



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Mr Jordan Watson: Professional conduct panel outcome**

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

**December 2025**

## Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	4
Summary of evidence	4
Documents	4
Witnesses	5
Decision and reasons	5
Findings of fact	6
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	13
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	17

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

<b>Teacher:</b>	Mr Jordan Watson
<b>TRA reference:</b>	21339
<b>Date of determination:</b>	5 December 2025
<b>Former employer:</b>	Denton Community Academy, Manchester (previously Denton Community College)

### **Introduction**

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

The panel members were Mr Paul Hawkins (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Sarah Gardiner (lay panellist) and Mr Nathan Cole (teacher panellist).

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

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Callum Heywood of Browne Jacobson solicitors.

Mr Watson was present and was represented by Mr Nick Kennan of Cornwall Chambers, instructed by Thompsons Solicitors.

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 4 September 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Watson was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst working as an English Teacher at Denton Community College between September 2017 and November 2022:

1. He engaged in inappropriate behaviour and/or failed to maintain professional boundaries with one or more pupils/former pupils, by:
  - a. contacting one or more pupils/former pupils via telephone and/or social media platforms;
  - b. Allowing one or more pupils to take photographs/videos within school and/or during lessons;
2. He failed to take appropriate action and/or ensure appropriate action was taken in respect to a safeguarding disclosure concerning Pupil E, in that he failed to disclose and/or report that Pupil E;
  - a. [REDACTED];
  - b. [REDACTED].

Mr Watson admitted allegation 1 and that his conduct could amount to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in relation to that allegation, but maintained that was a matter for the panel. Allegation 2 was denied in its entirety.

## **Summary of evidence**

### **Documents**

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

Section 1: Chronology and anonymised pupil list – pages 8 to 9

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 11 to 22

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 24 to 51

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 53 to 464

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 467 to 629

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”).

## **Witnesses**

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

- Witness A, formerly [REDACTED] and now [REDACTED] at Denton Community Academy.
- Pupil A, a former pupil at Denton Community College.

Mr Watson also gave evidence to the panel.

## **Decision and reasons**

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Watson commenced employment as an English teacher at Denton Community College (now known as Denton Community Academy) (“the School”) in September 2017, having formerly been a pupil at the School.

In 2022, concerns were raised to the School in relation to Mr Watson’s alleged conduct in responding to purported disclosures made to him by a pupil. The pupil is referred to as Pupil E for the purposes of these proceedings. Other concerns were raised regarding Mr Watson’s conduct communicating with pupils/former pupils on social media and the taking of photographs/videos within lessons

These matters led to a disciplinary investigation and, thereafter, to a disciplinary hearing on 28 September 2022.

In November 2022, Mr Watson ceased employment at the School.

### **Evidence considered by the panel**

The panel carefully considered all of the evidence presented. It accepted the legal advice provided.

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

- Witness A, formerly [REDACTED] and now [REDACTED] at the School.
- Pupil A, a former pupil at the School.

Mr Watson also gave evidence to the panel

The panel was also presented with various hearsay accounts deriving from the School's investigation. Mr Watson also produced witness statements from the following individuals who were not called to give evidence:

- Witness B, the parent of former pupils at the School;
- Pupil D, a former pupil at the School who left in [REDACTED]; and
- The [REDACTED] of Pupil D, previously a pupil at the School taught by Mr Watson.

The panel was satisfied the admission of this evidence gave rise to no unfairness in the specific circumstances of this case.

Nonetheless, the panel recognised the need to consider the hearsay evidence with appropriate caution. Not least, it was unable to form a view as to the credibility of the individuals in question.

Mr Watson admitted allegation 1 in full and that his conduct could amount to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in relation to that allegation, but maintained that was a matter for the panel. Allegation 2 was denied in its entirety.

The panel confirmed it had not relied upon any findings made during the School's investigation or subsequently.

Insofar as the case papers alluded to other alleged failings on the part of Mr Watson that did not comprise a formal allegation before this panel, that information was disregarded and excluded from the panel's deliberations, other than where it was relevant contextually.

The panel was mindful of the need to form its own, independent view of the allegations based on the evidence presented to it.

## **Findings of fact**

The findings of fact are as follows:

**1. You engaged in inappropriate behaviour and/ or failed to maintain professional boundaries with one or more pupils/former pupils, by:**

**a. contacting one or more pupils/former pupils via telephone and/or social media platforms;**

**b. Allowing one or more pupils to take photographs/videos within school and/or during lessons;**

Mr Watson admitted the facts of allegations 1(a) and 1(b), which the panel considered together.

In relation to allegation 1(a), the panel was presented with copies of messages exchanged between Mr Watson and Pupil K in the period after Pupil K left the School in [REDACTED]. Whilst the contact began at the conclusion of formal teaching, it was prior to the end of the school year.

The panel was also presented with messages exchanged between Mr Watson and Pupil L, which occurred during the time of the School's investigation.

The communications occurred on Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook. Mr Watson maintained a professional Instagram account that was not utilised for the purposes of these communications, whereby he instead used his personal accounts.

Whilst there was reference to one or more telephone calls with pupils, for example in relation to organising tutoring, the evidence on this aspect was unclear and it was disregarded by the panel, which focussed its deliberations on the messages exchanged via social media.

Mr Watson accepted that he participated in these communications, which he maintained only commenced when the pupils were no longer current pupils and when their School email accounts had been deactivated, such that he regarded them as leavers.

He also confirmed he was part of a Snapchat group with former pupils, one message from which was included in evidence.

In relation to allegation 1(b), the panel heard evidence from Pupil A who stated, in particular:

*"Most pupils were on their phones during the classes and Mr Watson allowed them. I also remember Mr Watson would take photographs with pupils during lessons and allow them to take photographs of him as well."*

In oral evidence, he stated pupils would "go on their phones" and "get away with it" more so than in other lessons, in his experience.

The panel was presented with several photographs and a video taken by pupils within the School, in all of which Mr Watson appeared. His evidence was that the photographs and the video were not taken during formal teaching time.

The panel therefore concluded that Mr Watson's admissions were consistent with the evidence before it and found both particulars of allegation 1 proved.

It concluded that Mr Watson:

- Contacted more than one pupil via social media. The panel did not consider it was relevant whether they ought to be regarded as pupils or former pupils. The contact took place at a time when they formally remained pupils of the School but when they had recently left in a practical sense.
- Allowed pupils to take photographs and at least one video within the School. The panel concluded it was irrelevant whether the photographs were taken during formal teaching/lessons. They were clearly taken within the classroom environment and depicted him acting in a professional context. The pupils had permission to use their phones in circumstances that were unrelated to teaching, whether or not that occurred during lessons.

The panel went on to consider whether this conduct was inappropriate and/or amounted to a failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, which Mr Watson also admitted.

The panel agreed with Mr Watson's admission.

In relation to the messaging/social media contact with Pupil K, whilst the pupil may not have been active in terms of attendance at the School at that time, she remained on its roll. The contact was not compliant with the School's procedures and expectations, noting that the School's Code of Conduct in force at the time provided:

*"Do not accept friend requests from pupils past or present. If you feel this is necessary, you should first seek guidance from a senior manager. Be aware that your social media friends may also be friends with pupils and their family members and therefore could read your post if you do not have appropriate privacy settings."*

The circumstances of that particular school year, within the Covid-19 pandemic, also meant it was particularly important to maintain strict boundaries, whereby Witness A confirmed the temporary practice of teacher-assessed grades. There was an expectation that, until results were issued, there should be no communication with pupils so as not to compromise that process.

Further, the messages were inappropriate in terms of duration, nature, content and tone. The messages with Pupil K were very informal from the outset, at a time when the pupil had only recently departed the School. Some were sent at night and early in the morning and the exchanges read more like a friendship, with no discernible link to mentoring or professional support for this pupil. Mr Watson had a continuing duty to maintain



appropriate boundaries with recently departed pupils, not least having regard to his position of trust and responsibility, deriving from a professional relationship. Mr Watson failed to adhere to the expectations upon him in that regard.

Mr Watson's stated motivation was to continue to offer guidance or mentoring to pupils. However, that was not supported by the messages themselves.

Further, on several occasions the messages from Mr Watson alluded to a lack of contact from Pupil K. The inference being that Mr Watson was trying to get her to engage with him, which was not consistent with any form of mentoring. There was a clear risk of the messages being perceived by the pupil differently to what may have been intended by Mr Watson.

The messages were, throughout, informal and immature in tone and at no stage did Mr Watson seek to bring the messaging to an end, link the content directly to mentoring or attempt to place the exchanges onto a more formal basis.

Mr Watson's actions compromised appropriate boundaries given the pupil remained on the School's roll.

In relation to Pupil L, the messages before the panel were exchanged during the course of the School's investigation, whereby Mr Watson was seeking information about what Pupil L's brother may have shared with the School. That was inappropriate. It was a breach of professional boundaries, in that Mr Watson was seeking to use his professional status in relation to Pupil L to potentially support his position in the investigation, when he had been instructed not to contact anyone who may have been involved with it.

Certain messages with Pupil K were also sent during the course of the School's disciplinary process, in which he set out his position having put her forward as a witness, which were inappropriate and breached boundaries for the same reasons.

Further, by his own admission Mr Watson was part of a Snapchat group with former pupils. Whilst only one message from that group was included in evidence, it referred to Mr Watson using it *"to keep in touch, help out, and have a laugh with who I've mentored"*. Whilst the timing of this message was unknown, it hinted at extensive use of social media to communicate with former pupils in an informal way with no clear link to mentoring, or at the very least not exclusively so. Within that message, Mr Watson explicitly records that *"some people would most likely even be disapproving of me even using Snapchat at all with you guys"*, evidencing his recognition, at the time, that his behaviour could be perceived as improper.

In relation to the photographs and video, in the particular context, the panel was satisfied that these were over-familiar and blurred the boundaries between pupils and teachers, whether or not they were taken during the course of actual lessons. It was not consistent with the School's policies. There was always a risk of photographs and videos being

shared by pupils, including on social media. Mr Watson agreed that the video was linked to a 'TikTok trend' at the time and accepted he asked no questions regarding to what use it would be put, which was plainly inappropriate and evidenced a breakdown in terms of the need to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

The panel therefore accepted Mr Watson's admissions and found allegations 1(a) and 1(b) proved.

**2. You failed to take appropriate action and/or ensure appropriate action was taken in respect to a safeguarding disclosure concerning Pupil E, in that you failed to disclose and/or report that Pupil E;**

**a. [REDACTED];**

**b. [REDACTED].**

The panel considered allegations 2(a) and 2(b) together.

The panel did not receive first-hand evidence from Pupil E, nor there was a first-hand account from Pupil E about these specific issues within the case papers.

The TRA relied upon the evidence of Witness A that, on 13 May 2022, a pupil or a member of staff, disclosed issues to her regarding Pupil E. That led to her speaking with Pupil E directly, who reported to Witness A that she had a [REDACTED] and that this had previously been discussed with Mr Watson in an [REDACTED] lesson on an unknown date.

In a subsequent conversation with Pupil E's mother, reference was also made to a [REDACTED] incident, albeit without expressly suggesting that this was also something that Pupil E had discussed with Mr Watson.

Witness A recorded these disclosures on the School's CPOMS system. A copy of the entry was included in evidence. It was written in generic terms and did not seek to capture the precise words said to have been used by Pupil E.

Witness A confirmed that, insofar as Pupil E may have disclosed matters to Mr Watson, there was no record of any such disclosure, or action taken as a consequence, on CPOMS.

Mr Watson denied that:

- A disclosure [REDACTED] was ever made to him by Pupil E.
- Pupil E ever disclosed to him that [REDACTED], or had expressed a desire to do so in the future.

Mr Watson stated that had that occurred, he would have recognised the seriousness of it and reported it immediately through the appropriate safeguarding channels.

The panel recognised that, for Mr Watson to be held accountable for not responding to a safeguarding disclosure, it first needed to be satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that information of that nature was disclosed to him that required action to be taken.

Over and above Witness A's evidence, which was not first-hand, the panel was referred to an email from Pupil E's [REDACTED], suggesting Mr Watson knew about Pupil E's *"distress in January [2022]"* and *"the self harm which followed in February could have been linked to this [REDACTED] issue"*.

In the panel's view, this fell some way short of evidence of a clear disclosure that Mr Watson failed to act upon. It was not apparent if Pupil E had any input into or discussed the email with her [REDACTED] before it was sent. Whilst there was a statement from Pupil E, obtained during the course of the School's investigation, it did not address these specific issues at all, nor were they addressed in any other account from other pupils.

Accordingly, there was no clear or direct evidence before the panel of Pupil E having made a clear, actionable disclosure to Mr Watson with specific reference to this allegation.

With reference to allegation 2(b), Witness A confirmed in oral evidence that the only disclosure regarding [REDACTED], as distinct from [REDACTED], came from Pupil E's mother, not Pupil E directly. Accordingly, the panel could not identify any evidence whatsoever that Pupil E ever suggested, whether to Witness A or anybody else, that she had made a specific disclosure to Mr Watson alluding to [REDACTED].

The panel accordingly concluded that the TRA had not proven, to the requisite standard, that any actionable disclosures of a safeguarding nature were made by Pupil E to Mr Watson as alleged.

The panel therefore found allegation 2 not proved.

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

Having found allegations 1(a) and 1(b) 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 Watson, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Watson 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 ...

The panel also considered whether Mr Watson's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

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

Over and above the breaches of the Teachers' Standards identified above, in relation to all of the proven allegations the panel took into account the wider context.

In relation to allegation 1(a), Mr Watson's failings occurred in relation to school leavers, who remained technically enrolled at the School and thereby the conduct fell within the education setting. His actions were contrary to the School's policies. Mr Watson was a role model, was in a position of responsibility and had a duty to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with these individuals. For the reasons set out in the panel's decision in allegation 1, Mr Watson breached his obligations in that regard, particularly with reference to the nature and tone of the messages with Pupil K.

Not only did he engage in informal communications with Pupil K, he contacted Pupil L and Pupil K with specific reference to the School's investigation, which was also unacceptable.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Watson in relation to allegation 1(a) amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

In relation to allegation 1(b), the panel took into account that Mr Watson's actions were contrary to the School's policies and were indicative of a pattern of behaviour, whereby

Mr Watson failed to do what was expected of him. He exhibited poor judgement in allowing photographs and a video to be taken in the School, which were subsequently shared online by pupils. Nonetheless, whilst inappropriate, the panel was not persuaded that Mr Watson's failings in relation to allegation 1(b) were so serious as to amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel was therefore satisfied that the conduct of Mr Watson in relation to allegation 1(a) only amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Watson'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.

For the same reasons as set out above, the panel was not persuaded that its findings in allegation 1(b) constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

However, in relation to allegation 1(a), the findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Watson's actions in relation to allegation 1(a) constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

## **Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State**

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

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

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

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

Given the panel was concerned with inappropriate behaviour and a breach of professional boundaries, there was a public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. However, there was no direct safeguarding issue and there was no evidence of harm.

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

The panel was of the view that a public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Watson was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

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

There was some positive evidence about Mr Watson as a teacher, including testimonials from pupils. He had been regarded as someone with potential by the School. However, as a young, inexperienced teacher at the time of these events, it could not be said he had made an exceptional contribution to the profession. Accordingly, whilst there was a degree of public interest in retaining Mr Watson, as a qualified teacher, in the profession, the panel did not regard this as a strong consideration in the specific circumstances of this case.

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 a high 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 Watson.

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 behaviour relevant in this case was:

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

Even though there was behaviour in this case indicating 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.

In the light of the panel's findings it considered the following mitigating factors were present in this case:

- Mr Watson had fully engaged with the proceedings and made a full admission in relation to the conduct found proved.
- The conduct comprised a single allegation, which was regarded as an isolated episode in the context of his career as a whole, albeit not isolated in duration and demonstrating a failure to maintain professional boundaries, inappropriate use of social media and a persistent failure to comply with the School's policies.
- There was some positive evidence about Mr Watson's teaching practice.
- There was evidence of regret, remorse and insight. With the benefit of hindsight, Mr Watson accepted his failings and he had taken steps to seek to address his behaviour, through undertaking relevant training and reflection, for example.
- There was no suggestion and it was not alleged that Mr Watson was improperly motivated. The contact only commenced when he regarded pupils as leavers, albeit the panel had found that the nature of the messages with Pupil K were not consistent with mentoring as Mr Watson had sought to advance as an explanation.
- Mr Watson alluded to a subsequent diagnosis of medical conditions, which he believed had contributed to his actions. Whether or not this is correct, noting there was no clear medical evidence indicating that these health matters had a direct, causative impact on his actions, Mr Watson alluded to the steps he had taken to understand how these conditions impacted upon him and the professional support he had received.
- It had taken a prolonged period of time to reach this stage, such that the impact of these proceedings had been felt by Mr Watson for some time.

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, on balance, a recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response.

The nature of the proven conduct in this case was inappropriate for the reasons outlined. Mr Watson's conduct was deliberate and there was evidence, from the time, that he knew his conduct was improper. He had demonstrated poor judgement and an inability to recognise and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Further, the panel regarded Mr Watson's insight to be emerging rather than complete. He had sought to attribute blame for his conduct on his circumstances at the time, in a manner the panel regarded as unpersuasive. For example, insofar as Mr Watson alluded to professional pressures at the time and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the panel was not persuaded that these directly linked to his specific actions as found proven. To that extent, the panel was of a view that it could not be said Mr Watson had taken full responsibility for his actions.

However, on balance, the panel determined that, in the specific circumstances of the allegation found proved, the conduct was not sufficiently serious to warrant a prohibition order, which was accordingly not necessary or proportionate to safeguard the public interest considerations Mr Watson's actions gave rise to.

Whilst there was a theme that emerged from the papers regarding Mr Watson's understanding of professional boundaries, the panel was constrained by its specific findings, which related to a single allegation. The panel did not consider the actions, on the basis of those findings, were fundamentally incompatible with Mr Watson remaining a teacher, noting the steps he had taken to address the concerns and thereby remediate his conduct.

Further, having gone through this experience, and noting the expressions of regret and remorse, the panel considered it was unlikely that Mr Watson would put himself in the same situation again. That, coupled with the steps taken by Mr Watson to address his behaviour, meant the panel considered it was more likely than not that Mr Watson will have learnt important lessons and his mistakes were, therefore, less likely to be repeated.

In light of these matters, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate in this case.

Having very carefully taken account of the public interest considerations Mr Watson's proven conduct gave rise to, the panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it has made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message as to the standards of behaviour that were acceptable.

The panel considered this was a proportionate outcome, particularly in circumstances where the panel's published findings may have a residual impact in terms of Mr Watson's professional reputation and future employment prospects.

Further, the panel considered that the passage of time since these concerns first came to light and the repercussions there had been for Mr Watson, meant that a prohibition order would be punitive and disproportionate.



## 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 unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found allegations 2a and 2b not proven and found that allegation 1b does not amount to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Jordan Watson should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct and 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 Watson 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 ...

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

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered

therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Watson, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

“Given the panel was concerned with inappropriate behaviour and a breach of professional boundaries, there was a public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. However, there was no direct safeguarding issue and there was no evidence of harm.”

I have also taken into account the panel’s comments on insight and remorse, which the panel has set out as follows:

“There was evidence of regret, remorse and insight. With the benefit of hindsight, Mr Watson accepted his failings and he had taken steps to seek to address his behaviour, through undertaking relevant training and reflection, for example.”

“Further, having gone through this experience, and noting the expressions of regret and remorse, the panel considered it was unlikely that Mr Watson would put himself in the same situation again.”

I have given these comments 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 has observed:

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding of failing to maintain professional boundaries in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Watson himself. The panel has commented:

“There was some positive evidence about Mr Watson as a teacher, including testimonials from pupils. He had been regarded as someone with potential by the School. However, as a young, inexperienced teacher at the time of these events, it could not be said he had made an exceptional contribution to the profession.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Watson 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 mitigating factors. I have noted the panel's comment:

“There was no suggestion and it was not alleged that Mr Watson was improperly motivated. The contact only commenced when he regarded pupils as leavers, albeit the panel had found that the nature of the messages with Pupil K were not consistent with mentoring as Mr Watson had sought to advance as an explanation.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the comments of the panel on the risk of repetition, including:

“Further, having gone through this experience, and noting the expressions of regret and remorse, the panel considered it was unlikely that Mr Watson would put himself in the same situation again. That, coupled with the steps taken by Mr Watson to address his behaviour, meant the panel considered it was more likely than not that Mr Watson will have learnt important lessons and his mistakes were, therefore, less likely to be repeated.”

I have agreed with the panel that, on balance, the conduct of Mr Watson was not sufficiently serious to warrant a prohibition order.

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 be 'M. Jones', written in a cursive style.

**Decision maker: David Oatley**

**Date: 8 December 2025**

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