



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **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 Ryan Scott

**TRA reference:** 18903

**Date of determination:** 14 November 2025

**Former employer:** Holne Chase Primary School, Bletchley, England

### **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 3 November 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Ryan Scott.

The panel members were Mrs Melissa West (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Shabana Robertson (lay panellist) and Mr Tony Coyne (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Lucy Bishop of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Sherelle Appleby of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Mr Ryan Scott was present and was represented by Dr Debbie Jack, a lay representative.

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

## Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 1 August 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Scott was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst employed at the Holne Chase Primary School:

1. Mr Scott stored a substantial amount of pupil data on his Google Drive from his current and former schools from between around 2005-2019, including;

a) Photographs and/or videos of one or more children from:

i. Holne Chase Primary School, between around 2013-2019;

ii. St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley, between around 2009-2013;

iii. St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Harpendon, between around 2005-2009;

b) Photographs and/or videos of one or more children in swimming costumes including from;

i. Holne Chase Primary School, between from around 2015-2019;

ii. St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Harpendon, between around 2005-2009;

c) Videos of children undertaking gymnastics at Holne Chase Primary School from around 2016;

d) Photographs of one or more children undertaking gymnastics poses including at St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley:

i. From around 2010-2011

ii. From around 2011-2012;

e) A photograph of a pupil asleep on the coach, from a trip to the [REDACTED];

f) A photograph of a pupil on the coach, with no top on, holding a sick bag from around 2017-2018;

g) A photograph of a child bending over with their bottom pointed at the camera, from around 2006;

h) Parental/guardian contact details from St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley, from around 2010.

2. Mr Scott stored photographic imagery of children on his external hard drive, including;

- a) One or more photographs of one or more children showing their underwear;
- b) One or more photographs of one or more children partially undressed in bed sleeping;
- c) One or more photographs of one or more children getting changed;
- d) One or more videos that included slow motion panning of one or more children;
- e) A video that zoomed in around the crotch and/or bottom of a child;

3. Mr Scott inappropriately used personal device(s) in School in that he:

- a) Used his own iPad and/or laptop on the premises;
- b) Used his mobile phone to take and/or store photographs of pupils.

4. Mr Scott engaged in inappropriate physical contact with one or more pupils including:

- a) Sitting with his legs open and allowing the child to sit between his legs;
- b) In or around 2018-2019, by placing his arm around a pupil as shown by photograph IMG\_2282;
- c) In or around 2018-2019, by allowing a pupil to rest their leg over his, as shown by photograph IMG\_3885;
- d) In or around 2018-2019, by allowing pupils to lean or lie on him on a trampoline;
- e) In or around 2016-2017, by placing his arm around a pupil as shown by photograph '[REDACTED]';
- f) In or around 2016-2017, by allowing a pupil to place their arm around his neck as shown by photograph '[REDACTED]'.

5. Mr Scott failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with one or more pupils, including;

- a) Inviting one or more male pupils to his office when they should have been in class;
- b) Providing one to one pastoral interventions to one or more male pupils in circumstances where he failed to provide any paperwork and/or intervention logs about the purpose of these meetings;

c) Inviting a former pupil to the School and/or providing pastoral care within the School premises;

6. Mr Scott's conduct as may be found proven at Allegations 1-5 above was despite having been subject to a disciplinary process regarding conduct towards pupils and parents at St Nicholas' School, Hertfordshire, in or around 2009;

7. Mr Scott's conduct as may be found proven at Allegations 1a)-g), 2 and 3 above was despite advice being given to him at St Paul's following a concern between around 2009 – 2013 that he had been using his own camera to take photographs of pupils;

8. Mr Scott's behaviour as may be found proven at 1a)-g) and 2-5 above was conduct of a sexual nature and/or was sexually motivated.

Mr Scott admitted allegations 1a to 1g but noted that he had stored the data for school purposes.

Mr Scott admitted allegation 1h.

Mr Scott denied allegation 2.

Mr Scott admitted allegation 3a to the extent that he used his own iPad, it was noted that he had never had a personal laptop.

Mr Scott admitted allegation 3b but that he took photographs under instruction, but did not admit to storing the photographs.

Mr Scott denied the stem of allegation 4 and allegations 4a, 4c and 4d.

Mr Scott admitted allegations 4b, 4e and 4f.

Mr Scott denied allegations 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Where Mr Scott had admitted the allegations as outlined above, he denied that this amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct which 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: Notice of Hearing – pages 10 to 17

Section 2: Chronology – pages 19 to 20

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 22 to 129

Section 4: TRA Extraneous Bundles – Google Drive Bundle (1296 pages) and Sensitive Data Bundle (15 pages)

Section 5: TRA Documents – pages 134 to 484

Section 6: Teacher Documents – pages 487 to 520

Additionally, the panel was provided with 74 “videos of children undertaking gymnastics”.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance 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”). The panel noted at the outset of the hearing that the TRA Referral form contained in the bundle was dated 22 November 2019, suggesting that the Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2018 should apply. However, the Notice of Proceedings referred to paragraph references contained in the 2020 Procedures.

The panel noted that the teacher’s representative was indifferent as to which Procedures applied, and that the presenting officer had prepared on the basis of the 2020 Procedures applying. The panel considered that the main difference between the Procedures was the time for service of the Notice of Proceedings. The panel considered that the Notice had been served within the time limit contained in both the 2018 and 2020 Procedures and that given the Notice of Proceedings referred to paragraph references from the 2020 Procedures, Mr Scott had been on notice of the 2020 Procedures applying.

In exercising its discretion at paragraph 1.6 of the Procedures, the panel directed that the 2020 Procedures would apply.

## **Witnesses**

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

Witness A – [REDACTED]

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Witness C – [REDACTED]

Witness D – [REDACTED]

Witness E – [REDACTED]

Witness F – [REDACTED]

Mr Scott also gave oral evidence and called the following witnesses:

Witness G – [REDACTED]

Witness H – [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.

Between 2005 and 2009 Mr Scott was employed as Deputy Headteacher and then promoted to Headteacher at St Nicholas Primary School, Harpendon. Towards the end of Mr Scott's employment at St Nicholas Primary School, a police investigation was launched following a parent's complaint against Mr Scott. Mr Scott resigned from St Nicholas Primary School in 2009.

Between September 2009 and March 2013 Mr Scott was employed as a teacher at St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley. An investigation was launched into Mr Scott during his employment at St Paul's Primary School.

Between March 2013 and February 2020 Mr Scott was employed as Assistant Headteacher and then promoted to Deputy Headteacher at Holne Chase Primary School, Milton Keynes.

In November 2019 a referral was made to the TRA in respect of Mr Scott.



## Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

### **Whilst employed at the Holne Chase Primary School:**

#### **1. You stored a substantial amount of pupil data on your Google Drive from your current and former schools from between around 2005-2019, including:**

##### **a) Photographs and/or videos of one or more children from:**

##### **i. Holne Chase Primary School, between around 2013-2019**

The panel noted that it had been provided with a bundle which contained screenshots of a Google Drive, which was said to have been Mr Scott's professional Google Drive. In other words, a Google Drive which was linked to his Holne Chase Primary School ("**Holne Chase**") email address. Although the panel was not provided with the email address linked to the Google Drive, Mr Scott accepted that the Google Drive Bundle represented the contents of his professional Google Drive while at Holne Chase.

The contents of the Google Drive Bundle ran to over 1,200 pages and while some pages contained screenshots of folder structures, most of the pages contained screenshots of folders containing images, with a number of pages containing over 10 thumbnails of a mixture of pictures and videos on the page.

The panel heard evidence from Witness A, Witness C and Mr Scott that Holne Chase also had a "Shared Drive". Witness C explained this was connected to the Network which staff members could also use to store data. These were referred to as "K" and "T" drives. Mr Scott told the panel that as part of the school's "Google Classroom" package users had access to the Google Drive which could be used to store data. Mr Scott also told the panel that in respect of the Google Drive staff members could access their accounts on any laptop.

During oral evidence Mr Scott confirmed that the contents of the Google Drive Bundle was taken from an area on the Google Drive called "My Drive". The panel heard that the "My Drive" area was Mr Scott's personal area on the Google Drive which could only be accessed by other members of staff if Mr Scott granted permission, or if the user had admin rights. Mr Scott confirmed there was a shared area on the Google Drive which all users had access to.

The panel heard evidence from Mr Scott that he was aware that storage capacity was an issue on his professional Google Drive. At paragraph 3 of his response at the Hearing Stage, Mr Scott stated:

*“I had more than one conversation with Holne Chase’s IT support about the [sic] increasing the amount of storage that I needed on the school’s Google drive and was given more space and told by our IT support that we have unlimited data storage available.”*

Mr Scott confirmed this during his oral evidence, and told the panel that the unlimited data offering was free to schools.

Mr Scott’s representative also acknowledged that the data stored on Mr Scott’s Google Drive represented a “huge amount of data”. When questioned why he had “so much” data on the Google Drive, Mr Scott stated that it was because he had been a teacher for over 20 years and that he treated electronic resources in the same way that he would a useful reading book.

When questioned by the presenting officer, Mr Scott noted that the amount of data was reflective of someone who had been in teaching for a long period of time and that it contained “a fair bit” of data.

The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr Scott stored a substantial amount of pupil data on his professional Google Drive.

The panel then turned to consider allegation 1a.i.

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs and videos of children from Holne Chase which were taken during his employment at the school.

Witness G, Witness H and Mr Scott confirmed, when taken to some of the photographs in the Google Drive Bundle which contained images of both staff and pupils, that they were taken during residential trips organised by Holne Chase. The panel also noted that a video was shown from one of these residential trips.

Mr Scott also confirmed during his oral evidence that he remembered seeing the Holne Chase logo in photographs of the school’s swim team.

The panel also noted that some of the folders which contained these photographs were dated. They were therefore satisfied that the Google Drive contained images of pupils from Holne Chase between around 2013-2019.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

## **ii. St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley, between around 2009-2013**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that he had transferred all data he had from St Paul's Church of England Primary School ("**St Paul's**") to his professional Google Drive account at Holne Chase as part of a data dump exercise. Mr Scott noted that he did not consider whether the data should be deleted at this time, or indeed at any other time whilst it was stored on the Google Drive. The panel also noted that Mr Scott confirmed during his oral evidence that he did not have permission to keep the data once his employment at St Paul's had terminated.

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs and videos of children from St Paul's which were taken during his employment at the school.

During her oral evidence, Witness D was taken to various folders in the Google Drive Bundle, including ones entitled "2012-2013 Indoor Athletics" and "2011-2012". Witness D confirmed that she recognised the hall in which the photos were taken and the PE kit worn by the pupils in the photos as being from St Paul's. Witness D also noted that she recognised some of the faces in the photographs as being pupils from St Paul's.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

## **iii. St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Harpendon, between around 2005-2009**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that he had transferred all data he had from St Nicholas Church of England Primary School ("**St Nicholas**") to his professional Google Drive account at Holne Chase as part of a data dump exercise. Mr Scott noted that he did not consider whether the data should be deleted at this time, or indeed at any other time whilst it was stored on the Google Drive. The panel also noted that Mr Scott confirmed during his oral evidence that he did not have permission to keep the data once his employment at St Nicholas had terminated.

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs and videos of children from St Nicholas which were taken during his employment at the school.

During her oral evidence, Witness B was taken to various folders in the Google Drive Bundle and confirmed that she recognised the swim tops, particularly the logo, worn by the pupils in the photographs. Witness B also recognised the faces in some of the photographs as being pupils of St Nicholas.

The panel was satisfied, based on the labelling of the folders, that the photos were dated between 2005 and 2009.

The panel noted that while there were less videos which appeared in the Google Drive Bundle for St Nicholas, the folders between 2005-2009 did contain some examples of videos.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

On balance, the panel therefore found allegation 1a. proven.

**b) Photographs and/or videos of one or more children in swimming costumes including from:**

**i. Holne Chase Primary School, between around 2015-2019;**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs of children from Holne Chase in swimming costumes.

Witness F was taken to folders in the Google Drive Bundle entitled “2017-2018 swim team” and “2016-2017”. Witness F said that she remembered some of the photographs from when she initially searched Mr Scott’s professional Google Drive in October 2019.

The panel noted that Witness F was not able to assist with identifying which school the pupils in the photographs were from, as she only joined Holne Chase in September 2019. However, the panel noted Mr Scott’s admission that the Google Drive contained photographs of pupils in swimming costumes from Holne Chase.

The panel noted that it had not been provided with any videos of one or more children in swimming costumes from Holne Chase, but was satisfied that the Google Drive contained photographs.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

**ii. St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Harpendon, between around 2005-2009**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs of children from St Nicholas in swimming costumes.

During her oral evidence, Witness B was taken to various folders in the Google Drive Bundle, including ones entitled “swimming 2008”, “swimming 2007” and “2005-2006 National Swimming Championship”. Witness B confirmed that she recognised the swim tops, particularly the logo, worn by the pupils in the photographs. Witness B also recognised the faces in some of the photographs as being pupils from St Nicholas.

The panel also noted that the Google Drive Bundle contained an image of a board at what appeared to be a leisure or swimming centre which referred to St Nicholas. Witness B also pointed this out during her oral evidence.

Mr Scott also told the panel about the National Swimming Championship in which the swim team at St Nicholas had reached the final and that it was an important occasion for the school. Mr Scott told the panel that St Nicholas did not have a swimming pool and was the only non-fee paying school which had made it into the final and that Swim England had published information about the event in their literature.

The panel noted that it had not been provided with any videos of one or more children in swimming costumes from St Nicholas, but was satisfied that the Google Drive contained photographs.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

On balance, the panel therefore found allegation 1b. proven.

### **c) Videos of children undertaking gymnastics at Holne Chase Primary School from around 2016**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained videos of children undertaking gymnastics at Holne Chase from around 2016.

The panel was provided with 74 videos of pupils doing gymnastics.

During the hearing, one of these videos was shared on screen. This video appeared to have been taken from a folder entitled “Gym Practice – May 2016”. The video showed a pupil working through what appeared to be a number of gymnastic manoeuvres on a mat.

When asked what the purpose of these videos was, Mr Scott stated that Holne Chase was involved in a gymnastics competition hosted by the local authority in which the pupils had to do a vault and a complex gymnastics sequence from memory. Mr Scott and other teachers would host practice sessions for the gymnastics team in the run up to the competition. In the video shared on screen, Mr Scott can be seen in the background overseeing pupils on the vault.

Mr Scott stated that the children had recommended filming one another as some of them went to gymnastic clubs outside of school and videos would be used in the run up to a competition in order to critique one another. Mr Scott stated that the videos were placed on his My Drive in a shared folder which the pupils could also access.

Mr Scott confirmed that the videos were kept on the My Drive as a teaching resource for children who entered the competition in later years.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

### **d) Photographs of one or more children undertaking gymnastics poses including at St Paul’s Church of England Primary School, King’s Langley:**

### **i. From around 2010-2011**

### **ii. From around 2011-2012**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained photographs of children undertaking gymnastics poses at St Paul's from around 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

The panel identified folders in the Google Drive Bundle from between 2010 and 2012 which contained images of children undertaking gymnastics poses. Within those folders, the panel also noted one particular photo which contained a clear logo which read "St Paul's".

The panel also considered Witness D's oral evidence and her responses when shown images from the folders "2010-2011 Gymnastics", "2011-2012 Gymnastics" and "2012-2013 Indoor Athletics" within the Google Drive Bundle. Witness D confirmed that she recognised the hall in which the photos were taken and the PE kit worn by the pupils in the photos as being from St Paul's. Witness D also noted that she recognised some of the faces in the photographs as being pupils from St Paul's.

The panel was satisfied that the children in the photos were undertaking gymnastics poses.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

### **e) A photograph of a pupil asleep on the coach, from a trip to the [REDACTED]**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained a photograph of a pupil asleep on the coach from a trip to the [REDACTED].

The presenting officer stated that the Sensitive Data Bundle contained images which were in the Google Drive Bundle but were selected and placed into a separate bundle.

The panel noted that Mr Scott accepted that the contents of the Sensitive Data Bundle were taken from the Google Drive.

The panel noted that the photo appears in the Google Drive Bundle in a folder entitled "[REDACTED]". The folder appears in a main folder entitled "[REDACTED]". The panel found that it was more likely than not that the photo was from the [REDACTED].

The panel also heard from Mr Scott that when on residential trips or when using public transport, the pupils would wear pink hats so that they could be easily identified. The pupil in the photograph was wearing a pink hat.

Mr Scott stated that he did not recognise the photo when he first viewed it, but notes that the child is definitely from Holne Chase. Mr Scott stated that any member of staff could have taken the photo and uploaded it to his My Drive. However, the panel noted that the allegation related only to the storing of the photograph, and not whether Mr Scott had taken the photograph.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

**f) A photograph of a pupil on the coach, with no top on, holding a sick bag from around 2017-2018**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained a photograph of a pupil on the coach, with no top on, holding a sick bag from around 2017-2018.

The panel noted that this photograph was contained in the Google Drive Bundle and the Sensitive Data Bundle.

The panel identified that the photograph was contained in a folder entitled “2017-18” in the Google Drive Bundle. The panel found that it was more likely than not that the photo was from around 2017-2018.

When shown this photograph during his oral evidence, Mr Scott said that he remembered sitting further towards the back on the coach so he may not have taken the photograph. Mr Scott also recognised the member of staff sat next to the pupil on the coach. However, the panel noted that the allegation related only to the storing of the photograph, and not whether Mr Scott had taken the photograph.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

**g) A photograph of a child bending over with their bottom pointed at the camera, from around 2006**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained a photograph of a child bending over with their bottom pointed at the camera.

The panel noted that this photograph was contained in the Google Drive Bundle and the Sensitive Data Bundle.

The panel noted that the photo was contained in a folder entitled “[REDACTED]”. The panel found it was more likely than not that the photograph was from around 2006.

Mr Scott also noted that the “chances are very high” that the photograph is of a child from St Nicholas. The panel also noted that the photograph in the Sensitive Data Bundle contained text at the bottom which stated “St Nicholas Primary School”. Mr Scott stated

that pupils acting as class photographers would have taken this and it would likely have been used for a yearbook.

The panel noted that Mr Scott was employed at St Nicholas between 2005 and 2009, which aligned with the alleged year the photograph was taken.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

#### **h) Parental/guardian contact details from St Paul's Church of England Primary School, King's Langley, from around 2010**

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that the Google Drive contained parental/guardian contact details from St Paul's from around 2010.

The panel noted within the Sensitive Data Bundle, a redacted copy of a table had been included which contained the names of pupils, details of their parents/guardians and their contact details. The panel noted that this table did not appear in the Google Drive Bundle, and no information had been provided as to how the table had been accessed from the Google Drive. The panel noted that Mr Scott did not dispute that the table was on the Google Drive.

The panel identified a file entitled "[REDACTED]contact list" and noted that this file was dated 13 October 2010. The panel found that, on the balance of probabilities, the table was taken from the Google Drive. This "contact list" was found in a folder entitled "Trips" and a sub-folder entitled "[REDACTED]".

Witness D was shown this table on screen during her evidence and she confirmed that she recognised some of the children's names as being former pupils of St Paul's. Witness D also noted that she recognised some of the parents'/guardians' names.

Witness D stated that she would have expected Mr Scott to have the list in his possession at the time of the trip, but noted that there would have been no reason for Mr Scott to have it once the trip had taken place.

Mr Scott also agreed that the contact details were taken from whilst he was employed at St Paul's.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

The panel therefore found all of allegation 1 proven.

#### **4. You engaged in in appropriate physical contact with one or more pupils including:**

##### **c) In or around 2018-2019, by allowing a pupil to rest their leg over yours, as shown by photograph IMG\_3885:**



The panel was provided with photograph IMG\_3885 in the Sensitive Data Bundle and in the Google Drive Bundle.

The photograph was contained in the Google Drive Bundle in a folder entitled "[REDACTED]".

The panel heard from Mr Scott, Witness G and Witness H that the image was taken during the residential trip to the [REDACTED] whilst Mr Scott was employed at Holne Chase. The panel found that it was more likely than not that the photograph was taken in 2019.

Mr Scott stated that the photograph was taken at the end of the day during the residential trip and that he can be seen to be reading a story to the pupils. Mr Scott stated that this was the last activity of the day before the children went to bed.

The photograph appears to be a wide panoramic-type one, which shows a room filled with pupils. Mr Scott is located on the right-hand side on one sofa, with pupils sat around him. A pupil can be seen in the photograph resting their leg over Mr Scott whilst he is reading the story.

The panel heard evidence that Witness G and Witness H were also in the photograph, located on the other side of the room with Witness G sat on another sofa with her legs crossed facing away from the pupil sat next to her. Witness H is sat on the floor with pupils around her.

The panel found that Mr Scott was sat in a position which was far too relaxed. The photograph appears to be capturing the reality of the situation, and it does not appear that anyone in the photograph is aware that it is being taken. The panel found that it did not look as though the child had placed his leg on Mr Scott for the purposes of the photo.

The panel considered Mr Scott's explanation during oral evidence that he was absorbed in the story and was unaware or did not notice that the pupil was resting their leg over his. Mr Scott also stated that he would have discouraged that type of contact and would have asked the pupil to move their leg, or moved his own leg.

The panel did not find this to be plausible and noted that Mr Scott had a responsibility to the pupil and to himself not to allow that. The panel considered that the photograph did not demonstrate a teacher who was discouraging that type of contact.

The panel also considered that this photograph demonstrated a lack of proper boundaries between Mr Scott and the pupil.

Mr Scott told the panel that he was wearing loungewear/jogging bottoms in the photograph. The panel considered that Mr Scott appeared to be wearing pyjamas as

opposed to jogging bottoms. The panel found this to be inappropriate and demonstrated that Mr Scott was too relaxed around pupils.

The panel found that Mr Scott had engaged in inappropriate physical contact with the pupil by allowing the pupil to rest their leg over his.

On balance, the panel found this allegation proven.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegations against you not proved, for these reasons:

**2. You stored photographic imagery of children on your external hard drive, including:**

- a) One or more photographs of one or more children showing their underwear**
- b) One or more photographs of one or more children partially undressed in bed sleeping;**
- c) One or more photographs of one or more children getting changed;**
- d) One or more videos that included slow motion panning of one or more children;**
- e) A video that zoomed in around the crotch and/or bottom of a child;**

Neither the external hard drive nor the images alleged to have been contained on the hard drive were provided to the panel.

The only evidence the panel had in relation to allegation 2 was the evidence of Witness F who had reviewed the contents of the external hard drive in February 2020 before it was handed to the police. The panel also noted that it had been provided with correspondence between Browne Jacobson LLP and the police which discussed the external hard drive. The external hard drive itself had been destroyed by the police.

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied allegation 2 as he had not seen the contents of the external hard drive. However, Mr Scott did accept that he owned an external hard drive which would have been located in his office at Holne Chase.

Mr Scott told the panel that as part of an exercise to update St Paul's website, he was provided with an external hard drive with a large amount of storage. Mr Scott accepted that he continued to use the external hard drive to store data. Mr Scott acknowledged that the data from St Paul's and St Nicholas would have been stored on the external hard drive and when he was provided with access to the Google Drive at Holne Chase, he transferred all data from the external drive to the Google Drive.

The panel considered Witness F's description of the content of the external hard drive at paragraph 63 of her statement. This stated:

*"I confirm that from the photographs we accessed on the external hard drive, we saw a photograph of a boy in his underpants; he had a shirt on which was undone, and you could clearly see his underpants. There were also photographs of around five/six half naked children asleep in bed: they were lying in the beds with no tops on (duvets covered the rest of their bodies). There were also videos, which appeared to be recordings made in secret, as the children featured seemed unaware, of slow-motion panning of children which started from their feet and moved slowly up to their head and then down again. It appeared photographs were taken from behind the scenes of school productions and rehearsals. There was also footage of a male child in overalls and the camera zoomed in around his crotch area. The Hard Drive also contained a PowerPoint slide show saved to which included romantic music and a portfolio of photographs of children."*

During her oral evidence, Witness F recalled that the children in the images and videos on the external hard drive were not pupils of Holne Chase. Witness F stated that the contents of the external hard drive were "hard to forget".

In relation to the children being in bed, Witness F confirmed that the photographs looked like they were taken on residential trips.

Witness F clarified during her oral evidence that she genuinely believed that the "secret recordings" she referred to in her witness statement were recorded by other children and that someone was running around with a camera behind the scenes. Witness F confirmed that she saw Mr Scott in the footage. The panel noted that this was different to the impression Witness F gave in her witness statement.

The panel found Witness F to be a credible witness and recognised that the contents of the external hard drive may have been "hard to forget". The panel appreciated that it is unusual to have photographic evidence spanning someone's entire teaching career.

However, the panel considered paragraph 42 of Witness F's statement in which she described the contents of the Google Drive:

*"All the photographs of the children stored upon the [Google] Drive appeared to be male and they looked between nine and eleven years old. We found photographs of children in their swimming costumes between 2007-2019; photographs and videos of children in their gymnastics lessons. It's not clear whether the children knew they were being filmed. We also found videos and photographs of Mr Scott with children who were all wearing sleepwear, on residential trips including in 2019. There were photographs of boys in vulnerable positions, by which I mean that they appeared asleep or poorly, in bed."*

The panel noted that the Google Drive Bundle showed a mixture of boys and girls in the photographs and children who knew they were being filmed. The panel found that Witness F's description of the contents of the Google Drive did not align with the actual content of the Google Drive Bundle, and therefore approached Witness F's description of the content of the external hard drive with caution.

The panel then considered Witness F's description of the external hard drive against the police's findings which were provided in the bundle. The panel exercised caution when considering this evidence as it was hearsay.

The panel noted that Witness F called the LADO about the contents of the external hard drive and the LADO then contacted the police.

In a letter to Browne Jacobson LLP dated 9 December 2022, a member of the Public Access, Joint Information Management Unit at Thames Valley Police stated:

*"Contact has been made with the Officer in Charge ["OIC"] of the case with regards to the requested photographs. She has confirmed that there were pictures of children on devices, storage devices and memory cards owned by Mr Scott. These were reviewed and whilst they, at times, concerned children getting changed or already dressed, they did not show children specifically in underwear. There were also no images of children sleeping or drinking. With regards to the requested videos, the OIC has confirmed that there was no slow motion panning of children nor were there any videos that zoomed into a child's private area."*

In an email dated 17 October 2023 to Browne Jacobson LLP, the Senior Manager for Public Access for Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary and Thames Valley Police provided a "summary statement" from the OIC:

*"Back when I was dealing with this case as a police matter, I did view the hard-drive and also a large majority of the DVDS which contained videos and images from schools Mr SCOTT had worked in in the past. The DVDs and CD's were Mr SCOTT'S property and seemed to span over the last 10 or so years of his career. They were mostly of children in a school play, or getting ready for plays / trips etc.*

*Due to this I would say that there were children in various states of dress / costume but I saw no images of children that would be considered indecent, nor were the children in underwear of suggestively photographed from what I saw. I would not have described the music (if there was any) as 'romantic' but I imagine that Witness F was looking at the material from the point of view of a teacher in a safeguarding role where her concern was that this was entirely inappropriate. From a police point of view though, there was nothing in the material that I viewed that met the criminal threshold. I also went through all of Mr SCOTT'S note books and paperwork which the school had passed me and found nothing here either."*

The panel appreciated that the criminal threshold the police would have been applying when viewing the content of the external hard drive would have been higher than the threshold Witness F would have been applying to the images. However, the panel also noted that when Witness F viewed the content of the external hard drive, the investigation into Mr Scott was well-progressed. The panel therefore exercised further caution with her description of the external hard drive given that it could have been influenced by the information she had already obtained in relation to Mr Scott as part of the wider investigation.

The panel noted the difficulty in respect of this allegation in that Mr Scott had not viewed the content of the external hard drive. However, Mr Scott did acknowledge that there would have been data on the external hard drive, but this data would not have been any different to the data on the Google Drive. Mr Scott said that he was unable to comment on how Witness F interpreted the content of the hard drive, but referred to the police's interpretation which did not align with Witness F's for the most part.

The panel noted the lack of evidence presented in respect of this allegation, and the issues with the evidence available. The panel found that it was more probable than not that the content of the external hard drive had been transferred to Mr Scott's professional Google Drive. The panel noted that there were no photographs or videos on the Google Drive which matched the descriptions as set out in allegations 2a. – 2e.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

### **3. You inappropriately used personal device(s) in School in that you:**

#### **a) Used your own iPad and/or laptop on the premises**

The panel heard from Mr Scott that he had not owned a laptop for a number of years, so would not have used his own laptop on the premises.

Mr Scott admitted to using his own iPad whilst employed at Holne Chase. At paragraph 21 of his witness statement, Mr Scott confirmed that he did use his iPad "for school purposes." Mr Scott stated during oral evidence that he would use his iPad to take notes during meetings.

The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr Scott used his own iPad on the school premises.

The panel then went on to consider whether Mr Scott's use of the iPad was inappropriate.

The panel considered the responses provided by the previous Headteacher to questions in relation to Mr Scott contained in the bundle:

***“To your knowledge did [Mr Scott] use personal devices in school? He had an ipad and an iphone***

***For what purposes did he use these for? In meetings, kept notes on ipad and I think he used a Maths programme that was an app on his ipad.***

The note also states, in response to whether personal devices were used in school:

*“yes but it was discouraged.*

*People have used ipads in meetings – personal ones occasionally”.*

The panel heard from Witness F that the previous Headteacher of Holne Chase had allowed staff to use their personal IT equipment but when she commenced employment in September 2019, she made it clear that staff were not to do so.

Witness F told the panel that she had a conversation with Mr Scott about the use of his iPad and after that conversation, he stopped using it.

The panel referred to the “Notes from Strong Management Advice” document contained in the main hearing bundle which records a meeting which took place on 1 October 2019 between Mr Scott, Witness F with Witness E as note taker. This note stated:

*“It was noted that RS was not now using his personal iPad within school.”*

The panel found that it was not provided with evidence to demonstrate that Mr Scott had used his iPad inappropriately on the school premises. The policies contained in the bundle did not prohibit the use of personal iPads whilst at school.

The previous Headteacher was aware of Mr Scott using his iPad at school and did not appear to have taken any action to stop this. When told by Witness F to stop using his iPad, Mr Scott did so.

The panel therefore found that Mr Scott did not use his iPad inappropriately on school premises.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

#### **b) Used your mobile phone to take and/or store photographs of pupils**

The panel noted that Mr Scott accepted using his mobile phone to take photographs of pupils, but that he did so under instruction. Mr Scott denied storing photographs of pupils on his mobile phone.

The panel therefore went on to consider whether Mr Scott’s use of his mobile phone was inappropriate.

The panel heard from various witnesses that each class at Holne Chase had a digital camera. Mr Scott told the panel that every week three pupils would be chosen at random to take on the role of “class photographer”. They would be responsible for the class camera and would be required to take photographs throughout the week.

During his oral evidence, Mr Scott stated that he did use his own mobile phone to take photographs but never on school premisses, only on trips or when offsite. Mr Scott told the panel about a residential trip the school went on to [REDACTED] and they took the school cameras and laptops with them on the trip with the intention of updating parents on how the trip was going via social media. Mr Scott stated that the Wi-Fi available at the accommodation was “patchy”, and therefore they encountered issues when trying to post an update to the school’s Twitter account. The post included photographs of the children. Mr Scott stated that the previous Headteacher was on the trip and recommended that the staff use their personal mobiles to post the update.

Mr Scott stated that he raised concerns about using his personal mobile and that he referred to the Acceptable Use policy which prevented staff from using their mobiles. Mr Scott stated that the previous Headteacher acknowledged the policy was not fit for purpose and gave permission for mobile phones to be used. The panel was told that the previous Headteacher said that the Acceptable Use policy would be changed when they got back to school.

Mr Scott then referred to the Acceptable Use policy contained in the bundle dated 6 March 2019 and noted that this was the version which had been amended following the residential trip. Mr Scott referred to section 7.5 titled “Mobile phones and other technologies” which read:

*“The use of mobile phones or PDAs by children or young people will not be allowed in our school, on school grounds if a child is attending an after-school club or on a trip or residential visit.*

*Staff members are not allowed to use their personal numbers to contact children and young people under any circumstances.”*

Mr Scott also referred to section 7.6 titled “Video and photographs”:

*“The term ‘image’ refers to the taking of video footage or photographs via any camera or other technology, e.g. a mobile phone. When in school there is access to:*

- digital cameras*
- visualisers*
- photographs/images used to identify children...”*

The panel noted that the wording of the policy did not demonstrate that Mr Scott's use of his mobile phone was inappropriate.

Mr Scott stated that when he did take photographs of pupils offsite, he would upload them to the Google Drive and then immediately delete them from his device. Mr Scott stated, when cross-examined, that he was "actively encouraged" to use his device offsite.

The panel heard from Witness G and Witness H that they also used their personal devices to take photographs of children but that these were deleted when they had been uploaded to the Google Drive, either at the end of the day or at the end of the trip.

The panel noted that the policies contained in the bundle, which pre-date Witness F's [REDACTED], do not appear to have prohibited the use of mobile phones to take pictures.

The panel noted that Witness F introduced a new Child Protection & Safeguarding policy on her appointment to the school in September 2019. This policy stated:

*"Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones, devices and cameras to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones, devices and cameras will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.*

*Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones, devices or cameras."*

The panel considered Witness A's evidence at paragraph 26 of her statement, which she confirmed orally:

*"Mr Scott had shown me photos of the children from a school trip on his personal phone. [redacted] I reminded him that at the end of the academic year (July 2018), we had all signed a contract stipulating that we would only use school photographic and video equipment with the children."*

The panel noted that this was insufficient to demonstrate that Mr Scott stored photographs of pupils on his mobile phone as this incident could have taken place on a school trip, the same day on which the photograph was taken and before it was uploaded to the Google Drive. The panel also noted that by showing Witness A the photographs on his phone, this did not mean that the photographs were stored on Mr Scott's phone. It is possible that he was looking at the photographs on Twitter.

The panel was therefore not presented with sufficient evidence to prove that Mr Scott had stored photographs of pupils.



The panel considered Witness A's evidence that Mr Scott would have "signed a contract stipulating that we would only use school photographic and video equipment with the children" but that this contract was not contained in the bundle nor was it mentioned by any other witnesses from Holne Chase.

The panel also heard during Witness C's oral evidence that while on a school trip to [REDACTED], the staff members had forgotten the class tablet so were unable to take photographs. Witness C stated that she called the previous Headteacher to seek permission to use a mobile phone to take photographs. This permission was refused, and the panel was told that the previous Headteacher arranged for a teaching assistant to drive the class tablet to the [REDACTED].

The panel considered Witness C to be a balanced and credible witness and accepted her evidence in respect of the [REDACTED] trip. The panel noted that this advice differed to the advice Mr Scott stated that he had received during the [REDACTED]. The panel noted that Witness G and Witness H also provided an account which corroborated Mr Scott's.

On balance, the panel accepted Mr Scott's position that he was given permission by the previous Headteacher to take photographs of pupils on his mobile phone whilst offsite. Mr Scott's use of his mobile phone in these circumstances was found by the panel to be appropriate.

The panel noted that it had not been provided with any evidence to suggest that Mr Scott was using his phone whilst on the school premises.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

The panel therefore found allegation 3 not proven.

#### **4. You engaged in inappropriate physical contact with one or more pupils including:**

##### **a) Sitting with your legs open and allowing the child to sit between your legs**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

The panel noted that the evidence in respect of this allegation was limited.

The panel considered Witness C's witness statement at paragraph 22:

*"Other staff, including at least three Teaching Assistants in KS1 reported to me during 2018/2019 that they had witnessed Mr Scott sitting on a chair working with children and that the pupils would be stood in between this legs... When Mr Scott was in EYFS one*

*afternoon, a child showed him his work and I also witnessed Mr Scott sit down and call the child to stand in between his legs as he spoke to him.”*

The panel heard evidence that the chairs in the classrooms for Early Years were for small children and low to the ground. The panel therefore considered that it was more likely than not that if Mr Scott was sat on one of those chairs he would, as an adult, have been sat with his legs open.

During cross-examination, Mr Scott agreed that it was the responsibility of a teacher not to allow pupils to stand between their legs when a teacher is speaking to them. Mr Scott also accepted that if the allegation is proven, this would amount to inappropriate physical contact.

The panel heard evidence from Witness G that in the time she worked with Mr Scott (around 5 years) she never saw Mr Scott sitting with his legs open and allowing a child to sit between them. Witness H also confirmed that she had never seen Mr Scott sitting with his legs open and allowing a child to sit between them.

The panel noted that Witness C's evidence made reference to a child standing between Mr Scott's legs, and the allegation referred to sitting between his legs.

Notwithstanding this, the panel found, on balance, that there was insufficient evidence to prove that Mr Scott had allowed a child to sit between his legs.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**b) In or around 2018-2019, by placing your arm around a pupil as shown by photograph IMG\_2282**

The panel noted that Mr Scott accepted that his arm had been around a pupil, but did not accept that he had engaged in inappropriate physical contact.

The panel considered the photograph which was contained in the Sensitive Data Bundle and the Google Drive Bundle.

The panel had heard from Witness F that when she viewed the content on the Google Drive, she recalled that this photo appeared on the Google Drive as a standalone photo, with all other photos being organised into folders. This aligned with the screenshot contained in the Google Drive Bundle.

Mr Scott provided context for this photograph during his oral evidence. He stated that the photograph was taken at the end of year party for the [REDACTED]. The photograph was of Mr Scott and a pupil with whom he had conducted academic interventions. Mr Scott stated that the pupil's [REDACTED] took the photo and that she was “adamant” that she wanted a photograph of just her [REDACTED] and Mr Scott. Witness H, who was also

present when the photograph was taken, gave a similar account of the context during her oral evidence.

When shown this photo during her oral evidence, Witness F stated that she thought Mr Scott's hand should be placed higher on the pupil, for example on his shoulder. Mr Scott accepted that, with hindsight, his arm should have been placed higher.

Mr Scott also stated that he did not like the outfit he was wearing and that it is an unflattering photo but he was being "badgered" by the pupil's mother to have a photo. Mr Scott stated if he had stopped and thought about where he was positioning his hand, he would have moved it higher.

The panel considered that it was more likely than not that Mr Scott would have been posed with the pupil for a matter of seconds. It was noted that the photo captured a brief moment in time. The panel did not consider Mr Scott to have premeditated his hand placement on the pupil.

The panel found that, in the circumstances, while Mr Scott was ill-advised or unwise to pose in the manner he did in the photograph, there was insufficient evidence to suggest that he had engaged in inappropriate physical contact with the pupil.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**d) In or around 2018-2019, by allowing pupils to lean or lie on you on a trampoline**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

The panel noted that there were a lot of photographs in the Google Drive Bundle of Mr Scott on a trampoline with pupils. The panel heard from Mr Scott, Witness G and Witness H that these photographs were taken during a residential trip to the Isle of Wight.

Witness G and Witness H confirmed during their oral evidence that they were also on the trampoline with the pupils. Both Witness G and Witness H refer to the trampoline as being a fun activity, which all staff members had taken part in.

The panel was also shown a video of Mr Scott on the trampoline. The video was two seconds long and did not show pupils leaning or lying on Mr Scott, rather he was lying on the trampoline with pupils around him.

The panel heard from Mr Scott that he was lying on the trampoline as he had fallen over and that pupils had then shouted "pile on" or words to that effect. Mr Scott told the panel that he got cross and told the children to get off. He then stated that he got his phone out to check that it was not broken.

Mr Scott provided another account to the panel, that he had his phone out in the video as he was videoing the “silliness” of it. The panel noted the inconsistencies in Mr Scott’s account of the trampoline activity and did not consider his evidence in this regard to be plausible.

The panel noted that neither Witness G nor Witness H remember hearing the children saying “pile on” before climbing on Mr Scott. They also could not remember Mr Scott getting cross while on the trampoline.

Mr Scott, Witness G and Witness H did provide consistent accounts as to the bouncy nature of the trampoline which suggested that once on the trampoline, users would have a lack of control.

The panel noted that there were a number of images on the Google Drive of Mr Scott on the trampoline. There was an image in the Google Drive Bundle in which a pupil can be seen to be leaning or lying on Mr Scott’s back. The panel was unclear as to how the situation had come about. However, the panel accepted the evidence it heard about the bouncy nature of the trampoline, that everyone was running around and once someone had fallen over it was difficult for them to get back to their feet. The panel also accepted the fact that Mr Scott had his back to the pupil and therefore the panel could not be sure that Mr Scott had allowed the pupil to lean or lie on him.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**e) In or around 2016-2017, by placing your arm around a pupil as shown by photograph ‘[REDACTED]’**

The panel noted that Mr Scott accepted that his arm had been around a pupil, but did not accept that he had engaged in inappropriate physical contact.

The panel considered the photograph which was contained in the Sensitive Data Bundle and the Google Drive Bundle. The photograph was a selfie taken by Mr Scott of him and a pupil on [REDACTED].

The panel did note that there did not appear to have been an educational purpose for the photograph. However, this did not mean that the placing of Mr Scott’s arm around the pupil in the photograph was inappropriate.

The panel also found it difficult to see the full extent of the physical contact in the photograph. The photograph does not show exactly where Mr Scott’s arm is placed. The panel found that it was more probable than not that Mr Scott’s arm was on the pupil’s shoulder. The panel found that this was not an example of inappropriate physical contact.

The panel considered that it was more likely than not that Mr Scott would have been posed with the pupil for a matter of seconds. It was noted that the photo captured a brief moment in time.

The panel did note that Mr Scott was ill-advised in taking the selfie in the first place with the pupil and that it demonstrated a more informal relationship than would have been expected between a teacher and pupil.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**f) In or around 2016-2017, by allowing a pupil to place their arm around your neck as shown by '[REDACTED]'**

The panel noted that Mr Scott accepted that the pupil's arm had been around his neck, but did not accept that he had engaged in inappropriate physical contact.

The panel considered the photograph which was contained in the Sensitive Data Bundle and the Google Drive Bundle.

Mr Scott provided some context as to when this photograph was taken. He stated that the pupils attended the [REDACTED] and that someone suggested taking a quick group photograph. Mr Scott told the panel that everyone came in together for the photo, and then seconds later everyone returned to their seats.

The panel was not presented with any evidence that Mr Scott allowed a pupil to place their arm around his neck. The panel also considered that the pupil's arm was over the railing onto Mr Scott's shoulder, rather than around his neck. The pupil in the row behind was leaning over to get into the photo. The panel found that the pose would have been held for a matter of seconds, rather than being there for any length of time

In any event, the panel found that the position of the pupil's arm was not inappropriate.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**5. You failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with one or more pupils, including:**

**a) Inviting one or more male pupils to your office when they should have been in class**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

During oral evidence, Mr Scott told the panel that he would not "invite" pupils to his office, but pupils would be sent to his office for disciplinary or celebratory matters, or to deliver a message.

The panel noted that it was not provided with any evidence to suggest that Mr Scott had invited pupils to his office when they should have been in class.

The panel considered Witness E's written evidence. At paragraph 18 of her statement, it stated:

*"I have also seen Mr Scott with pupils, during lesson time, in the 2018/2019 academic year when he had become the nonteaching Deputy Head. I am unsure if the pupils had permission to leave the class form their teachers."*

The panel noted that Witness E did not suggest that Mr Scott invited the pupils to his office.

The panel also considered Witness F's evidence at paragraph 48 of her statement:

*"Further concerns were reported by [Witness A] that Mr Scott kept children back in his office when they should have been in class, and that these children were always male."*

This was also confirmed in a letter dated 21 October 2019 from Witness A to Witness F following a conversation as to incidents she had witnessed in relation to Mr Scott.

The panel noted that this was not evidence that Mr Scott invited the pupils to his office.

Given that the panel did not find that Mr Scott had invited one or more male pupils to his office, it did not need to consider whether he failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**b) Providing one to one pastoral interventions to one or more male pupils in circumstances where you failed to provide any paperwork and/or intervention logs about the purpose of these meetings**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

The panel heard about Holne Chase maintaining a provision map for pupils. This recorded any interventions provided to pupils. The intervention logs or paperwork would be completed in order to add to the provision map to track a pupil's progress.

The panel heard that Mr Scott was asked by Witness A to engage with a male pupil, [REDACTED], who had become withdrawn and with whom there were concerns as to his attendance. At paragraph 12 of her statement, Witness A states:

*"In January 2019 I had asked Mr Scott to speak with a male pupil, [REDACTED], who I was worried about, as I had noticed he was becoming quite withdrawn. It is normal practice to ask a colleague to speak to a pupil if you have concerns as a class teacher,*

*as some children may feel more at ease with other adults; Mr Scott was also my line manager and the DSL, so he was the natural choice.”*

Witness A confirmed to the panel that the discussions/interventions with [REDACTED] initially worked well with [REDACTED] becoming more engaged. However, he then became reluctant to leave lessons to go with Mr Scott.

During her oral evidence, Witness A confirmed that Mr Scott did not keep her informed about the intervention nor provide any paperwork following the meetings.

The panel noted that Mr Scott admitted that he did not complete paperwork and/or intervention logs about the purpose of pastoral interventions he conducted with children.

Mr Scott told the panel during his evidence that his understanding was that the person who instigated the intervention would provide the paperwork to the person delivering the intervention to complete. As he did not receive any paperwork from Witness A to complete in respect of pupil [REDACTED], he did not think he had to complete any.

Mr Scott did state during his oral evidence that he did provide updates as to the meetings/interventions in pupils’ “home school link books”. These link books were sent home with pupils each day and were a method for parents/teachers to communicate messages back and forth. The panel noted that Mr Scott did not include any information as to the link books in his written evidence, and therefore the TRA’s witnesses were not asked about them.

The panel noted that there was some confusion as to whether the meetings with pupil [REDACTED] were informal meetings, or formal pastoral interventions.

However, the panel could not find how a failure to complete any paperwork and/or intervention logs as to pastoral interventions demonstrated a failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with one or more pupil. No evidence had been provided to the panel to support this.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

### **c) Inviting a former pupil to the School and/or providing pastoral care within the School premises**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

The panel noted that it was provided with limited evidence in support of this allegation.

The panel considered Witness E’s witness statement. Paragraphs 12 and 13 stated:

*“I reported to [Witness F] my concerns about Mr Scott having provided pastoral care to Pupil [REDACTED], after the pupil had left the School. Pupil [REDACTED] had been in*

*Mr Scott's class... Once Pupil [REDACTED] had left the School [REDACTED], Mr Scott invited him back on a regular basis for pastoral care. I recall that this would have been in Autumn 2016. I cannot accurately confirm how long these meetings went on for and how many took place, but I had witnessed them together on various occasions after school had finished and when most staff had left for the day.*

*Mr Scott and Pupil [REDACTED] would go upstairs and sit down together on the sofa, outside Mr Scott's classroom. They sat side by side and very close to each other, to the point that their bodies were touching. I am aware of this as I witnessed it myself."*

The panel heard from witnesses as to the location of the sofa outside Mr Scott's classroom. The sofa was located on the upper level of the main school building, and to see it you would have to walk halfway up the stairs.

The panel also considered a note Witness E provided to Witness F dated 18 October 2019 which stated:

*"I raised a concern with [Mr Scott] re his meetings after school with a child ([redacted]) returning to Holne Chase from [secondary school] after school had finished. They would meet up in his class room. I was told that he was giving pastoral care to [redacted]..."*

The panel also considered a note of Witness E's interview with the investigating officer in the school's investigation which stated:

*"First concern – ...[redacted] kept coming back after he had the [sic] left school. In September/October last year he was sitting close to Ryan on the sofa. Ryan said he needed that time to chill as he knows what he is like at home."*

The panel noted that this account did not refer to Mr Scott having invited the former pupil back to the school nor to him providing any pastoral care.

The panel noted that there was a lack of evidence from Witness E to demonstrate the content of the discussions between the former pupil and Mr Scott or anything to demonstrate that Mr Scott had invited the former pupil.

The panel noted that this appeared to be the only evidence it was presented with to suggest that Mr Scott was providing pastoral care to the former pupil and that this was not first-hand information which Witness E had obtained. The panel also noted that Witness E's account had slightly changed over time.

The panel found that it was more probable than not that the former pupil did attend the school and did speak to Mr Scott. However, the panel was not provided with any evidence to suggest that Mr Scott had invited him or any former pupils to the School and/or provided pastoral care to them within the school premises.



On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**6. Your conduct as may be found proven at Allegations 1-5 above was despite having been subject to a disciplinary process regarding conduct towards pupils and parents at St Nicholas' School, Hertfordshire, in or around 2009**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

The panel only considered whether allegation 6 had been found proven in respect of allegations 1a)-h) and 4c).

The panel noted that the evidence in relation to whether a disciplinary process had taken place was unclear.

The panel heard from Witness B that Mr Scott had been subject to a disciplinary process whilst at St Nicholas. Mr Scott stated that he was not aware he had been subject to a disciplinary process.

Witness B told the panel that the records in relation to Mr Scott's employment at St Nicholas had been destroyed.

Witness B stated at paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 of her witness statement, in referring to concerns raised in anonymous letters written by a parent of St Nicholas:

*"The concerns related to inappropriate boundaries with children. He had organised a sleepover with them and slept in the school hall with them. He was also reported as having favourites, particularly with the boys. He was unkind to boys who weren't popular or sporty, to children who were a bit 'different' or not quite 'attractive'...*

*He was also very inappropriate towards staff in comments he made in the staffroom...*

*There were also later concerns around a [REDACTED] trip, including concerns about inappropriate comments about girls, and the way they were dressing."*

Witness B told the panel during her oral evidence that the process came to an end just before a hearing was to take place in relation to the concerns. She stated that an agreement was reached with Mr Scott that he would be allowed to resign provided he agreed not to work in Hertfordshire again.

The panel noted that there was a reference to a section 47 process having been commenced in relation to Mr Scott in the bundle. It is unclear whether the concerns raised as part of the section 47 process were the same concerns raised as part of any investigation or disciplinary process commenced in relation to Mr Scott's conduct.

At paragraph 5 of a statement provided by a consultant at HFL Education it stated:

*“I was the Investigating Officer into Ryan Scott when he was subject to an investigation as Headteacher at St Nicholas School... We were contacted by the Chair of Governors at the School when concerns about Mr Scott had arisen.”*

The statement refers to having found the concerns to be “*broadly true*”, however no detail as to the concerns are provided.

The panel noted that Mr Scott did subsequently resign from his position as Headteacher at St Nicholas, as Witness B stated was agreed, which could suggest that there was some kind of disciplinary process.

The panel found that, on balance, a disciplinary process was conducted in relation to Mr Scott’s conduct at St Nicholas. However, the nature of the allegations and concerns raised as part of the disciplinary process were not clear. The panel was therefore not able to determine which conduct Mr Scott had been investigated for at St Nicholas and whether it had any bearing on Mr Scott’s behaviour in storing data on the Google Drive and/or allowing a child to rest his leg on him.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

**7. Your conduct as may be found proven at Allegations 1a)-g), 2 and 3 above was despite advice being given to you at St Paul’s following a concern between around 2009 – 2013 that you had been using your own camera to take photographs of pupils**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

Given that the panel did not find allegations 2 nor 3 proven, it only considered whether allegation 7 had been found proven in respect of allegations 1a)-g).

The panel noted that the advice Mr Scott received at St Paul’s related to him using his own camera to take photographs of pupils. The allegations at 1a)-g) related to Mr Scott having stored a substantial amount of data, and not which device was used to take the photos.

The panel also noted that there was a lack of evidence as to the device used to take the photographs and/or videos stored on the Google Drive and that Mr Scott appeared in some images so could not have taken those photographs.

The panel therefore noted that the allegations at 1a)-g) were not covered by the advice Mr Scott received at St Paul’s.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

## **8. Your behaviour as may be found proven at 1a)-g) and 2-5 above was conduct of a sexual nature and/or was sexually motivated**

The panel noted that Mr Scott denied this allegation.

Given that the panel did not find allegations 2-5 proven, it only considered whether allegation 8 had been found proven in respect of allegations 1a)-g) and 4c).

The panel found that the photos/videos stored on the Google Drive represented all aspects of school life, covering curriculum and extra-curricular activities. There were photos of individual pupils as well as many group photos. It was also clear to the panel that some of the photos/videos were taken by children.

The panel noted that the data from Holne Chase was shared with other members of staff and was stored on the Google Drive for things like end of school yearbooks. The panel also noted that the data from Mr Scott's previous two schools was kept for professional purposes and was not kept for personal, private viewing.

The panel found that the images/videos were of a similar nature across all three schools.

Finally, the panel noted that the images/videos from all three schools were of both male and female pupils and also contained images of other staff. The panel found that in storing the data this was not conduct of a sexual nature nor was it sexually motivated.

The panel noted that the photograph referred to at allegation 4c) represented one photo out of 1000s in the Google Drive Bundle. Whilst the physical contact between the pupil and Mr Scott was inappropriate, this photograph depicted the entire class along with two other adults and was clearly taken by somebody else as a record of the school trip. There was no evidence that this conduct was of a sexual nature and/or sexually motivated.

On balance, the panel found this allegation not proven.

## **Findings as to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute**

Having found allegations 1 and 4c proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers, which is referred to as "the Advice".

The panel first considered whether the conduct of Mr Scott, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Scott 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Scott, in relation to the facts found proved, did not amount to breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2018 ("KCSIE").

### **Behaviours associated with offences**

The panel also considered whether Mr Scott'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 none of these offences were relevant.

In respect of allegation 1, the panel concluded that Mr Scott made an error of judgement as to the data stored on the Google Drive and that he did not think about needing to delete historic data from the drive. Although the panel had found that Mr Scott had engaged in inappropriate physical contact at allegation 4c it noted that the inappropriate physical contact was found in one photo out of the 1000s contained in the Google Drive Bundle.

For these reasons, the panel was not satisfied that the conduct of Mr Scott amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

Accordingly, the panel was not satisfied that Mr Scott was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

## **Disrepute**

In relation to whether Mr Scott'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 Scott'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 Scott was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

The panel noted again that the finding at allegation 4c demonstrates an incident which is significant but that it represented one incident. In respect of allegation 1, the panel noted that Mr Scott would have been trusted to store the data as part of his role as a teacher but not to take the data with him as he moved between schools. In respect of the list of contact information for parents at St Paul's, the panel noted that the public may be concerned that this information was still being held years after the trip had taken place. The panel was mindful that Mr Scott was a very experienced teacher and had held senior positions, including as a Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher, and therefore should have known better.

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

## **Summary**

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Scott'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 conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, it was necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition

orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely, the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, the protection of other members of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct, that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest, if they are in conflict.

In light of the panel's findings against Mr Scott, which involved storing a substantial amount of data from his current and former schools, including photographs and videos of pupils and contact details of parents/guardians, and engaging in inappropriate physical contact with a pupil, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Scott 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 Scott was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

The panel also considered whether prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest.

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 Scott in the profession. The panel considered that there were adverse public interest considerations, since Mr Scott's behaviour was found to be a serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards. However, the panel considered this against a public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator.

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.

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 Scott.

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, the relevant one in this case was:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;

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

There was evidence that Mr Scott's actions were deliberate.

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

The panel noted that it heard from a number of witnesses, including those attending on behalf of the TRA, that Mr Scott was a talented teacher who was held in high regard by parents, students and professionals.

The panel saw evidence that showed Mr Scott was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.

The panel noted that Mr Scott had already been subject to an interim prohibition order since May 2020.

The panel heard from the Chair of Governors at one of Mr Scott's former schools, a witness on behalf of the TRA, that he was a "fantastic teacher" and how her son would "might say he was the best teacher he ever had". She also stated that Mr Scott was bright and engaged children well.

The panel also heard from the former SENCO at one of his previous schools, a witness on behalf of the TRA, that Mr Scott was an "exceptional [REDACTED] teacher".

The panel also considered a statement from a teaching assistant who worked with Mr Scott for a number of years that he had "exceptional teaching skills", that he "made reading fun and accessible for all levels", and made "children feel validated in their ability". Another teaching assistant who had worked with Mr Scott and whose son was taught by Mr Scott found him to be "trustworthy, kind and caring". She stated that she "never had any doubts that [Mr Scott] would act appropriately and professionally".

An interim headteacher at one of Mr Scott's previous schools also provided a statement which said he was "extremely reliable, hardworking and conscientious". She noted that Mr Scott was "one of the best teachers she had ever met".

The panel also considered a statement provided by a teacher who had worked alongside Mr Scott during her NQT year. She stated that Mr Scott's mentorship was "invaluable" in helping her develop her "teaching practice and professional confidence". She also stated that Mr Scott "always prioritised the needs of the pupils and invested considerable time in ensuring that their experiences of education were positive and enriching". She ended her statement by stating that Mr Scott's "professionalism, dedication and integrity made a lasting impression" on her, and she holds him in the "highest regard both personally and professionally".

While the panel considered Mr Scott's conduct to be serious due to the breach of the Teachers' Standards, Mr Scott had shown remorse and insight and had explained to the panel how he would act differently moving forward. The panel considered that Mr Scott's conduct had not caused any harm to pupils and that the finding of inappropriate physical contact related to one photograph out of 1000s the panel was provided with. The panel noted that in respect of the storing of the substantial amount of pupil data, while there was a risk that the data could have made its way into the public domain, this fortunately did not happen.

The panel considered that there was an incredibly low risk that Mr Scott would repeat the conduct as he had shown that he had learnt from the process. Mr Scott also repeatedly told the panel that with hindsight, he wished he had never transferred the data.

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 some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, and/or found that some allegations do not amount to unacceptable professional conduct. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that the findings of conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Ryan Scott 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
- 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 findings of misconduct are serious as they include a teacher storing a substantial amount of data from his current and former schools, including photographs and videos of pupils and contact details of parents/guardians, and engaging in inappropriate physical contact with a pupil.

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 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 Scott, 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 records that it found in this case that “....there was a strong 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 it sets out as follows:

“While the panel considered Mr Scott’s conduct to be serious due to the breach of the Teachers’ Standards, Mr Scott had shown remorse and insight and had explained to the panel how he would act differently moving forward. The panel considered that Mr Scott’s conduct had not caused any harm to pupils and that the finding of inappropriate physical contact related to one photograph out of 1000s the panel was provided with. The panel noted that in respect of the storing of the substantial amount of pupil data, while there was a risk that the data could have made its way into the public domain, this fortunately did not happen.

The panel considered that there was an incredibly low risk that Mr Scott would repeat the conduct as he had shown that he had learnt from the process. Mr Scott also repeatedly told the panel that with hindsight, he wished he had never transferred the data.”

In my judgement, the evidence of Mr Scott’s insight and remorse means that I agree with the panel that the risk of a repetition of this behaviour is limited. 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 records the following: “Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Scott were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct 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 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 Scott himself. The panel records the following: “The panel noted that it heard from a number of witnesses, including those attending on behalf of the TRA, that Mr Scott was a talented teacher who was held in high regard by parents, students and professionals.”

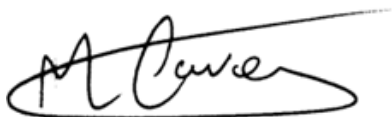
A prohibition order would prevent Mr Scott from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the degree of insight and remorse demonstrated by Mr Scott and its assessment that the risk of repetition is low.

I have also given careful consideration and significant 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 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 hand-drawn oval border.

**Decision maker: Marc Cavey**

**Date: 19 November 2025**

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