



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Dale Hills: Professional conduct panel meeting 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 Dale Hills
Teacher ref number:	0043047
Teacher date of birth:	18 May 1979
TRA reference:	24425
Date of determination:	28 November 2025
Former employer:	CCT Learning Abbey View School, Gloucestershire

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 28 November 2025 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Dale Hills.

The panel members were Mr Richard Young (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Melissa West (teacher panellist) and Mrs Natalie Moore (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Luisa Gibbons of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP Solicitors.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Hills that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Hills provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer, Mr Jon Walters of Brabners LLP, Mr Hills or his representative, Mr Colin Henderson of The Reflective Practice.

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 3 September 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Hills was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that while a teacher at the CCT Learning Abbey View School (“the School”):

1. On or around 8 May 2024, he created the following pupil risk assessments (“the Documents”):
 - a. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child A (Document A);
 - b. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child B (Document B);
 - c. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child C (Document C).
2. He falsely:
 - a. In respect of Document A:
 - i. backdated the document to 7 February 2024 without having declared that he had done so;
 - ii. completed the document in the name of [REDACTED].
 - b. In respect of Document B:
 - i. Backdated the document to 27 October 2023 without having declared that he had done so;
 - ii. Completed the document in the name of Person A;
 - iii. Asserted that a review had taken place on 17 May 2024, when it had not.
 - c. In respect of Document C:
 - i. Backdated the document to 29 June 2023 without having declared that he had done so;
 - ii. Completed the document in the name of Person A;
 - iii. Asserted that a review had taken place on 25 May 2024 when it had not.
3. On or around 9 May 2024, he provided the Documents to Ofsted inspectors.

4. His conduct in paragraphs 1 – 3 was intended to mislead the Ofsted inspectors.

5. His conduct in paragraphs 1 – 3 above was dishonest by reason of paragraph 4.

Mr Hills admitted the allegations and admitted that he was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: anonymised person list – page 3 to 7

Section 2: statement of agreed facts – pages 8 to 11

Section 3: notice of referral, response and notice of meeting – pages 12 to 33

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 34 to 125

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 126 to 129

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”).

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Hills on 10 July 2025.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

In advance of the meeting the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Hills for the allegations to be considered without a hearing. The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest. The panel did not determine that such a direction was necessary or appropriate in this case.

Mr Hills was employed as principal at the School from 1 September 2021 and was the Designated Safeguarding Lead. An Ofsted inspection took place at the School between 8 and 10 May 2024. He was dismissed from his employment on 24 July 2024. He was referred to the TRA on 19 September 2024.

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:

While a teacher at the CCT Learning Abbey View School (“the School”):

- 1. On or around 8 May 2024, you created the following pupil risk assessments (“the Documents”):**
 - a. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child A (Document A);**
 - b. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child B (Document B);**
 - c. Pupil risk assessment in relation to Child C (Document C).**

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that he was responsible for the completion and the backdating of the Documents.

The panel noted that this accorded with Mr Hills’ response during the School’s investigation in a meeting held on 23 May 2024. The record of this meeting states that “Without prompting, he volunteered that he had written three risk assessments And that he had back dated [sic] them on the evening of the first day of the Ofsted inspection. He then gave these risk assessments to the inspectors on the following day leading them to question their authenticity with the Chair.” The note also records that Person A who was also in attendance confirmed that he “does not write any risk assessments.”

The panel noted that at Mr Hills’ disciplinary hearing, he was asked if he had written the risk assessments himself. He responded that he took “full responsibility for the risk assessments. It was under my direction.” He was asked “who put pen to paper on those risk assessments?” and responded, “I take full responsibility.” The panel noted that Mr Hills’ responses were somewhat evasive.

Nevertheless, in light of Mr Hills’ earlier admissions and his subsequent admissions, the panel found it more likely than not that Mr Hills had created the Documents.

The panel reviewed the Documents and screenshots of the properties of each of the Documents confirming that they were each created on the evening of 8 May 2024.

The panel noted that in Mr Hills' representations for this hearing, Mr Hills stated that he recognised that he had made a poor decision.

The panel found this allegation proven.

2. You falsely:

a. In respect of Document A

- i. Backdated the document to 7 February 2024 without having declared that you had done so;**
- ii. Completed the document in the name of [REDACTED].**

The panel noted that in the anonymity key [REDACTED] is Person A.

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that Document A was completed in the name of Person A, who was employed as an assistant principal at the School and dated 7 February 2024. He admitted that Person A was not involved in completing Document A. He admitted that the metadata for the assessment showed that the document was created at 19:22 on 8 May 2024. Mr Hills admitted that Document A was backdated so that it appeared to have been completed earlier than it had been, and that he was responsible for backdating the document.

The panel noted that Mr Hills' admissions were consistent with his response during the School's investigation in a meeting held on 23 May 2024 referred to in allegation 1 above.

The panel reviewed Document A and noted that it was completed in the name of Person A and bore the date 7 February 2024. The panel also saw a screenshot of the properties of the document confirming that it was created at 19:22 on 8 May 2024.

Based on the above evidence, the panel found that it was more likely than not that Mr Hills had falsely backdated Document A to 7 February 2024 without having declared that he had done so, and completed the document in the name of [REDACTED].

The panel noted that in Mr Hills' representations for this hearing, Mr Hills stated that he recognised that he had made a poor decision.

The panel found this allegation proven.

b. In respect of Document B:

- i. Backdated the document to 27 October 2023 without having declared that you had done so;**
- ii. Completed the document in the name of Person A;**

iii. Asserted that a review had taken place on 17 May 2024, when it had not.

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that Document B was completed in the name of Person A and dated 24 November 2023. The panel considered this to have been an erroneous date, having reviewed Document B as referred to below. 24 November 2023 was the date of the purported first review rather than being the purported date of creation. He admitted that Person A was not involved in completing Document B. He admitted that the metadata for the assessment showed that the document was created at 18:22 on 8 May 2024. Mr Hills admitted that Document B was backdated so that it appeared to have been completed earlier than it had been, and that he was responsible for backdating the document.

The panel noted that Mr Hills' admissions were consistent with his response during the School's investigation in a meeting held on 23 May 2024 referred to in allegation 1 above.

The panel reviewed Document B and noted that it was completed in the name of Person A and bore the date 27 October 2023. The panel also saw a screenshot of the properties of the document confirming that it was created at 18:22 on 8 May 2024. The panel noted that Document B contained a reference suggesting that the risk assessment was "still valid" at 17 May 2024, even though that date was a date in the future.

Based on the above evidence, the panel found that it was more likely than not that Mr Hills had falsely backdated Document B to 27 October 2023 without having declared that he had done so, and completed the document in the name of Person A.

The panel found this allegation proven.

c. In respect of Document C:

- i. Backdated the document to 29 June 2023 without having declared that you had done so;**
- ii. Completed the document in the name of Person A;**
- iii. Asserted that a review had taken place on 25 May 2024 when it had not.**

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that Document C was completed in the name of Person A and dated 29 June 2023. He admitted that Person A was not involved in completing Document C. He admitted that the metadata for the assessment showed that the document was created at 19:11 on 8 May 2024. Mr Hills admitted that Document C was backdated so that it appeared to have been completed earlier than it had been, and that he was responsible for backdating the document.

The panel noted that Mr Hills' admissions were consistent with his response during the School's investigation in a meeting held on 23 May 2024 referred to in allegation 1 above.

The panel reviewed Document C and noted that it was completed in the name of Person A and bore the date 29 June 2023. The panel also saw a screenshot of the properties of the document confirming that it was created at 19:11 on 8 May 2024. The panel noted that Document B contained a reference suggesting that the risk assessment was "still valid" at 25 May 2024, even though that date was a date in the future.

Based on the above evidence, the panel found that it was more likely than not that Mr Hills had falsely backdated Document C to 29 June 2023 without having declared that he had done so, and completed the document in the name of Person A.

The panel found this allegation proven.

3. On or around 9 May 2024, you provided the Documents to Ofsted inspectors.

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that he submitted the Documents to Ofsted inspectors on 9 May 2024.

The panel noted that Mr Hills' admissions were consistent with his response during the School's investigation in a meeting held on 23 May 2024 referred to in allegation 1 above.

The minutes of the disciplinary hearing referred to concerns having been raised about backdated paperwork and that this had been raised by the inspectors.

The panel considered it more likely than not that Mr Hills had provided the Documents to the Ofsted inspectors on or around 9 May 2024.

The panel found this allegation proven.

4. Your conduct in paragraphs 1 – 3 was intended to mislead the Ofsted inspectors.

5. Your conduct in paragraphs 1 – 3 above was dishonest by reason of paragraph 4.

In the statement of agreed facts, Mr Hills admitted that when the inspector raised concerns about the Documents and whether they had been falsified, Mr Hills stated that he was unaware. He admitted that when interviewed by the School, he accepted writing, backdating and signing the Documents in Person A's name. Mr Hills also admitted that at a disciplinary hearing convened by the School on 22 July 2024, he had stated that the Documents were completed under his direction but did not directly respond to a question as to whether he had written them.

Mr Hills admitted that given his state of knowledge at the time of the conduct he has admitted, he was dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

The panel noted that during the School's investigation, in a meeting held on 23 May 2024 Mr Hills stated that the "pressure and stress of the Ofsted inspection, led him to take the decisions in relation to... the creation of paperwork for the lead Ofsted inspector."

The notes of the disciplinary hearing record that Mr Hills "recognised that he had made a grave misjudgement. The Ofsted inspection had come after two external reviews which had created significant pressure for himself and, thereby, led to an error of judgement on his part. DH felt this could be viewed as dishonest, but that was not his intention." He went on to state that he "felt immense pressure and stress" and "mistakenly thought that creating the paperwork would alleviate some of the scrutiny."

The panel considered that Mr Hills had intended to mislead the Ofsted inspector, otherwise he would not have backdated the Documents to portray that they had been created at an earlier date. The panel noted that Mr Hills had been motivated to alleviate some of the scrutiny upon him. The panel considered that the ordinary honest person would consider this to be dishonest.

The panel found allegations 4 and 5 proven.

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

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

The panel noted that the Preamble of Teachers' Standards requires that teachers act with honesty. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Hills was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Hills in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”).

The panel considered that Mr Hills was in breach of the requirement to make sure that his approach was child centred and to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Since the documents falsified by Mr Hills were safeguarding documents, there could be no confidence that the assessments had been produced with a view to enabling the children to have the best outcomes. Falsified risk assessment created a risk with the regards to the safety of the environment for children to learn and he thereby failed to ensure that the children had the best outcomes. Mr Hills had an obligation to ensure that policies and procedures for safeguarding were followed at all times, yet falsified safeguarding records. He had the obligation to ensure that child protection files were kept up to date, and ought to have recognised that unreliable safeguarding records could impact on the children’s safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Hills in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children. This explains the importance of effective sharing of information between practitioners, local organisations and agencies being essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children safe. Providing false information to Ofsted undermined the ability of Ofsted to assess the efficacy of the service provision.

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

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

The panel found that the offence of fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant.

The panel noted that Mr Hills’ representative had made representations to the effect that prohibition may not be a realistic prospect in this case. However, the panel did not consider Mr Hills’ actions to be trivial, inconsequential, a temporary lapse or otherwise excusable. Ofsted has the responsibility of scrutinising the performance of schools, and teachers, particularly the principal, have the responsibility to provide Ofsted with accurate information. There is a public interest in being able to place reliance upon Ofsted reports, and the accuracy of the underlying information that Ofsted has relied upon to make their assessment is critical to maintaining confidence in that system. The panel considered

that misleading Ofsted by falsifying safeguarding records falls significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

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

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr Hills was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Hills' 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 Hills' 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 Hills was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that that the offence of fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant.

As referred to above, Mr Hills' conduct undermines the system of inspection and regulation of schools that the public and parents rely upon in taking decisions regarding the education of children. Furthermore, Mr Hills failed to act as a role model in being honest about deficiencies in the School, rather than covering up such issues.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Hills' actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and

proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely, the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils; the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of dishonesty creating safeguarding records for pupils and backdating them.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Hills 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 Hills 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 Hills in the profession. Whilst Mr Hills may have had some ability as an educator given that he held a leadership position, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Hills in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he breached the trust placed in him by Ofsted to provide them with true information.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times. The panel noted that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position of trust should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest.

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

The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proved. In the list of such behaviours, those that were relevant in this case were:

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE); and
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity...;

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 Hills' actions were deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Hills was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation. The panel noted that Mr Hills' representative had referred to the high pressure [REDACTED] of Mr Hills at the time of the Ofsted inspection. [REDACTED]. The panel accepted that an Ofsted inspection can be a stressful time. Mr Hills also stated that the Ofsted inspection had come after two external reviews which had created significant pressure for him.

There was no evidence that Mr Hills had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector, other than having been a teacher with 23 years' experience, having been promoted to the position of principal, and having no previous disciplinary issues.

Mr Hills provided no character statements attesting to his abilities as a teacher or to his character.

The panel noted that Mr Hills had admitted the allegations and that he is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. This has enabled the case to be dealt with efficiently without witnesses needing to be inconvenienced by attending a hearing. The panel noted that he made those admissions immediately having been informed that the allegations were to be referred to a professional conduct panel.

The panel further noted that Mr Hills had admitted the allegations during the School's investigation.

At the time of the School's disciplinary hearing, Mr Hills provided a more evasive response when he was asked if he had written the risk assessments himself. He also described his actions as being an error of judgement, rather than an act of dishonesty. He also disputed that he had brought the School into disrepute, although accepted that he brought the School into disrepute with Ofsted. The panel also noted that Mr Hills did not accept responsibility to make sure the risk assessments were in place, despite his position as designated safeguarding lead, and prevaricated on this point, saying it was a "grey area but it was [REDACTED] responsibility." He did however, state that he did not put enough steps into place, that he "took too much on [him]self" and that he needed to "ensure others are held to account."

An email from Mr Hills' representative dated 13 January 2025, at the time of this case being considered for referral to a professional conduct panel, called into question whether Mr Hills appreciated the seriousness of the matter. This letter, copied to Mr Hills, reminded the TRA decision maker that he should only refer the most serious cases of misconduct and that he had no jurisdiction in cases of incompetence. The decision maker was also warned not to aggregate individual allegations of non-serious misconduct to regard them collectively as serious. The representations also referred to the lack of any actual harm to any child as being a mitigating factor. The representations suggested that prohibition may not be a realistic prospect. The panel was concerned that these representations indicated that Mr Hills did not appreciate the impact that his acts of dishonesty would have on the School, its staff, on the children and their families. If his actions had gone on undetected, those children would have safeguarding documents on their record that were invented, which could have had implications for their future welfare. Furthermore, he undermined the School's relationship with Ofsted, and could have caused other staff members to come under greater scrutiny.

Mr Hills provided a statement for the purpose of this professional conduct panel meeting. He stated that "since the incident I have taken time to reflect deeply on the impact of [his] actions." He also referred to this period having been "one of significant personal growth, allowing [him] to better understand [him]self, the pressure [he] was under and how [he] respond[s] in challenging circumstances". The panel noted that Mr Hills had not provided the detail of those reflections, or his understanding of the impact of his actions. He also referred to having a better understanding of the extent of the pressure he was experiencing at the time and how it influenced his judgement. However, he has not provided any explanation of the strategies he would adopt if he were under similar pressures in the future.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition

order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Hills of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Hills. The seriousness of the dishonesty was a significant factor in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

The panel went on to consider whether or not it would be appropriate for it to decide to recommend a review period of the order. The panel was mindful that the Advice states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances, in any given case, that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

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

The panel noted that this dishonesty was committed whilst Mr Hills was under a period of stress, and was confined to falsifying a series of documents in one instance, rather than this being repeated acts of dishonest over a sustained period of time. The panel noted that Mr Hills had shown remorse, and appears to be developing insight, but that there was some work to do to demonstrate that he understands the strategies he can adopt to manage pressures in the future.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period after three years.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

I have given very careful consideration to this case and to the recommendation of the panel in respect of both sanction and review period.

In considering this case, I have also given very careful attention to the Advice that the Secretary of State has published concerning the prohibition of teachers.

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Dale Hills should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 3 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Hills is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Hills involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of dishonesty on the part of Mr Hills.

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 Hills, 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:

“There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of dishonesty creating safeguarding records for pupils and backdating them.”

A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

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

“The panel noted that Mr Hills had shown remorse, and appears to be developing insight, but that there was some work to do to demonstrate that he understands the strategies he can adopt to manage pressures in the future.”

In my judgement, the lack of full insight means that there is some risk of the repetition of this behaviour and this puts at risk the future wellbeing of pupils. I have therefore given this element considerable weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel has observed:

“As referred to above, Mr Hills’ conduct undermines the system of inspection and regulation of schools that the public and parents rely upon in taking decisions regarding the education of children. Furthermore, Mr Hills failed to act as a role model in being honest about deficiencies in the School, rather than covering up such issues.

The panel considered that Mr Hills’ conduct could potentially damage the public’s perception of a teacher.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of dishonesty 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 Hills himself. The panel has commented:

“There was no evidence that Mr Hills had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector, other than having been a teacher with 23 years’ experience, having been promoted to the position of principal, and having no previous disciplinary issues.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Hills 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 seriousness of the misconduct found proven. The panel has said:

“Whilst Mr Hills may have had some ability as an educator given that he held a leadership position, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Hills in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher, and he breached the trust placed in him by Ofsted to provide them with true information.”

“The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr Hills. The seriousness of the dishonesty was a significant factor in forming that opinion.”

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

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

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended 3-year review period.

I have considered the panel’s comments:

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

The panel noted that this dishonesty was committed whilst Mr Hills was under a period of stress, and was confined to falsifying a series of documents in one instance, rather than this being repeated acts of dishonest over a sustained period of time. The panel noted that Mr Hills had shown remorse, and appears to be developing insight, but that there was some work to do to demonstrate that he understands the strategies he can adopt to manage pressures in the future.”

I have considered whether a 3-year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing 2-year review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the dishonesty found, the lack of full insight and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that a 3-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Mr Dale Hills is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children’s home in England. He may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 8 December 2028, 3 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr Hills remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Dale Hills has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 1 December 2025

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