploading the video to TikTok and to having contact with Pupil A on the platform. In an email dated 29 September 2022, submitted during the School's internal investigation and exhibited to the witness statement of Witness B's, Mr Rowley responded to the allegation regarding the TikTok video by stating: "Further, this was not 'connecting with pupils' – it was on my account and I later tagged it into the account of (Pupil A) for one pupil (not several) to see. This was clearly wrong on my part. No offence was taken and (Pupil A) found it amusing."

The panel found this allegation proven.

h) Contacted and / or followed Pupil A on social media;

The panel considered the account of Pupil A provided to the police in which she described the contact over TikTok and that Mr Rowley followed her and requested a follow back. Pupil A described Mr Rowley asking her to go hiking together and asking her if she would speak to him when she leaves school. Pupil A explained that it was over TikTok when Mr Rowley told her about his dreams of kissing her all over her body, cuddling with no clothes on and having sex with her.

Pupil A also described Mr Rowley telling her that he made an Instagram account and she saw him viewing her story on there, he also messaged her there, with the first message on 21 July 2022.

The panel noted that Mr Rowley admitted during his police interview to having contact with Pupil A on TikTok.

In addition, the panel considered an email from Pupil A to Mr Rowley dated 28 August 2022, exhibited through the evidence of Witness A. In that email, Pupil A wrote: "I've blocked u many times and u make accounts to message me, request me on, it's just too

much and I'd starting to scare the shit out of me, I don't have to explain myself on why I blocked u and didn't speak to u, maybe cause ur my teacher ????? The only reason I unblocked u was to tell u my grades ,CAUSE UR MY TEACHER AND I HAVE THAT LEVEL OF RESPECT TO TELL U WHAT I GOT"

In response Mr Rowley stated, "As I said, I created those alternative accounts to see if u would block me- I needed to know if u had a problem with me or something."

The panel found this allegation proven.

i) Encouraged contact between you and Pupil A to continue through talking, texting and meeting in person;

The panel considered various pieces of evidence, including the initial handwritten letter from Mr Rowley to Pupil A, the exhibited text messages, email exchanges, and Pupil A's account provided to the police.

In particular, the text messages demonstrated that Mr Rowley encouraged Pupil A to meet with him on several occasions. Examples included offers to teach her to swim and invitations to go for a walk. On 16 June 2022 Mr Rowley messaged Pupil A: "We will go for a walk sometime if u decide to & then see about ur swimming later. A picnic would be nice. We'll see. I sound really push, don't i?"

In the handwritten letter to Pupil A, Mr Rowley wrote "I will leave you my contact details I will write it on a little card you will find it in this envelope. I would love for us to continue this by talking / phoning / texts and meeting up."

The panel found this allegation proven.

2. Your conduct as may be proven at Allegation 1 was sexually motivated;

The panel considered whether, even in the absence of any direct evidence, sexual motivation should be inferred or deduced from the surrounding evidence.

Mr Rowley in his police interview admitted to finding Pupil A attractive, that some of the messages were flirty but he denied that they were sexual.

Mr Rowley stated in his email on 2 August 2025 to the TRA that "Once she started flirting, I got sucked into flirting back".

The panel considered the contents of the communications between Mr Rowley and Pupil A, as exhibited by Witness A, Witness B and provided in the account of Pupil A and found evidence of sexual comments. In particular within the comments made by Mr Rowley in respect of those found proven referred to in Schedule 4, he referred to Pupil A as a 'sex goddess' and 'attractive' and made references to dreaming of 'cuddling with no clothes on', 'kissing' and 'having sex' with Pupil A. Mr Rowley, asked Pupil A to send him

a photograph while she was in a towel following a shower and in other communications stated that he loved her.

The panel considered that the evidence presented to them of the conduct as a whole was inherently sexual in nature and that there was an absence of any plausible alternative explanation. The panel also noted that there was an escalation of the sexual nature of the conversations between Mr Rowley and Pupil A over time. The panel considered that it could be inferred that Mr Rowley's conduct was either in pursuit of sexual gratification or in pursuit of a future sexual relationship.

The panel found this allegation proven.

3. On one or more occasions you:-

a) encouraged and / or requested Pupil A to destroy correspondence;

The panel considered a text message sent by Mr Rowley to Pupil A, recovered from his mobile phone by the police and exhibited in the statement of Witness A. In that message, Mr Rowley wrote: "But we haven't done anything-contact yes, talked yes but not met or done anything. Try to get and delete if u can".

The panel also considered the handwritten letter provided by Mr Rowley to Pupil A, in which he wrote: "I ask that you a. destroy / burn this letter – would be embarrassing / dangerous if someone else found it." Mr Rowley admitted during his police interview that he had asked Pupil A to destroy the handwritten letter.

The panel found this allegation proven.

b) deleted your correspondence with Pupil A when you knew and / or was aware that your conduct in respect of Pupil A was being investigated;

The panel considered the account of Pupil A, in which she stated that Mr Rowley deleted his TikTok account which removed the messages exchanged on TikTok. The panel considered this account to be credible since Mr Rowley in his police interview admitted to deleting messages as he knew that it was wrong and he could get into trouble.

The panel found this allegation proven.

4. In or around June 2022 you influenced and / or attempted to influence Pupil A's account to the Police;

The panel considered a series of text messages sent by Mr Rowley to Pupil A, exhibited in the statement of Witness A. These included messages such as: "Stick to the story", "We need to stick to what we said", "Gonna stick to our story – I could get called in after school tomorrow", "I get that ur scared – It's just dragging on. We need to stick to what we said".

On 24 June 2022, Pupil A messaged Mr Rowley: “Also please can you send me the pics of the note again cause I deleted this chat and wanna like go thru it again so I know what I’m saying.” Mr Rowley responded: “Morning the notes for you. Remember p1 – 6 are addressing the evidence, p7 – 10 is the summary of events. Try not to worry too much – I know it’s difficult not to.” The notes referred to the communications between Mr Rowley and Pupil A. They included statements such as: “U know I love you to bits – means – ‘care deeply’” “Also we talked of keeping in touch or meeting up in future – but only as friends” (with “only as friends” underlined). The panel considered that the purpose of these notes was to influence the account Pupil A would give to the police.

In her account to the police, Pupil A was asked about these messages and stated: “He was telling me what to say, to lie, if I was asked by the police.”

The panel also considered an email from Mr Rowley to Pupil A dated 29 August 2022, in which he wrote: “I now face the worst time of my life – the police station... knowing that you have given a completely different account than what I thought.”

Witness A, in oral evidence, confirmed that Mr Rowley was subject to bail conditions prohibiting contact with Pupil A. Despite this, contact continued, resulting in Mr Rowley’s further arrest.

In Mr Rowley’s defence the panel considered an email from Mr Rowley to the TRA dated 2 August 2025, in which he stated: “She did resort to lying to cover up her part in all this. She further insisted on me writing down what had happened and explaining screenshots held by [REDACTED] – she said she was overwhelmed and would forget or make mistakes. The handwritten notes by me were to help her, as she had requested. I did say to her that I would phone her, but she said no, and to write everything down. Again this was lying to me and she then used this against me, in order to protect herself.”

The panel did not place weight on this explanation, in light of the repeated text messages from Mr Rowley urging Pupil A to “stick to the story.” It considered that these messages demonstrated Mr Rowley applying pressure on Pupil A in an attempt to influence her account to the police.

The panel found this allegation proven.

5. Your conduct was dishonest as may be proven at allegations 3 and/or 4 in that you were attempting to prevent the School and/or Police uncovering the full extent of his conduct with regards to Pupil A.

The panel understood that the test for dishonesty is set out in the case of *Ivey v Genting Casinos*. This requires a decision-maker to consider:

- a) What was the Teacher’s knowledge or belief as to the facts, and

- b) Was the conduct dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people?

The panel noted that Mr Rowley, in the hand written letter to Pupil A, stated that it “would be embarrassing / dangerous if someone else found it”, which evidenced the state of Mr Rowley’s knowledge and belief. The panel also noted that he instructed Pupil A to “stick to the story”. The panel considered that on the balance of probabilities Mr Rowley was aware that he was seeking to protect his own position, and cover up his conduct with regards to Pupil A.

The panel determined that ordinary decent people would consider his actions in these circumstances to be dishonest.

The panel determined that the conduct found proven at allegations 3 and 4 was dishonest.

The panel found this allegation proven.

6. You failed to report / and or take any reasonable steps to report:

- a) That you considered Pupil A was attracted to you;**
- b) That you had provided Pupil A with advice unrelated to your profession;**
- c) That Pupil A sent photographs of herself to you;**

The panel considered the handwritten note sent by Mr Rowley to Pupil A in a text message, as exhibited by Witness A. In it, Mr Rowley wrote: “Did I think you had a thing for me, beyond being your favourite teacher, probably in hindsight. You did stare at me a lot and I made fun of you for this saying ‘stop staring’ people would think you in love with me.” The panel considered this to indicate that Mr Rowley believed Pupil A was attracted to him.

The panel found that Mr Rowley gave Pupil A advice unrelated to his professional role. This included comments in the handwritten note regarding her social media use and personal relationships. In text messages, exhibited by Witness A, Mr Rowley discussed Pupil A watching Love Island, asking: “So what did u learn from LI – about life that is?” and later commenting: “...gotta remember it’s not real life.”

The panel also found that Pupil A sent photographs of herself to Mr Rowley. In a text message exhibited by Witness A on 23 June 2022, Mr Rowley wrote: “Can’t believe I’ve had to delete every photo and vid uv sent me this week.” In addition, he admitted in his police interview that Pupil A had sent him photos of herself to him.

The panel considered the School’s child protection and safeguarding policy and noted that Mr Rowley had completed Level 2 safeguarding and child protection in education training. As Head of Faculty and a leader within the School, he was aware of his

obligations to report and take reasonable steps in relation to the matters set out at a), b), and c).

Witness B gave oral evidence regarding the School's social media policy, which applies even after a pupil leaves the School. The policy prohibits social media contact between staff and pupils and requires reporting of any incidental interactions.

Mr Rowley made no reports to the School regarding these matters. The School only became aware of the situation following a third-party disclosure. Mr Rowley had sufficient time to report the behaviour, which escalated over time, but failed to do so.

The panel found this allegation proven.

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

Having found all of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and 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 Rowley, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Rowley 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 and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- 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 Rowley in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”).

The panel considered that Mr Rowley was in breach of the requirement to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that he failed to protect Pupil A and act in her best interests.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Rowley in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel considered that Mr Rowley was in breach of the provision to report safeguarding concerns and failed to share information which may impact a child’s safety and welfare.

The panel also considered whether Mr Rowley’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 offences of sexual communication with a child, abuse of trust, controlling or coercive behaviour, harassment, stalking and serious dishonesty were relevant.

The panel noted that some of the allegations took place outside the education setting. Despite this the panel felt that Mr Rowley’s conduct was relevant to his position as a teacher in that he had been inappropriately communicating with a school age child via social media. The panel also found that Mr Rowley failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A whilst placed in a position of trust as her teacher.

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

In relation to whether Mr Rowley’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 Rowley'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 Rowley was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that the offences of sexual communication with a child, abuse of trust, controlling or coercive behaviour, harassment, stalking and serious dishonesty were relevant.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Rowley'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

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 pupil.

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

The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Rowley 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 Rowley in the profession. There is evidence that Mr Rowley had ability as an educator and has had a lengthy teaching career with no previous disciplinary issues referred to the TRA. No evidence was offered, however, suggesting that his contribution to the education profession has been such that the interest in retaining Mr Rowley in the profession would outweigh the adverse public interest considerations noted above, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he sought to exploit his position of trust, causing significant harm to a pupil.

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 Rowley.

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 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;

- 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);
- violation of the rights of pupils;
- actions or behaviours that promote extremist political or religious views or attitudes, or that undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This would encompass deliberately allowing the exposure of pupils to such actions or behaviours, including through contact with any individuals who are widely known to express views that support such activity, for example by inviting any such individuals to speak in schools;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions or purposeful destruction of evidence
- collusion or concealment including:
 - any activity that involves knowingly substantiating another person's statements where they are known to be false;
 - failure to challenge inappropriate actions, defending inappropriate actions or concealing inappropriate actions;
 - encouraging others to break rules;
 - lying to prevent the identification of wrongdoing;

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 found that Mr Rowley's actions were deliberate. There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Rowley was acting under duress.

No evidence was provided that Mr Rowley had previously been subject to any warnings or disciplinary sanctions. There was no evidence that he had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct or of having contributed significantly to the education sector.

Mr Rowley did not provide any testimonial statements attesting to his character or teaching ability.

However, during oral evidence, Witness B described Mr Rowley as "a very competent teacher." He noted that while Mr Rowley was not particularly involved in extracurricular

activities, he was regarded as a leader and an exemplary teacher in the classroom, achieving excellent exam results.

The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character. Mr Rowley's actions continued over a prolonged period and escalated in severity. His behaviour did not cease following arrest. He continued to communicate with Pupil A while on police bail, breaching conditions prohibiting contact.

Of further concern to the panel was Mr Rowley providing screenshots of WhatsApp conversations with Pupil A from October 2024. He claimed these showed that she wished to maintain contact, contrary to her account, and accused her of lying. This further evidences the high risk of repetition and lack of insight.

The panel found that Mr Rowley demonstrated no genuine remorse. While he acknowledged and accepted some wrongdoing during his police interview and in emails sent to the TRA on 2 August 2025 and 9 October 2025, he also sought to shift blame onto Pupil A. His admissions in the police interview were limited and did not reflect an understanding of the seriousness of his behaviour. He continued to deny any sexual motivation, which indicated a lack of meaningful reflection on his actions.

The panel further noted Mr Rowley's reflections in the police interview, communications with Pupil A, and his resignation email to the school dated 7 June 2022. He wrote: "I hope you are well and the school is functioning well. After much deliberation, it is with regret that I hereby offer my resignation with immediate effect. I am truly sorry for how I have let you, the school, my colleagues and pupils down over the last few weeks. I hope that I can be remembered for the high professional standards that I set for myself prior to this episode. The repercussions of this are not only the termination of my employment with you, but are far reaching in every aspect of my life. I wish you and the school well and hope that you achieve your goal for an outstanding school. Should I ever return to teaching, I hope that you can provide some kind of positive reference in the future."

The panel considered that Mr Rowley's focus was primarily on the personal impact of the allegations. There was a marked absence of any meaningful consideration of the potential harm to Pupil A or the broader public interest implications of his actions.

The panel found that Mr Rowley failed to take full responsibility for his conduct and that there is a high risk of repetition.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings would be sufficient would

unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Rowley of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Rowley, given his inappropriate relationship with Pupil A, breaching his role of trust and apparent lack of remorse 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;

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. One of these include fraud or serious dishonesty.

The panel further considered that Mr Rowley demonstrated a limited understanding of the seriousness of the issues in this case, leading the panel to conclude that meaningful remediation was highly unlikely.

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 Mark Rowley should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Rowley 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 and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- 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 Rowley, involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) and involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include sexual communication with a child, abuse of trust, controlling or coercive behaviour, harassment, stalking and serious dishonesty.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would

achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Rowley and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

“The panel considered that Mr Rowley was in breach of the provision to report safeguarding concerns and failed to share information which may impact a child’s safety and welfare.”

“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 pupil.”

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 remorse and insight, which the panel sets out as follows, “The panel found that Mr Rowley demonstrated no genuine remorse. While he acknowledged and accepted some wrongdoing during his police interview and in emails sent to the TRA on 2 August 2025 and 9 October 2025, he also sought to shift blame onto Pupil A. His admissions in the police interview were limited and did not reflect an understanding of the seriousness of his behaviour. He continued to deny any sexual motivation, which indicated a lack of meaningful reflection on his actions.” In my judgement, the lack of remorse or 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 observe, “the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Rowley was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.” I am particularly mindful of the findings in this case which included sexual communication with a child, abuse of trust and dishonesty and the impact that such findings 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 Rowley himself and the panel comment “There is evidence that Mr Rowley had ability as an educator and has had a lengthy teaching career with no previous disciplinary issues referred to the TRA. No evidence was offered, however, suggesting that his contribution to the education profession has been such that the interest in retaining Mr Rowley in the profession would outweigh the adverse public interest considerations noted above, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he sought to exploit his position of trust, causing significant harm to a pupil.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Rowley 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 “The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character. Mr Rowley’s actions continued over a prolonged period and escalated in severity. His behaviour did not cease following arrest. He continued to communicate with Pupil A while on police bail, breaching conditions prohibiting contact.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the following findings:

“The panel considered that Mr Rowley’s focus was primarily on the personal impact of the allegations. There was a marked absence of any meaningful consideration of the potential harm to Pupil A or the broader public interest implications of his actions.”

“The panel found that Mr Rowley failed to take full responsibility for his conduct and that there is a high risk of repetition.”

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Rowley 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 remorse or 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 that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"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;

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. One of these include fraud or serious dishonesty."

The panel has also said that "The panel further considered that Mr Rowley demonstrated a limited understanding of the seriousness of the issues in this case, leading the panel to conclude that meaningful remediation was highly unlikely."

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 findings, the lack of either insight or 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 Mark Rowley 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 Rowley 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 Rowley has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SABuxcey', with a horizontal line extending from the left side.

Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 12 November 2025

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