



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Thomas Munro: 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 Thomas Munro

Teacher ref number: 17/59075

Teacher date of birth: 7 June 1996

TRA reference: 20942

Date of determination: 20 November 2025

Former employer: Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, Maidstone,

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 17 November 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Thomas Munro

The panel members were Ms Geraldine Baird (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Aisha Miller (teacher panellist) and Mr Andrew Harries (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Eve Piffaretti of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Caroline Collins of Capsticks LLP solicitors.

Mr Munro was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 11 August 2025.

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

1. Between around September 2020 and February 2022 he failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil A in that he:
 - a. Contacted Pupil A via email in a way that was inappropriate given:
 - i. The number of emails exchanged; and/or
 - ii. The times at which they were sent; and/or
 - iii. The content of the emails.
 - b. On one or more occasions told to Pupil A discussed his romantic and/or sexual relationships with Pupil A.
 - c. On one or more occasions encouraged Pupil A to meet him at the School.
 - d. Suggested that he create a false social media profile to contact Pupil A.
2. Between around December 2021 and 24 February 2022 he failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil B in that he contacted Pupil B via email in a way that was inappropriate given:
 - a. the number of emails exchanged; and/or
 - b. the times at which they were sent; and/or
 - c. the content of the emails.
3. Between around December 2021 and February 2022 he :
 - a. On one or more occasions requested Pupil C's personal contact details;
 - b. Told/discussed his sexual preferences and/or masturbation and/or menstruation and/or his romantic/sexual relationships with Pupil C;
 - c. Encouraged Pupil C to maintain contact with him after Pupil C left the School.
4. His conduct as may be found proven at allegations 1-3 was sexually motivated.
5. He failed to report, appropriately or at all, safeguarding concerns as they arose in relation to:
 - a. Pupil A; and/or
 - b. Pupil B.

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 4 to 6

Section 2: Notice of Proceedings and response – pages 7 to 43

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 44 to 61

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 62 to 458

Section 5: Teaching Regulation Agency additional witness statements – pages 459

Supplementary bundle of emails with Student A - 150 pages

Supplementary bundle of emails with Student B - Part 1 pages 145 and part 2 135 pages

Supplementary bundle of emails with Student C - 10 pages

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

Witness B

Pupil C

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Introduction

On 1 September 2020, Mr Munro commenced employment as Head of Biology at Maidstone Grammar School for Girls (“the School”). Mr Munro oversaw all teaching and learning for the biology department. In addition Mr Munro was a form tutor in the sixth form and taught some chemistry.

On 25 February 2022, Witness B overheard [REDACTED], Pupils G and F, discussing Mr Munro’s alleged ‘overstepping boundaries’ with Pupil A. Witness B informed Individual A, who then made this information known to Witness A. On the same day, Mr Munro’s communication with pupils was reviewed by Witness A and concerns were raised in relation to his emails with [REDACTED], Pupils A, B and C.

Mr Munro’s school account was frozen and he was sent home from his duties on 25 February 2022.

Witness A commissioned Individual A to conduct a safeguarding investigation. All three pupils were interviewed.

On 3 March 2022, Mr Munro was suspended by the School.

On 9 March 2022, Mr Munro attended a meeting with Individual A alongside his union representative. On 19 March 2022, Mr Munro signed that the minutes of the meeting were a true and accurate record.

On 22 March 2022 Individual B was appointed to conduct a disciplinary investigation. Mr Munro attended a meeting with Individual B alongside his union representative on 1 April 2022.

Individual B compiled a Disciplinary Investigation report dated 27 April 2022. At the conclusion of the investigation, a disciplinary process was instigated.

On 7 June 2022, a disciplinary panel meeting was held at the School which Mr Munro attended, accompanied by his union representative.

On 7 June 2022, Mr Munro was dismissed from his position for gross misconduct.

On 11 July 2022, Mr Munro was referred to the TRA.

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
- Witness B
- Pupil C

The TRA also relied upon the accounts from other pupils, obtained during the School's investigation, which were admitted as hearsay evidence.

The panel was satisfied this gave rise to no unfairness in the specific circumstances of this case, in terms of admissibility. However, the panel recognised the need to consider the hearsay evidence with appropriate caution.

Mr Munro did not attend the hearing and was not represented. In his absence, the panel carefully considered the responses he provided to the School during the course of the School's investigations and disciplinary process.

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

Insofar as the hearing bundle alluded to other alleged failings on the part of Mr Munro that did not comprise a formal allegation in these proceedings, that information was disregarded and excluded from the panel's deliberations.

Similarly, with reference to the various opinions set out within the evidence, the panel was mindful of the need to exercise its own judgement. It was for the panel, not anyone else, to draw inferences and conclusions from proven facts in this case.

The panel proceeded 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:

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

- 1. Between around September 2020 and February 2022 you failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil A in that you:**
 - a. Contacted Pupil A via email in a way that was inappropriate given:**
 - i. The number of emails exchanged; and/or**
 - ii. The times at which they were sent; and/or**

iii. The content of the emails.

Allegation 1(a) concerned contact alleged to have been made by Mr Munro with Pupil A via email, which were said to be inappropriate and amounted to a failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

In relation to the alleged, the panel first considered whether the TRA had proved the contact made, before considering whether this was inappropriate and, if so, a professional boundary breach.

In relation to allegation 1(a)(i), the panel had before it a large number of emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil A, spanning a period from 10 September 2020 at 17:11 to 18 February 2022 at 00:12. The volume of emails amounted to 150 pages and were exchanged over many days and for a protracted period of time.

The volume, timing and content of the emails were supported by the witness and oral evidence of Witness A. Witness A gave an example of emails sent by Mr Munro to Pupil A on the 23 February 2022 that were only minutes apart to illustrate the texting like nature of the communication. She also stated that the volume of messages was far in excess of what would be expected between a member of staff and a pupil. She would expect an average of no more than one email a week and stated that the emails between Mr Munro and Pupil A were excessive. The panel considered Witness A's evidence to be credible and truthful.

The panel also considered the hearsay evidence of Pupil F and Pupil G and the record of incident form for Pupil A on 25 February 2022. Pupil F stated that during half term Pupil A and Mr Munro had exchanged a long chain of emails and Pupil G stated that, "*For at least a few months now Mr Munro and Pupil A have exchanged a lot of emails... there were e-mail chains between them reaching at least 100 emails...*". Pupil A stated that her friends may find it difficult to understand the number of emails exchanged between her and Mr Munro.

At the School's disciplinary panel meeting Mr Munro accepted that he did engage emails to a high frequency and that this was not professional or appropriate. He stated that he struggled to switch off at home and that when he got an email he would reply. He also accepted that was not an excuse for the quantity of emails and that he would not do it again.

In relation to allegation 1(a)(ii), the panel carefully reviewed and noted the timings of the emails. The emails were timed stamped and dated to clearly show that Mr Munro sent emails to Pupil A including early in the morning, during the school day, late in the evenings, at night, at weekends and during the School holidays. The panel noted the following as examples of timings of emails sent by Mr Munro from the wide-ranging emailing that took place between Mr Munro and Pupil A.

- On 4 January 2021 at 20:13 and 22:12
- On 9 October 2021 at 22:11
- On Sunday 14 November 2021 at 11:49, 12:15, 17:32, 18:03, 18:21, 18:37, 20:39, 21:03 and 22:16
- On 17 February 2022 at 00:19, 00:27, 00:32, 00:36, 00:40, 00:42, 01:23

The panel again relied on Witness A's evidence which confirmed that staff were told not to communicate with pupils outside of working hours of the school, which were generally 8am to 5pm during term time, whereas a large volume of emails from Mr Munro were outside these timeframes and outside of term time, including from his personal device, contrary to the School's Acceptable Use Policy. The panel also considered the hearsay evidence of Pupil A which confirmed that messages were sent during school, out of school, as well as on the weekend and that email exchanges had taken place up to 1.00am in the morning. This was corroborated by the time stamps on the emails.

The panel also again noted Mr Munro's hearsay evidence provided at the School's disciplinary panel meeting as set out under allegation 1(a) (i) above.

In relation to allegation 1(a)(iii), the panel considered the contents of emails exchanged and considered them to be inappropriate, including being informal, over-familiar and unrelated to school or schoolwork. The panel noted the following as examples:

On Sunday 14 November 2021 Mr Munro wrote at 18:27,

"Pretend we hate each other? xD This seems like an extreme solution like we are trying to make people think we don't talk xD

Yeah I like staying in my office xD I am not a social person as you know! Tbh I spend many lunchtimes now just helping students / chatting to them :P"

and later on Sunday 14 November 2021 at 20:39,

"I'm sure we will stay on topic for the first few minutes! But hey it makes it less scary to have a friendly face!

I am weird with social stuff, I hate talking to adults but I enjoy acting!

I have a fan group? You lot needed better people to "fan" over xD

I really like my department! So do chat with them but I enjoy talking to you guys I do my job because of the students after all"

On 25 November 2021 he wrote at 21:32,

"I'm very good at waking up without any help, even without alarms!

I absolutely love taskmaster! I'm guessing you've seen the actual show ...wouldn't I literally make the perfect Alex Horne ? x D I honestly love that sort of "presenter role".

I completely get your point. Do your own thing before doing other people's stuff (tl;dr basically) Can see why it's annoying ! Especially something like task master can be insanely good!"

The panel concluded that the emails sent by Mr Munro to Pupil A included numerous other examples of Mr Munro discussing his personal life, [REDACTED], members of staff and other students with Pupil A. The content of the emails including the tone, language and emojis used, were over- familiar and inappropriate. The panel considered the contact went far beyond what was necessary from a teaching and / or pastoral perspective.

The panel again relied on Witness A's evidence which set out her professional view that the emails between Mr Munro and the pupils in question were extremely inappropriate and unprofessional. She also stated that emails to pupils from staff members should be formal and only about educational and professional matters.

The panel was aware that, in the School's disciplinary panel, Mr Munro had accepted that he shared information beyond what he should do with pupils. He explained that he didn't plan to share this information and that he cared about pupils' lives and their well-being. He indicated that he asked them about their lives and felt that teachers should get to know pupils. He accepted that he should not have engaged in these conversations and he answered questions that he should not have.

Accordingly, the panel concluded that Mr Munro contacted Pupil A in a way that was wholly inappropriate given the volume of emails exchanged, the times at which they were sent and the content of the emails. The panel was satisfied that in doing so Mr Munro had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegations 1(a)(i) to (iii) proved.

b. On one or more occasions told to Pupil A /discussed your romantic and/or sexual relationships with Pupil A.

The panel again considered the contents on the emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil A and its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1 (a) above.

It was clear from the contents of the emails sent by Mr Munro to Pupil A that he discussed with and told Pupil A about his romantic and sexual relationships. For example,

On 15th November 2021 at 09:09 Mr Munro wrote "*I am so glad I don't have a bed time anymore, I just cannot stick to it and no-one yells at me if I can't sleep. Literally [REDACTED]*" Later that day at 20:19 he wrote "*I'm incredibly huggy person with my*

friends / [REDACTED] and my best friends are the same back so we just constantly having a cuddle!”

On 22 November 2021 at 21:14, Mr Munro wrote,

“I’m the same, I’d love a young kid who can speak, like 4 years old. I can’t wait to have a little daughter ! [REDACTED].”

The emails were further corroborated by the record of incident form for Pupil A on 25 February 2022 in which she stated that Mr Munro informed her that he was [REDACTED] and that she knew this was inappropriate to share with a pupil.

The panel also took into account the evidence provided by Witness B. The panel found her to be a credible and reliable witness. She indicated that on 25 February 2022 Pupil F and G had disclosed their concerns relating to Mr Munro’s relationship with Pupil A. Pupil F disclosed that Mr Munro had shared information with Pupil A about [REDACTED]. This was further confirmed in Pupil F’s hearsay evidence.

Furthermore, the panel took into account that, at the School’s disciplinary panel, Mr Munro accepted that he had shared information that he should not have with Pupil A. He specifically referenced a biology lesson when he received a text from [REDACTED]. He went on to say that he regretted it and that he shouldn’t have shared this with Pupil A but that it came out due to a moment of distress.

The panel concluded that Mr Munro had, on more than one occasion, discussed his romantic and sexual relationships with Pupil A. The panel was satisfied that in doing so Mr Munro had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 1(b) proved.

c. On one or more occasions encouraged Pupil A to meet you at the School.

The panel again considered the contents of the emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil A and its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1 (a) above.

The panel noted that the emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil A included numerous examples of suggestions made by Mr Munro that Pupil A should come to see him. This is illustrated by the following examples from the wide-ranging emailing that took place between Mr Munro and Pupil A:

- On Sunday 21 November 2021, in response to Pupil A asking if he is free tomorrow morning Mr Munro wrote, at 16:41, “ *Yep! :) any particular reason ?? you OK?”*

- On 22 November 2021 at 12:30 Mr Munro wrote, *“need to rant again today? We can do after school if you want!”* Then at 12:37 he wrote, *“I’m free !Come biology office :)”*
- On 25 November 2021 at 07:43 Mr Munro wrote, *“I’m in :)”*
- On 1 December 2021 at 08:48 Mr Munro wrote, *“ What’s up???? I’m free now if you can come to T001”* .Pupil A responded at 08:58 to say, *“ Sorry I was in assembly There’s nothing you can do about it I just feel a bit helpless,”* . At 09: 03, Mr Munro replied, *“I’m happy to listen though come up break if you want :)”*
- On 14 December 2021 at 11:05 Mr Munro wrote, *“ Is everything okay? I’m free now if now if I can help with anything :)”*

The panel concluded that Mr Munro had on one or more occasions encouraged Pupil A to meet him at the School both at his instigation and in response to her requests. Witness A gave evidence that the School rotated lunchtime surgeries for science subjects and that she would not have expected Mr Munro to be encouraging Pupil A to attend one-to-one meetings with him. The panel considered this encouragement went beyond what was necessary from a teaching and pastoral perspective. The panel was satisfied that Mr Munro had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 1(c) proved.

d. Suggested that you create a false social media profile to contact Pupil A.

The panel again considered the contents on the emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil A. The panel concluded that there was clear evidence in support of this allegation in the emails between Mr Munro and Pupil A on 17 and 18 February 2022 as follows:-

On 17th February 2022 at 23:53 Mr Munro wrote, *“ I’m not that weird xD Dw I get that! I mean have thought of using a fake but yeah we can wait”* .

Pupil A replied at 23:54, *“Hold on is that just your preferred name”* .

At 23:56 Mr Munro wrote, *“I don’t use it ! So could just make one with fake everything”*

Pupil A responded at 23:57, *“oh so you don’t have one at all atm???? I mean you could it would probs work only issue would be if you went up my bf list people would wanna know who you were”* .

His reply at 23:58 was, *“Not at all! Easy just do a female one and all good.”*

At 00:00 on 18 February 2022, Pupil A replied, *“OK so was this your plan? Shall I add it to our list to discuss on Monday “.*

Mr Munro wrote at 00:01, *“ Was gonna suggest it ! Your choice! Takes only one minute to do. Will literally go along with whatever... would have made this week /weekend a lot easier xD” .*

Pupil A replied at 00:05, *“ Well we can't keep on like this it won't work so I'm OK with that :)”*

Mr Munro then stated at 00:06, *“OK I'll do it now”*,

Pupil A replied also at 00:06, *“Yeah do it now”*

and at 00:09 Mr Munro wrote, *“Done. I'll try find you.”*

The panel concluded that in suggesting that he create a false social media profile to contact Pupil A, Mr Munro had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 1(d) proved.

2. Between around December 2021 and 24 February 2022 you failed to maintain professional boundaries with Pupil B in that you contacted Pupil B via email in a way that was inappropriate given:

- a. the number of emails exchanged; and/or**
- b. the times at which they were sent; and/or**
- c. the content of the emails.**

Allegation 2 concerned contact alleged to have been made by Mr Munro with Pupil B via email, which were said to be inappropriate and amounted to a failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

In relation to each of the alleged contact as alleged in 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c), the panel therefore first considered whether the TRA had proved the contact made before considering whether this was inappropriate and, if so, a professional boundary breach.

In relation to allegation 2(a), the panel had before it a large number of emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil B spanning a period from 10 December 2021 at 14:46 to 20 February 2022 at 23:28. The volume of emails amounted to 104 pages and were exchanged over many days and for a protracted period of time.

In relation to allegation 2(b) and 2(c), the panel carefully considered the times that these were sent and the contents of the emails. The emails were timed stamped and dated to clearly show that Mr Munro sent emails to Pupil B, including early in the morning, during the school day, late in the evenings, at night, at weekends and in School holidays, including from his personal device, contrary to the School's Acceptable Use Policy. The panel noted the following as examples of timings of emails sent by Mr Munro from the wide-ranging emailing that took place between Mr Munro and Pupil B during this period.

- On Sunday 19 December 2021 at 19:54
- On 29 December 2021 at 10:02 and 14:48
- On Saturday 1 January 2022, at an unknown time between 01:23 and 01:42 and at 11:53
- On 3 January 2022 at 22:45 and 22:33
- On 3 February 2022 at 19:10, 19:58, 21:31 and 21:35
- On 7 February 2022 at 23:09

The volume, timing and contents of the emails was supported by the witness and oral evidence of Witness A. The panel accepted and relied on Witness A's evidence and referred to its findings of fact under allegation 1 a(i) to (iii) in relation to her evidence which also applied to this allegation. Witness A also provided evidence as to Pupil B's particular vulnerabilities and needs.

The panel also referred to Mr Munro's responses at the School's disciplinary panel meeting as set out in its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1(a) (i) to (iii) above and concluded that this hearsay evidence applied to allegations 2(a) to 2(c).

In relation to allegation 2(c) the panel considered the contents of emails exchanged and considered them to be inappropriate, including being over-familiar and not relating to school or homework. The panel noted the following as examples:

On Saturday 1 January 2022, at an unknown time between 01:23 and 01:42, Mr Munro wrote,

"Happy new year to you too!

No need to thank me, I am always here to support you! (Well actually you can finally get rid of me this summer) xD

Here's to a better 2022! (We can at least hope for the best!)"

On the same day at 11:53 Mr Munro wrote,

“Well that’s my job [Pupil B] I’m here to help :) maybe the therapy part isn’t my job but I’m always happy to do that too!

What are your resolutions? I’m learning the clarinet and flute xD”

At 1 January 2022, 22:23, Pupil B wrote , “ *Yeah! Like I know my [REDACTED] needs a lockdown, but my grades cannot afford to ...”*

In response at an unknown time before 22:45 , Mr Munro stated, “ *I feel exactly the same! [REDACTED] needs a lot of time off! But that ain’t going to happen and we just have to focus on school to get through it !”*

On Saturday 12 February 2022 at 15:56 Mr Munro wrote, “ *I’ve got so much to do and not really in the mood to do any of it. Soooo back to staring at nothing”* and at 16:09 Mr Munro wrote, “ *Tbh after the bath I’ll do it before Person E gets home!”* and at 23:28, he wrote, “ *...Btw make sure we have time to chat in person on Monday :) I think it is needed!”*. The panel noted that 49 emails were exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil B on this date between 09:35 and 23:28.

On Sunday 13 February 2022 at 14:13, Mr Munro wrote, “ *What you gonna do all day? I’ll be in town in like 30 mins xD...*” The panel noted that 24 emails were exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil B on this date between 09:29 and 21:22.

The panel concluded that the emails sent by Mr Munro to Pupil B included numerous other examples of Mr Munro discussing his personal life, [REDACTED], members of staff and other students with Pupil B. The content of the emails including the tone, language and emojis used, were over-familiar and wholly inappropriate. The panel considered the contact went far beyond what was necessary from a teaching or pastoral perspective.

Accordingly, the panel concluded that Mr Munro contacted Pupil B in a way that was wholly inappropriate given the volume of emails exchanged, the times at which they were sent and the content of the emails. The panel was satisfied that in doing so Mr Munro had failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with Pupil A.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegations 2 (a) to (c) proved.

3. Between around December 2021 and February 2022 you:

a. On one or more occasions requested Pupil C’s personal contact details;

The panel heard direct evidence from Pupil C, a [REDACTED] pupil in Mr Munro’s [REDACTED], in relation to this allegation and relied on her oral and witness evidence. The panel found Pupil C to be a very credible, honest, measured and compelling witness and it had the opportunity to test her evidence. She stated that on three or four occasions

Mr Munro had requested her personal contact details. He had done this in person at the end of the meeting on [REDACTED], by emails sent later that day and when he met Pupil C the next day.

The panel were provided with 10 pages of emails exchanged between Mr Munro and Pupil C dated from 1 March 2021 to 18 January 2022, but noted that Witness A and Pupil C referred to emails exchanged by Mr Munro and Pupil C in February 2022 but, the panel did not have the benefit of these emails relating to this allegation.

During the School's investigation process, in a meeting with Individual A on 9 March 2022, Mr Munro confirmed that he had asked Pupil C for her personal contact details because he wanted to stay in contact when she left school.

Pupil C was clear in her oral and written evidence that Mr Munro has asked for her personal contact details in person on [REDACTED] and by email. She described the background to the verbal request made by Mr Munro. This request was made at the end of the one-to-one meeting between Pupil C and Mr Munro on [REDACTED]. As Pupil C went to leave the room, Mr Munro stood by the classroom door holding it shut. Pupil C stated that she felt pressurised to agree to giving Mr Munro her personal contact details as she wanted to get out of the room. She agreed that she would but had no intention to actually give the details to Mr Munro. She stated that Mr Munro had said that he wanted her contact details so that when she left school and turned 18 he could talk to her further about the matters they had discussed during the meeting. Pupil C also stated that Mr Munro asked for personal contact details again the next day.

The panel further took into account that in the incident report Pupil C completed on 1 March 2022 she specifically referred to Mr Munro's email requests for her personal contact details.

The panel also took into account its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1(d) above and inference that, given that Mr Munro had suggested the creation of a false social media profile to contact Pupil A, it is more likely than not that he requested Pupil C's personal contact details on one or more occasions. The panel also took into account that Mr Munro had accepted during the School's disciplinary process that he had maintained contact with a pupil from a former school he taught in who was doing [REDACTED].

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 3(a) proved.

b. Told/discussed your sexual preferences and/or masturbation and/or menstruation and/or you romantic/sexual relationships with Pupil C;

The panel again accepted the direct evidence from Pupil C in its entirety in relation to this allegation, for the same reasons as set out in allegation 3(a) above.

Pupil C stated that she met with Mr Munro at lunchtime on [REDACTED] in order to go through amendments to her CV.

She was clear in her evidence that she waited outside Mr Munro's classroom for him to arrive and that when he did, before entering, Mr Munro told her about a [REDACTED] pupil who had refused to do a Biology test as she was on her period. Pupil C and Mr Munro then went into the classroom and he continued to talk about how more should be done to teach young girls about menstruation. He also said that masturbation should be taught and after this subject matter went on to explain how he masturbates. Mr Munro [REDACTED] and discussed 'kinks' and BDSM. He disclosed that he had [REDACTED] then asked Pupil C about her 'kinks' and whether she knew the difference between fetishes and 'kinks'.

On questioning by the panel, Pupil C confirmed that the meeting with Mr Munro lasted approximately 40 minutes. Mr Munro went inside the room first, sat at the teachers desk, pulled a stool next to him for Pupil C to sit on and opened his laptop to pull up Pupil C's CV. Pupil C stated that once the CV was on screen Mr Munro turned to face Pupil C to continue the conversation about [REDACTED] and pushed his laptop to one side. Pupil C confirmed that the door to the technicians room remain closed, but that a chemistry technician popped into the room on one occasion, about 15 minutes into the conversation. At that point Mr Munro stop talking and moved to look at his laptop.

After about 20 minutes. Mr Munro also got up to shut the door into the classroom from the corridor when a pupil ran past and the rest of the conversation took place with the door closed.

Pupil C stated that the last 20 minutes of the meeting involved discussion of 'kinks', BDSM, fetish themes with all doors to the classroom closed. She also confirmed that at no point during the meeting were her CV questions discussed and that he sent her emails in respect of her CV later that day.

Pupil C also stated that she had a further one-to-one meeting with Mr Munro on [REDACTED] before morning form time. During this conversation Mr Munro *"kept diverting the conversation back to the day before and he asked if I had tried the [REDACTED] thing when you make yourself wait"*. Pupil C explained how Mr Munro kept asking her questions about her [REDACTED] and what they had discussed the day before.

The panel further took into account that, in the incident report Pupil C completed on 1 March 2022, she specifically referred to Mr Munro discussing menstruation, masturbation, his romantic and sexual relationships as well as sexual preferences with her. The panel was satisfied that Pupil C was consistent in her evidence and she provided a clear time line for the content discussed and the actions taken by Mr Munro in the 40 minute meeting on [REDACTED].

During the School disciplinary panel hearing Mr Munro accepted that he discussed menstruation with Pupil C, in the context that schools were not teaching women's issues, which corroborates her evidence in this regard. He stated that he had been discussing this in a biology lesson. He also accepted that he had discussed his personal life and [REDACTED] with pupils. He denied discussing masturbation or sexual preferences.

The panel noted that the purpose of the meeting with Pupil C was to go through her CV. Pupil C was not studying biology at the time and Mr Munro was not in the pastoral care team. The panel accepted Witness A's evidence that there was no professional, pastoral or education reason for Mr Munro to discuss any of these matters, including menstruation with Pupil C and that the door to the classroom should have remained open at all times.

The panel noted the impact of Mr Munro's conduct on Pupil C. She stated that after this meeting Mr Munro's demeanour changed and, that, *"He looked at me differently and I felt uncomfortable. There was no fun banter and it felt dark and mysterious, as if he was giving me a look, like 'we have a secret' "*. She stated that since the meeting she had struggled with accepting that she didn't do anything wrong and described to the panel the on-going impact Mr Munro's conduct had on [REDACTED].

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 3(b) proved.

c. Encouraged Pupil C to maintain contact with you after Pupil C left the School.

The panel relied on its findings in relation to allegation 3(a) above, and the panel again accepted the direct evidence from Pupil C in its entirety in relation to this allegation, for the same reasons as set out in allegation 3(a) above.

Pupil C told the panel that Mr Munro wanted to maintain contact with her after she left the school and that he wanted her contact details to be ready for when she turned 18, so that he could talk more about the matters they had discussed in allegation 3(b) above in person.

Pupil C's evidence was, in part, corroborated by Mr Munro during the School's disciplinary panel meeting on 7 June 2022 in that he confirmed that he offered to give his personal email but stated that he only gave this once pupils left the school for giving references and advice and that he liked to stay in touch with pupils as he cared about them. Mr Munro had also accepted that he had stayed in touch with a former pupil from his previous school who was undertaking [REDACTED].

The panel also took into account its findings of fact in relation to allegation 1(d) above and inferred that given that Mr Munro had suggested the creation of a false social media profile to contact Pupil A it is more likely than not that he requested Pupil C's personal contact details on one or more occasions.

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 3(c) proved.

4. Your conduct as may be found proven at allegations 1-3 was sexually motivated.

Having found the facts of allegations 1 to 3 proved, the panel went on to consider whether Mr Munro's conduct was sexually motivated. The panel accepted the legal advice provided.

On the basis of the nature of his conduct and the context in which it occurred, the TRA submitted that the appropriate inference to draw was that Mr Munro's actions were sexually motivated in relation to allegations 1, 2 and 3.

The panel also took account of the fact that Mr Munro was a person of prior good character, which was not challenged.

The panel noted that Mr Munro was Pupil A and Pupil B's A level biology teacher.

In relation to allegations 1(a)(i) to (iii) and 2 (a) to 2(c), the panel had found that Mr Munro exchanged multiple inappropriate communications with Pupil A and Pupil B, outside the formal dynamics of a teacher/pupil relationship. The panel had regard to the inappropriate nature and content of the communications and the inappropriate and over-familiar relationship Mr Munro admitted he had developed with Pupils A and B. This also included suggesting to Pupil A that a false social media profile should be set up to contact Pupil A and his suggestion to meet up with Pupil B outside School, during a School holiday.

The panel noted that Mr Munro had spoken of hugs but there was no allegation of him physically seeking hugs. The panel also considered that the inappropriate interactions escalated over time and involved Mr Munro disclosing information about his personal life, including [REDACTED]. The emails exchanged between Mr Munro and these pupils became less and less formal in content, language and tone, which demonstrated an intention to break down formal boundaries between teacher and pupil. Mr Munro actively encouraged the crossing of boundaries, as set out in the example emails included under allegations 1 and 2. It was also apparent that he was seeking appreciation from the pupils by carrying on conversations with them late into the night, discussing matters that were wholly inappropriate, breached professional boundaries and were unconnected to his teacher or pastoral roles. The panel was concerned as to the pattern of behaviour demonstrated by Mr Munro's email interactions with Pupil A and B. The panel found a suggestive and sexual element to the emails between Mr Munro and Pupils A and B.

The panel concluded that the conduct found proved demonstrated that Mr Munro was inappropriately seeking close relationships with Pupils A and B, with a low grade of sexual intent sufficient to be in pursuit of sexual gratification.

In relation to allegation 3, the panel found that Mr Munro had told Pupil C about and discussed his [REDACTED]. The panel had the benefit of hearing first-hand, oral evidence from Pupil C. She was clear that Mr Munro had asked [REDACTED], as opposed to discussing this generically. He followed up the next day by asking Pupil C if [REDACTED]. The panel also took into account the impact that the meeting [REDACTED] had on Pupil C and accepted her evidence that Mr Munro's demeanour changes towards her after that meeting. The panel felt that Mr Munro was testing Pupil C to see how far he could push her to discuss her sexual preferences and that he was doing this to gain sexual gratification. Mr Munro explained that his fetish, in order to be turned on was girls in skirts and tights. [REDACTED]. She gave Mr Munro a weird look, which he saw. He said that he could turn it off when he was in work and that it was only 'effective' in the bedroom.

Mr Munro had also requested Pupil C's personal contact details and encouraged her to maintain contact after she left school.

The panel concluded that the conduct found proved in allegation 3 demonstrated that Mr Munro was inappropriately seeking a close relationship with Pupil C in pursuit of sexual gratification and in pursuit of a future sexual relationship.

For these reasons, on balance, the panel was persuaded that the TRA had proven, to the requisite standard, that Mr Munro's conduct in allegations 1 to 3 was for the purpose of seeking sexual gratification with Pupils A, B and C.

The panel was satisfied that this was an appropriate inference to draw in all of the circumstances of the case

For these reasons, the panel therefore found the facts of allegation 4 proved. Mr Munro's conduct as found proven at allegations 1-3 was sexually motivated.

5. You failed to report, appropriately or at all, safeguarding concerns as they arose in relation to:

a. Pupil A; and/or

b. Pupil B.

The TRA submitted that Pupil A and Pupil B had raised safeguarding issues in emails with Mr Munro.

In relation to allegation 5(a), the panel had sight of messages exchanged between Pupil A and Mr Munro, including examples quoted under allegation 1(a) (iii), above, and the following:

On 7 January 2021 at 16:04, in which Pupil A had disclosed had she was feeling nauseous in live lessons due to *“an anxiety thing”*.

Mr Munro replied at 17:42, *“Thanks for letting me know! Sorry to hear you’ve been feeling nauseous. Well you don’t have to talk tomorrow, you can just type or just stay quiet until you feel better :) It sucks when you know something is up but equally not sure why. Have you been able to do you work in general or just not?”*

Pupil A responded at 18:04 to state that, *“I am pretty sure its stress because during the first lockdown in March I used to feel sick at around 11 each day but there was no physical cause for it. The thing is that its lasted for nearly two months now so I really don’t see this going away.”*

On 16 November 2021 at 19:22, Pupil A disclosed that she was feeling anxious and in response at 19:24 Mr Munro wrote, *“Welcome to the anxiety club! What happened today? :(and what is happening tomorrow?”*

The panel took into account the written account provided by Pupil A which was supported by emails exchanged between Pupil A and Mr Munro. This confirmed that Pupil A disclosed to Mr Munro that she was anxious and stressed during RAG week with comments from Pupil A including, *“my brain is completely frazzled”, “I feel like I’m drowning I honestly just need a break”*

In relation to allegation 5(b), the panel had sight of messages exchanged between Pupil B and Mr Munro, including those set out under allegation 2(c) above.

On 11 October 2020 at 23:52 Pupil B wrote, *“I hardly leave home so I will wear trackies and pyjama tops all day everyday when I’m not in school. I wish i could if i go to the shop,...”*

On 12 October 2020 at 00:06 Pupil B wrote, *“My anxiety is literally constant, you could think and see me giggling in classes but that’s the mask, most lunchtimes i hide in the corner of a music room, becuae there’s too many people in my friendship group for me to handle. But I get you. I really do and it sucks doesn’t it?...”*

On Sunday 13 February 2022 at 23:03, in response to Pupil B’s disclosure that her mental health was not in a place where she could be socialising, but she needed biology help, including that, *“I cry about the stress of learning”*, he wrote. *“I know that feeling ... socialising can be so draining. Just chat to me and ignire everyone else xD(kidding)”*

The panel accepted the written and oral evidence provided by Witness A who confirmed that all staff had induction training on how to submit safeguarding concerns and identifying concerns which were appropriate to report. She stated that staff were required to report safeguarding concerns via the MyConcern system or directly to the School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). She also confirmed that all staff were required to

read “Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1” and that there were regular updates provided on this as well as the School’s Safeguarding policy.

Witness A stated that Mr Munro had attended regular safeguarding training. This was corroborated by Mr Munro’s training record. Furthermore, on balance the panel was satisfied that Mr Munro had attended safeguarding training on 22 February 2022 based on the oral evidence provided by Witness B.

The panel determined that Pupil A and Pupil B’s disclosures should have led to Mr Munro raising safeguarding concerns with the DSL or via MyConcern in relation to both Pupil A and Pupil B.

During the School’s disciplinary panel hearing Mr Munro accepted that he could and should have reported more using the MyConcern method. He indicated that he did verbally mention Pupil A’s [REDACTED] during RAG week to Witness A and that no reference was given to him to report it further. In her oral evidence Witness A indicated that Mr Munro had not reported concerns about Pupil A or Pupil B via the School’s safeguarding processes and that Mr Munro did not report matters to her. The panel accepted and relied on Witness A’s oral and written evidence. Mr Munro also confirmed that he was aware that Pupil B was [REDACTED] and that she had shared that with him. He again indicated that he mentioned this to the 6th form management team but that in hindsight he should have said something about the “*frequency*” and that he did not promise Pupil B confidentiality.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that Mr Munro was aware of the correct procedures to follow throughout any concerns raised by pupils and that he failed to do so in respect of the concerns raised by Pupil A and Pupil B.

The panel is satisfied that on more than one occasion in emails between Mr Munro and Pupils A and B when a pupil made reference to their vulnerabilities Mr Munro engaged in discussing these issues further instead of reporting these concerns to the DSL and / or via MyConcern as required by the School Safeguarding policy and procedures.

In light of the evidence above, the panel found the facts of allegations 5(a) and 5(b) 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 Munro in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Munro was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

Allegation 5 involved a failure by Mr Munro to act within the statutory framework for safeguarding children. He was required to exercise his own professional accountability to safeguard children at the School and he failed to do so in relation to Pupils A and B by not reporting the issues raised to him via MyConcern or to the DSL. This was a serious omission on Mr Munro’s behalf.

The panel considered that Mr Munro was in breach of the following provisions of KCSIE(September 2021):

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction.

Mr Munro failed to act in the best interests of Pupil A and Pupil B by failing to report the issues that they had brought to his attention to the DSL or via MyConcern thus ensuring that the School was aware of all relevant matters and could take any appropriate steps that were needed in relation to those matters, in the best interests of Pupils A and B.

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

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

The panel found that the offences of sexual communication with a child and controlling or coercive behaviour were relevant.

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

Mr Munro's failings occurred in and outside the classroom and involved and directly impacted pupils. They occurred against a backdrop where he had received training on safeguarding. Mr Munro held a position of trust and responsibility as a teacher. He was also a role model.

In addition, with reference to the specific findings made, in relation to allegation 1(a)(i) to (iii) and 2(a) to 2(c) the panel took into account the extensive number, timing and content of inappropriate emails which were sent over a substantial period of time. This conduct in relation to Pupil A clearly shocked Pupil F and Pupil G, such that they raised their concerns with Witness B. His conduct went far beyond what was appropriate, breaching professional boundaries.

In relation to allegations 1(b),1(c),1(d) and 3 Mr Munro abused his position and inappropriately emailed and interacted with Pupils A, B and C. In doing so, the panel found that his conduct was sexually motivated, as set out in allegation 4.

There was a consistent theme and pattern running through the allegations of professional boundary failings which were intentional and sexually motivated. Mr Munro had a duty to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with all pupils and at all times. He had clearly breached his obligations in that regard, in circumstances that linked directly to his interactions with three [REDACTED] pupils aged [REDACTED]. The panel considered Mr Munro's conduct to be sexual motivated: it included seeking and encouraging pupils to share personal contact details, regularly inappropriate comments in emails as set in allegations 1 and 2 and in discussions with Pupil C as set out in allegation 3. It was clear from Pupil C's evidence and the reactions from Pupil A and B during the School's

disciplinary process that the realisation of the inappropriate nature of their contact with Mr Munro had an impact on them.

The panel noted that aspects of the allegations took place both inside and outside the education setting and the sheer volume of emails sent by Mr Munro was such that the panel considered that this impacted the way Mr Muro fulfilled his teaching role and led to pupils being exposed to, or influenced by, his behaviour in a harmful way, in particular Pupil C as set out in her evidence.

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

In relation to whether Mr Munro'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 Munro'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 Munro was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that that the offence of sexual communication with a child and controlling or coercive behaviour was relevant.

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

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

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

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

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

In the light of the panel's findings, which involved sexually motivated behaviour towards three [REDACTED] pupils there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. There were clear safeguarding implications to his conduct, which posed an obvious risk of impacting negatively on all three pupils and a continuing risk to other pupils. Mr Munro's conduct involved a complete disregard for professional boundaries, and he had bombarded Pupil A and Pupil B with emails including late at night, at weekend and in school holidays. The panel were particularly concerned the Mr Munro's conduct displayed an escalating pattern and methodology of behaviour towards the three pupils. The panel has no evidence before it to suggest that he had understood that what he had done was wrong. He failed to report safeguarding concerns as they arose in relation to Pupil A and Pupil B, and the behaviour found proved towards Pupils A, B and C was sexually motivated. This behaviour reflected Mr Munro's complete disregard for the welfare of children, his safeguarding training, the School's Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE. Instead, Mr Munro continuously kept matters relating to pupil welfare to himself, including disclosures relating to their mental health.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Munro were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. The panel considered that the ordinary intelligent citizen would be horrified by Mr Munro's behaviour, particularly given the number of breaches and protracted period over which this took place with three [REDACTED] pupils.

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 Munro was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated. As set out above, his behaviour followed an escalating pattern and reflected a complete disregard for the

welfare of children, his safeguarding training, the School's Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

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 Munro in the profession.

There was some evidence about Mr Munro's abilities as a teacher. Witness A and Witness B stated that he was a good teacher. Mr Munro has an otherwise unblemished record. His competence had not been called into question. There was also a degree of public interest in qualified teachers, especially science teachers, remaining in the profession.

However, in the specific circumstances of this case, the panel did not regard this as a strong consideration. Mr Munro's conduct took place in and outside the School setting. There were no character references or testimonials before the panel. It could not be said that Mr Munro had made an exceptional contribution to education. In light of this and having regard to the nature of the allegations found proved in this case, the panel concluded there was not a strong public interest in retaining him in the profession.

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 Munro.

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);
- an abuse of any trust, knowledge, or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;

- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- failure to act on evidence that indicated a child's welfare may have been at risk e.g. failed to notify the designated safeguarding lead and/or make a referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies when abuse, neglect and/or harmful cultural practices were identified;
- 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);
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;
- concealment including:
 - defending inappropriate actions or concealing inappropriate actions;
 - encouraging others to break the rules

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

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

- Mr Munro appeared to have had an otherwise unblemished record. He had obtained the role of Head of Biology at the School.
- Mr Munro had not engaged in the TRA proceedings so the panel were not presented with any evidence of recent references or testimonials. Nonetheless, Witness A and Witness B gave some helpful information about him, as did the references that accompanied Mr Munro's job application for the School. The panel proceeded from the basis that Mr Munro had contributed to the education sector and ought to be regarded as a competent teacher even if there was no evidence to indicate either element as exceptional.
- There was some evidence in relation to Mr Munro's [REDACTED] at the relevant time, which he shared with pupils, particularly [REDACTED].

Weighed against this, the aggravating features in this case included that:

- In emails to Pupil's A and B and during the School's disciplinary panel hearing Mr Munro referred to personal challenges, including his [REDACTED]. However, in Mr Munro's absence and without any supporting evidence, the panel was unable to

place weight on these issues. There was no evidence that [REDACTED] had any causative impact on his behaviour at the relevant time. Further Mr Munro had not raised this in his job application or subsequently. It followed that the panel determined his actions were deliberate and he was not acting under duress.

- Mr Munro's actions amounted to a clear breach of the Teachers' Standards and raised serious public and child protection concerns.
- Mr Munro had behaved in a sexually motivated way towards three pupils, who were under the age of 18, such that he abused his position of trust. His conduct towards all three pupils was highly inappropriate for the reasons outlined, and expressly took advantage of the power imbalance between the teacher and pupil.
- His actions involved actual harm to Pupil C, who detailed in her oral evidence [REDACTED]. It also had the potential for harm to the other pupils and had obvious safeguarding implications.
- There was no evidence of insight, regret or remorse. Mr Munro had not attended the hearing nor submitted any evidence in mitigation since his dismissal. During the School's investigation and disciplinary process he alluded to regret for the impact he may have had on pupils in terms of comments perhaps being misconstrued, from his perspective. The panel concluded that Mr Munro had sought to minimise and justify his conduct on the basis of his status as a biology teacher, as well as saying that emails were always instigated by Pupil A and Pupil B. The panel did not consider that Mr Munro's subject specialism warranted the scope of topics he discussed and the multiple breaches of professional boundaries framing the pupil/ teacher relationship. The panel also took into account its findings of fact which included multiple examples of emails instigated by Mr Munro. The panel considered Mr Munro's responses during the School's disciplinary panel meeting on 7 June 2022, including that he stated, *"I fully accept shared information beyond what I should do. Didn't plan to tell this information. I care about students' lives and their wellbeing. I ask them about their lives, and feel that teachers should get to know pupils. I know I should not have engaged in these conversations. Students are always interested in teacher's lives."* However, the panel concluded that Mr Munro had not taken responsibility for his actions or demonstrated any awareness of the triggers that led him to act in this way. There was no evidence that he had taken any steps to avoid failings being repeated. The panel concluded that there was a high risk of Mr Munro repeating the conduct.
- The panel considered that Mr Munro has a deep seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour. With reference to its findings in this case, the panel noted that there were numerous occasions when Mr Munro had deliberately failed to act in accordance with the requirements of School policies in relation to Safeguarding

and Acceptable Use. He emailed and spoke to pupils about his intimate personal circumstances, his health and inquired after theirs. He sought and encouraged pupils to make contact outside the school environment and when they left the school. He also acted contrary to School policies in relation to one-to-one meetings with pupils by not keeping the door to his classroom open. The panel in particular noted its findings in relation to Mr Munro's meeting with Pupil C on 23rd February 2022. The panel had accepted the oral and written evidence of Witness B which stated that, *"Before speaking with Pupil A on the 25 February 2022, there were several occasions when a biology technician and some biology teachers had mentioned to Mr Munro that we have an open door policy. That if a pupil enters a classroom on their own, staff should never have the door closed if there is no other member of staff present. I even recall one senior technician, ..., talking about the fact that it had been reported to her that the Biology Technician had to go to the class and open the door and he would close it. This became almost like a game, where the two actions were repeated. Things like this were mentioned in the department, I just heard it from other staff and did not witness it myself."* Witness B also stated that she believed that Mr Munro's behaviour in closing doors continued despite it being reported.

- In these circumstances the panel considered that Mr Munro deliberately took it upon himself to control the supporting of students in order to enable his sexually motivated behaviour. Furthermore Mr Munro's conduct only came to light when it was reported by pupils at the school. By his actions, Mr Munro sought to encourage Pupils A, B and C to conceal the inappropriate contact and conversations, to make contact with him outside school. This was not only contrary to the safeguarding requirements but also an encouragement of pupils to break rules.

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

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

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate, concluding that Mr Munro's actions were fundamentally incompatible with his being a teacher. He had behaved in a sexually motivated way towards three children, who were pupils at the School. This was not, therefore, an isolated incident or one-off lapse of behaviour. The panel noted that Mr Munro was an experienced teacher who had worked

at an all-girls school previously. There was a continuing course of conduct, which demonstrated a pattern of behaviour and methodology and this was conduct which the panel judged was at the serious end of the spectrum. There was also no evidence of regret, remorse or insight and a high risk of repetition of the conduct.

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.

One of these includes:

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons.

This was directly applicable in this case. The panel also considered that in this case there was:

- a serious and deliberate breach of safeguarding requirements including a complete disregard of statutory framework for the welfare and protection of children, his safeguarding training, the School's Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

Not only did Mr Munro fail to report safeguarding concerns in relation to Pupil A and Pupil B, but his conduct and escalating pattern of deliberate and deep-seated behaviour resulted in, and had the potential to result in, harm to pupils.

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

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

In light of the panel's comments above, regarding the seriousness of Mr Munro's actions, the panel decided its findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be

appropriate, and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

The public interest considerations that Mr Munro's actions gave rise to were such that this was necessary, appropriate and proportionate.

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/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Thomas Munro should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a teacher breaching professional boundaries with pupils in ways which were sexually motivated. Mr Munro also exhibited failures to follow proper safeguarding processes.

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 unacceptable professional conduct and 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 Munro, 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 makes this observation:

“In the light of the panel’s findings, which involved sexually motivated behaviour towards three [REDACTED] pupils there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. There were clear safeguarding implications to his conduct, which posed an obvious risk of impacting negatively on all three pupils and a continuing risk to other pupils. Mr Munro’s conduct involved a complete disregard for professional boundaries, and he had bombarded Pupil A and Pupil B with emails including late at night, at weekend and in school holidays. The panel were particularly concerned the Mr Munro’s conduct displayed an escalating pattern and methodology of behaviour towards the three pupils. The panel has no evidence before it to suggest that he had understood that what he had done was wrong. He failed to report safeguarding concerns as they arose in relation to Pupil A and Pupil B, and the behaviour found proved towards Pupils A, B and C was sexually motivated. This behaviour reflected Mr Munro’s complete disregard for the welfare of children, his safeguarding training, the School’s Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE. Instead, Mr Munro continuously kept matters relating to pupil welfare to himself, including disclosures relating to their mental health.”

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:

“There was no evidence of insight, regret or remorse. Mr Munro had not attended the hearing nor submitted any evidence in mitigation since his dismissal. During the School’s investigation and disciplinary process he alluded to regret for the impact he may have had on pupils in terms of comments perhaps being misconstrued, from his perspective. The panel concluded that Mr Munro had sought to minimise and justify his conduct on the basis of his status as a biology teacher, as well as saying that emails were always instigated by Pupil A and Pupil B. The panel did not consider that Mr Munro’s subject specialism warranted the scope of topics he discussed and the multiple breaches of professional boundaries framing the pupil/ teacher relationship. The panel also took into account its findings of fact which included multiple examples of emails instigated by Mr Munro. The panel considered Mr Munro’s responses during the School’s disciplinary panel meeting on 7 June 2022, including that he stated, *“I fully accept shared information beyond what I should do. Didn’t plan to tell this information. I care about students’ lives and their wellbeing. I ask them about their lives, and feel that teachers should get to know pupils. I know I should not have engaged in these conversations. Students are always interested in teacher’s lives.”* However, the panel concluded that Mr Munro had not taken responsibility for his actions or demonstrated any awareness of the triggers that led him to act in this way. There was no evidence that he had taken any steps to avoid failings being repeated. The panel concluded that there was a high risk of Mr Munro repeating the conduct.”

In my judgement, the lack of evidence of full insight and remorse means that there is a 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 records the following observation:

“Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Munro were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. The panel considered that the ordinary intelligent citizen would be horrified by Mr Munro’s behaviour, particularly given the number of breaches and protracted period over which this took place with three [REDACTED] pupils.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a teacher repeatedly breaching professional boundaries with and exhibiting sexually motivated behaviour towards pupils in this case and the negative impact that such a finding is likely to have on the reputation of the profession.

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to

consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

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

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Munro himself. The panel comments as follows:

“There was some evidence about Mr Munro’s abilities as a teacher. Witness A and Witness B stated that he was a good teacher. Mr Munro has an otherwise unblemished record. His competence had not been called into question.”

Elsewhere, the panel notes that Mr Munro appeared to possess an unblemished disciplinary record and had achieved progression in his career.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Munro 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 serious and repeated nature of the misconduct found:

“Mr Munro had behaved in a sexually motivated way towards three pupils, who were under the age of 18, such that he abused his position of trust. His conduct towards all three pupils was highly inappropriate for the reasons outlined, and expressly took advantage of the power imbalance between the teacher and pupil.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments regarding the lack of insight and remorse and risk of repetition.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Munro 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, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

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

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended that no provision should be made for a review period.

In doing so, it has referenced the Advice:

“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.

One of these includes:

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons.

This was directly applicable in this case. The panel also considered that in this case there was:

- a serious and deliberate breach of safeguarding requirements including a complete disregard of statutory framework for the welfare and protection of children, his safeguarding training, the School’s Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.”

I have considered the panel’s concluding comments:

“In light of the panel’s comments above, regarding the seriousness of Mr Munro’s actions, the panel decided its findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate, and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

The public interest considerations that Mr Munro’s actions gave rise to were such that this was necessary, appropriate and proportionate.”

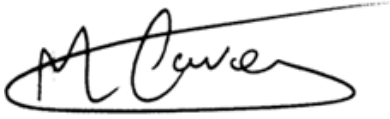
I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the very serious nature of the misconduct found, the lack of evidence of full insight or remorse, and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

This means that Mr Thomas Munro is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children’s home in England. Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of the allegations found proved against him, I have decided that Mr Munro shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of his eligibility to teach.

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

Mr Munro 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 'M Cavey', enclosed within a large, loopy oval stroke.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 27 November 2025

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