



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Patrick Lawler: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

December 2025

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

Teacher: Mr Patrick Lawler

Teacher ref number: 9851609

Teacher date of birth: 23 January 1963

TRA reference: 21388

Date of determination: 15 December 2025

Former employer: Monarch Education Recruitment Agency, Bristol

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 8 to 15 December 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Patrick Lawler.

The panel members were Miss Louisa Munton (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Andrew Hearn (lay panellist) and Mr Francis Ekengwu (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Ben Schofeld of Blake Morgan LLP.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Ian Perkins (and Ms Amalea Bourne on 15 December 2025) of Browne Jacobson LLP.

Mr Lawler 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 24 September 2025.

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

1. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Bede Academy from around September 2015 – December 2020, he published and/or endorsed one or more offensive comments, by:
 - a. in or around Autumn 2015, co-authoring an article, 'How to Discern True from False Religion' with Individual A, in *The Flock*, which stated that:
 - i. "Catholicism is the one true religion and ... all other religions are false, and of all the false religions Islam is demonstrably the most demonic."
 - ii. "anal copulation between two men is an unnatural, unhealthy, disgusting perversion"
 - iii. "killing children in the womb by abortion is a great wickedness"
 - iv. That Islam is "Satanically inspired"
 - b. in or around Autumn 2015, authoring an article, 'Part 2 – Traitors', in *The Flock*, which stated that:
 - i. "The majority of Priests, Bishops and Cardinals (including many of the occupants of two entire floors of the sodomite-run Domus Sancta Marthae) are traitors to the Faith..."
 - ii. "A very large number of [Catholic priests] are practising sodomites (quite openly) and predatory homosexual child-molesters"
 - c. in or around Spring 2018, authoring an article, 'Tales from the CCRS', in *The Flock*, in which he referred to:
 - i. "Sodomite 'marriage'" (as something which Catholics should not approve);
 - ii. "the satanic evil that has infected and taken over the vast majority of the human element of Holy Mother Church (especially the Episcopacy).

2. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Bede Academy from around September 2015 – December 2020, he engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour, by:
 - a. holding a public appointment as Trustee for Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice;
 - b. In or around 2019, telling Year 6 pupils:
 - i. That Rosa Parks had not refused to give up her seat on a bus;
 - ii. That Martin Luther King had been accused of embezzlement and/or was an academic fraud guilty of extensive plagiarism and/or had illegally changed his name.
 - c. On or around 3 July 2019, telling a colleague on a school bus and/or in the presence of one or more pupils;
 - i. Women are murderers if they have an abortion;
 - ii. There are too many burkas in London;
 - iii. Catholicism is the only true religion;
 - d. In or around the week commencing 26 October 2020, telling pupils that he did not believe in Covid and/or that the flu was worse and/or that masks were pointless;
 - e. In or around November 2020, referring pupils to ‘Burn, Loot, Murder’ as an interpretation of the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement;
 - f. In or around December 2020, saying in the presence of one or more pupils “do you want some other bastard to teach you” or using words to that effect;
 - g. In or around December 2020, saying in the presence of one or more pupils “I am surprised you were not all hanging from lampposts” or using words to that effect;
 - h. In or around December 2020, calling pupils ‘failures’ and/or ‘a waste of oxygen and air’ or using words to that effect;
 - i. In or around December 2020, telling a pupil that they had a mental disorder and/or that they were a pathetic and/or ignorant little girl, or using words to that effect;
 - j. In or around December 2020 saying, “back in the day you used to be able to get cocaine purer” or using words to that effect.

3. His conduct as may be found proven at;
 - a. 1 and/or 2b and/or 2c and/or 2e above;
 - i. demonstrated a lack of tolerance and/or respect for the rights and/or beliefs of others;
 - ii. was contrary to Fundamental British values in that it lacked tolerance to those with different faiths and/or beliefs;
 - b. 2b above sought to undermine anti-racist and/or civil rights education;
 - c. 2 above was despite having been given advice in respect of sharing his views and/or his language with students in or around 2 April 2019;
 - d. 2d and or 2e and/or 2f and/or 2g and/or 2h and/or 2i above was despite having been issued with a warning in a letter of 19 July 2019.
4. Whilst employed and/or engaged as a Supply Teacher by Monarch Education Recruitment Agency in or around September 2022, he engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour in a lesson, including by;
 - a. stating that there was no scientific proof of COVID-19;
 - b. stating that you can eat as much salt as you like without getting poisoned or using words to that effect and/or eating salt in front of one or more pupils.
5. His conduct as may be found proven at 4 above was despite having been:
 - a. given advice in respect of sharing his views and/or his language with students on or around 2 April 2019;
 - b. issued with a warning in a letter of 19 July 2019; subject to disciplinary action in or around December 2020.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Anonymised pupil list – page 8

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 9 to 25

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 26 to 337

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 338 to 731

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing.

Witnesses

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

- Witness A [REDACTED]
- Witness B [REDACTED]
- Witness C [REDACTED]
- Pupil C (Former pupil at Bede Academy)
- Pupil E (Former pupil at Bede Academy)
- Witness D [REDACTED]

No witnesses were called on behalf of Mr Lawler.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

Mr Lawler qualified as a teacher in 1999. From 2015 to 2020, Mr Lawler had been employed as a teacher of history at Bede Academy in Northumberland. In January 2022, Mr Lawler joined Monarch Education, a supply teacher agency. One of the schools which Mr Lawler attended as a supply teacher was Bristol Brunel Academy.

On 25 November 2022, Bristol's Local Authority Designated Officer convened a strategy meeting in regard to concerns raised about Mr Lawler's actions in both his private life and in the classroom. Following this process, Monarch Education no longer used Mr Lawler and Bristol's Local Authority Designated Officer submitted a referral to the TRA.

Following the TRA's own investigation, it has alleged a number of allegations against Mr Lawler which are the subject of this hearing.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

- 1. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Bede Academy from around September 2015 – December 2020, you published and/or endorsed one or more offensive comments, by;**

- a. in or around Autumn 2015, co-authoring an article, 'How to Discern True from False Religion' with Individual A, in *The Flock*, which stated that:
 - i. "Catholicism is the one true religion and ... all other religions are false, and of all the false religions Islam is demonstrably the most demonic."
 - ii. "anal copulation between two men is an unnatural, unhealthy, disgusting perversion"
 - iii. "killing children in the womb by abortion is a great wickedness"
 - iv. That Islam is "Satanically inspired"
- b. in or around Autumn 2015, authoring an article, 'Part 2 – Traitors', in *The Flock*, which stated that:
 - i. "The majority of Priests, Bishops and Cardinals (including many of the occupants of two entire floors of the sodomite-run *Domus Sancta Marthae*) are traitors to the Faith..."
 - ii. "A very large number of [Catholic priests] are practising sodomites (quite openly) and predatory homosexual child-molesters"
- c. in or around Spring 2018, authoring an article, 'Tales from the CCRS', in *The Flock*, in which you referred to:
 - i. "Sodomite 'marriage'" (as something which Catholics should not approve);
 - ii. "the satanic evil that has infected and taken over the vast majority of the human element of Holy Mother Church (especially the Episcopacy)."

Before the panel were a number of editions of '*The Flock*' which appeared to be a digital newsletter with articles relating to the catholic faith.

The Flock describes itself in the following terms:

"The Flock is the quarterly publication of Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice. It is robustly orthodox and not for the faint hearted and heretics. Liberal bishops should seek medical advice before reading."

It is openly published on a website purported to be run by an organisation called 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice', which also often refers to itself by the acronym PEEP. It had no

connection to Bede Academy. The only connection to these allegations is that when these articles were published online, Mr Lawler was concurrently employed by Bede Academy.

Copies of the three articles mentioned in this allegation were before the panel. Each stated that they were authored or co-authored by 'Patrick Lawler' and each of them contained the phrases set out above in the sub-allegations.

The panel noted that in a number of the editions of The Flock, an email address was given for Mr Lawler which also matched the email address used for him: (1) in these TRA proceedings, (2) in correspondence with Bede Academy and (3) in correspondence with Monarch Education. Furthermore, Witness A, a colleague of Mr Lawler at Bede Academy, gave evidence to the panel that Mr Lawler had told her in a discussion they had about his personal involvement with PEEP and directed her to its website. There was also contemporaneous documentary evidence of Witness A reporting this website to her senior colleagues in July 2019. Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that it was more likely than not that Mr Lawler, who is the subject of these TRA proceedings, is also the Patrick Lawler who authored and co-authored The Flock articles relevant to this allegation.

The wording of this allegation did not call for the panel to assess whether it was offended by such remarks, but to consider if it was more likely than not that some class of person would find such remarks offensive. Also, the wording of this allegation did not require any consideration of Mr Lawler's right to hold such views and espouse them in a way he wished to. Consideration of these fundamental rights would be for a later stage in the proceedings.

The panel noted that the articles touch on serious topics which were central to how people lived their lives, such as: faith, sexuality and women's rights. These are not trivial subject matters. Mr Lawler's comments on these topics were not just advancing strongly held opinions he might have on them. These were attacks on the positions others might take and live by which Mr Lawler sought to denigrate. The panel was satisfied that on that basis some class of persons would consider these remarks as being offensive.

Accordingly, the panel found this allegation proved.

2. Whilst employed as a Teacher at Bede Academy from around September 2015 – December 2020, you engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour, by;

a. holding a public appointment as Trustee for Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice,

As set out above, there was evidence before the panel of Mr Lawler's involvement with PEEP. Furthermore, in the copies of The Flock and screenshots of PEEP's website that were before the panel, Mr Lawler is referred to as its vice-chairman.

Furthermore, Mr Lawler is referred to as a trustee of PEEP in the Autumn 2021 edition The Flock, in an article which discusses PEEP's status with the Charity Commission.

At the bottom of PEEP's website screenshots, the following notice is included:

"Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice was a registered charity in England & Wales. No. 326394

However, in 2022 a woke bureaucrat from the Charity Commission attempted to censor us for telling the truth. Unwilling to accept being muzzled, PEEP resigned its charity status."

There was no other evidence before the panel which touched on Mr Lawler's potential status as a PEEP trustee. The panel noted that the sole reference to Mr Lawler being a trustee was linked to a date in late 2021, which was some time outside the timeframe given in the allegation (2015-2020).

The panel did not consider it proved that Mr Lawler was also a trustee in 2020 (and prior) in the absence of any further evidence.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation not proved.

b. In or around 2019, telling Year 6 pupils:

- i. **That Rosa Parks had not refused to give up her seat on a bus;**
- ii. **That Martin Luther King had been accused of embezzlement and/or was an academic fraud guilty of extensive plagiarism and/or had illegally changed his name.**

Witness A was the [REDACTED] at the time and was Mr Lawler's [REDACTED]. In her evidence to the panel, Witness A explained that she had become aware of a complaint by a parent about a Year 6 transition day lesson which Mr Lawler had conducted. Her understanding was that the lesson was intended to be on medieval history, so she was unsure on how Mr Lawler might have ended up discussing mid-twentieth century American civil rights topics.

Witness B was an [REDACTED] at the time of these allegations and gave evidence to the panel. Following concerns being raised to him about this lesson and another issue (subject to allegation 2c), Witness B undertook an investigation into those events which took place in July 2019.

As part of his investigation, Witness B spoke with the mother of the Year 6 pupil who had raised the complaint. In his report, Witness B noted that the mother had told him that her son informed her that Mr Lawler stated that Martin Luther King was a fraud and had embezzled lots of money and that Rosa Parks did not really exist in the lesson.

Witness B made enquiries with some Year 9 pupils who had been present in the Year 6 class at the time. His report notes that the lesson had been about the 'Bamburgh bodies' (a local medieval topic) and towards the end of the lesson, the pupils stated that Mr Lawler put up a picture of Martin Luther King. After a Year 6 pupil asked about him, Mr Lawler started telling the class that he had illegally changed his name and fraudulently obtained his doctorate. He also discussed Rosa Parks and that the bus seat event was all staged.

Witness B also interviewed Mr Lawler about this lesson. In his investigation report, Mr Lawler is noted as saying that towards the end of the lesson on the Bamburgh bodies, he asked the class if they had any questions on history in general and a pupil asked about Martin Luther King and that he explained to the class that there was recent evidence about him being an academic fraud and other issues around him and Rosa Parks. Witness B also said that Mr Lawler had attended the interview with a number of documents which he had sought to rely on as sources of evidence for asserting such views.

Although the accounts of what happened in the classroom were hearsay accounts, the panel noted that Mr Lawler essentially agreed the core facts in his interview with Witness B and the panel had no reason to doubt Witness B's evidence to the panel about his interview. Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that it was more likely than not Mr Lawler discussed these topics in the lesson.

The panel considered that dealing with those topics with Year 6 pupils in a transition lesson, in the fashion that Mr Lawler did, was both inappropriate and unprofessional. Pupils at that age do not have the ability to explore, test and challenge minority views which are presented in an unbalanced fashion. It was also completely outside of the context of the lesson which was otherwise expected to be delivered.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

- c. On or around 3 July 2019, telling a colleague on a school bus and/or in the presence of one or more pupils;**
 - i. Women are murderers if they have an abortion;**
 - ii. There are too many burkas in London;**
 - iii. Catholicism is the only true religion;**

Witness A's evidence to the panel was that during a school trip [REDACTED], she was sat on a coach next to Mr Lawler. They were discussing a number of topics on the journey, including an upcoming trip to London that Witness A was due to go on and topics around Mr Lawler's deeply held faith. Witness A's evidence was that Mr Lawler provided responses, as set out above, during that discussion. Witness A did not share

those views, and she challenged him about them during their conversation. Witness A further stated that she had previously enjoyed engaging in conversations with Mr Lawler about his faith and trying to understand his beliefs. Following this journey, she was not sure if she ought to report his strongly held views and sought advice from a senior colleague.

Witness A described in her evidence that although there were pupils on the coach, she did not think any were sat directly in the row behind and she did not think any would have heard, as they would have had headphones on or would have been watching their phones in any event.

Mr Lawler was asked about this conversation in his interview with Witness B. Mr Lawler was noted as saying he did recall having a discussion with Witness A about his faith and related views. He did not recall making a comment about burkas but did recall discussing comments recently made by John Cleese about London no longer being a 'British' city. He considered this was a private conversation between two colleagues.

The panel noted that much of what Witness A recalled of Mr Lawler saying was not disputed by Mr Lawler in his interview and was supported by contemporaneous documents which captured her recall at the time. The panel considered that although there were pupils on the coach, they were not in immediate proximity and were unlikely to have heard the conversation. On that basis, the panel did not consider this to be a conversation in the 'presence' of pupils, and the panel considered that it was effectively a private conversation between colleagues.

Although strong and controversial opinions had been expressed by Mr Lawler in the conversation, the panel considered that it was a private conversation between two adult colleagues, and one which Witness A had fully engaged with, by way of her debating and challenging those views. On that basis, the panel did not consider it was inappropriate or unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation not proved.

d. In or around the week commencing 26 October 2020, telling pupils that you did not believe in Covid and/or that the flu was worse and/or that masks were pointless;

The remarks in this sub-allegation attributed to Mr Lawler can be found in a description of a concern taken from an email sent by Pupil F's mother to the Academy. The panel inferred that Pupil F's mother's account was obtained by her speaking with her daughter following the school day.

Pupil F did not appear as a witness before the panel. However, in a statement given to the TRA in these proceedings, Pupil F moved away from the precision of the words set out in the above mentioned email. Pupil F stated in her statement that:

“I remember [Mr Lawler] saying ‘anti-mask’ stuff, about not wearing masks. I can’t remember what he said specifically.”

Furthermore, Pupil F did not comment on any discussion she may have had with her mother in the statement or confirm if the content of the email was an accurate and fair representation of any conversation she may have had.

Whilst there was some other evidence which may have touched on what Mr Lawler’s personal views were about the pandemic, the panel did not consider that these could provide a satisfactory evidential basis to draw an inference as to what Mr Lawler may or may not have said in the classroom, during the week of 26 October 2020. There was no other evidence from pupils as to what may have been said during this time.

In light of the multiple hearsay nature of Pupil F’s mother’s email, and the content of Pupil F’s own hearsay statement, the panel was not satisfied it had sufficiently cogent evidence available to satisfy itself it was more likely than not that Mr Lawler said the words that were specifically alleged in this sub-allegation.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation not proved.

e. In or around November 2020, referring pupils to ‘Burn, Loot, Murder’ as an interpretation of the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement;

In her statement to the TRA, Pupil F stated that Mr Lawler had said in a lesson that the BLM movement stood for ‘Burn, Loot, Murder’.

Also before the panel was an email from Pupil F’s mother to the Academy, which stated that Pupil F had informed her that Mr Lawler had:

“referred to [BLM] as the Burn, Loot and Murder movement. This was not done as a starting point for a class debate, but presented as fact, encouraging pupils to ‘look it up’ as it is ‘all true’.”

In his interview with Witness D, Mr Lawler is noted as saying that he recalled the occasion. He stated he was referencing writers James Deningpole and Matthew Bracken and how there were two BLM movements, and people wanted a second one which was called ‘Burn, Loot, Murder’.

Witness D’s evidence to the panel was that he was contemporaneously noting responses into OneNote during his interviews. He also said he was mindful of the serious nature of his investigation and wanted to make sure he gave Mr Lawler a full opportunity to explain his position. On that basis, the panel was prepared to place significant weight on Witness D’s evidence, particularly into his recording of the interviews he had undertaken.

The panel noted that Mr Lawler had to some degree admitted this allegation in the Academy’s investigation. It was therefore prepared to place significant weight on Pupil

F's corroborating hearsay account. The panel considered that the evidence showed that Mr Lawler was simply trying to advance his own viewpoints on the topic to pupils in an unbalanced fashion thereby disparaging the civil rights movement. The panel considered this to be an inappropriate and unprofessional teaching method.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

f. In or around December 2020, saying in the presence of one or more pupils "do you want some other bastard to teach you" or using words to that effect;

The panel heard oral evidence from Pupil C and Pupil E, who were taught by Mr Lawler for GCSE history. The pupils explained they had recently undertaken a mock examination, and the class had received relatively poor results.

Pupil C's evidence was that she did not personally recall Mr Lawler making the remarks set out in this sub-allegation but recalls other pupils talking about it following the lesson.

Pupil E's evidence was that she did recall Mr Lawler making such remarks. She described feeling quite uncomfortable at the time as a result of him saying it.

Mr Lawler admitted saying words to this effect in his interview with Witness D. He explained this was said in frustration following the poor mock results. The panel noted that Mr Lawler was not prompted about the use of the word 'bastard' and his admission regarding the use of this phrase had arisen in response to some of the other concerns raised during the interview.

In light of Pupil E's direct evidence, which was corroborated by Mr Lawler's admission in the interview, the panel was satisfied it was more likely than not that Mr Lawler said those words. The panel considered the use of such a derogatory phrase in reference to other professional colleagues was lacking in respect and therefore inappropriate and unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

g. In or around December 2020, saying in the presence of one or more pupils "I am surprised you were not all hanging from lampposts" or using words to that effect;

Pupil C's evidence was that Mr Lawler made a comment to the effect that he was surprised that more people were not hanging themselves off of lampposts. This was in a wider context of discussing mental health and life expectancy in a lesson. Pupil C talked about feeling taken aback at that comment, as she described that [REDACTED]. She added that the comment seemed so unnecessary and could affect people in the class.

Pupil E's evidence was Mr Lawler had told the class they (the pupils) should all be hanging from lampposts because of their recent poor mock exam results. Pupil E's evidence was that this was not said in a humorous fashion and that Mr Lawler appeared very stern with the class when he said those remarks.

Mr Lawler denied saying this in his interview with the Academy when the allegation was put to him. He said he would never make such remarks to pupils.

The panel had no reason to doubt the pupils' direct evidence regarding these remarks. The panel noted that Mr Lawler appeared to suggest there was some collusion between pupils in an attempt to get back at him for the poor exam results, but the panel saw no evidence to that effect in the material before it. Indeed, both pupils who gave evidence to the panel spoke of Mr Lawler's positive ability as a history teacher.

Whilst there was some difference in the respective understandings of the pupils as to the context of how Mr Lawler used the phrase, it was a conflict of evidence the panel considered it did not need to resolve. On either account, such a reference was inappropriate and unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

h. In or around December 2020, calling pupils 'failures' and/or 'a waste of oxygen and air' or using words to that effect;

Although noted in her contemporaneous statement in the Academy's investigation, Pupil C could now no longer recall Mr Lawler using words to the effect of 'pupils being a waste of oxygen' and similar remarks.

Mr Lawler denied saying pupils were a waste of oxygen. He did accept raising his voice and berating them for their underperformance in the mock examination.

Whilst the panel considered it was likely that Mr Lawler may have been rude and made disparaging comments towards the pupils, the panel did not consider it had sufficiently cogent evidence available to persuade it that on balance the specific phrases (or words to that effect) set out in this sub-allegation were said to the pupils.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation not proved.

i. In or around December 2020, telling a pupil that they had a mental disorder and/or that they were a pathetic and/or ignorant little girl, or using words to that effect;

Pupil C's evidence to the panel was that she recalled an occasion when she was talking to a friend in class. Mr Lawler was unhappy about this and called a girl a 'silly, ignorant little girl'.

Pupil D's evidence was that she also recalled Mr Lawler saying something to this effect to a pupil.

Mr Lawler accepted making these remarks in his interview with the Academy. He recalled saying it to a pupil who was talking to Pupil C and would not stop the conversation.

The panel was satisfied with this high level of corroboration in the various accounts that it was more likely than not that Mr Lawler made such remarks. The panel considered that Mr Lawler did not treat this pupil with the mutual respect expected of a teacher. The use of such derogatory language sought to undermine the pupil's image of themselves. It was therefore inappropriate and unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

j. In or around December 2020 saying, “back in the day you used to be able to get cocaine purer” or using words to that effect.

Pupil E's evidence was that during a lesson Mr Lawler discussed the historic purity of drugs. She did not recall exactly how the topic of drugs came around and recalled that nobody was asking about it at the time. It was just a topic Mr Lawler started talking about of his own volition and it was in no way related to the lesson.

Pupil E's account was corroborated by similar remarks in the statement of Pupil F.

This concern was not put to Mr Lawler in the Academy's interview.

Having received direct evidence, which was supported by other sources and was not challenged, the panel was satisfied it was more likely than not that Mr Lawler had said these words.

The panel could not identify any reasonable need for such a discussion to take place during a lesson and was satisfied that it was therefore inappropriate and unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

3. Your conduct as may be found proven at;

a. 1 and/or 2b and/or 2c and/or 2e above;

- i. demonstrated a lack of tolerance and/or respect for the rights and/or beliefs of others;**
- ii. was contrary to Fundamental British values in that it lacked tolerance to those with different faiths and/or beliefs;**

As allegation 2c was found not proved, it was not further considered in this allegation.

Similarly, as set out above regarding the panel's consideration on the 'offensive' or 'inappropriate/unprofessional' nature of these remarks, the panel was satisfied that Mr Lawler's conduct in these allegations did lack tolerance. They were advanced in a fashion which sought to reduce and malign those who held contrary positions to himself.

Accordingly, the panel found this allegation proved.

b. 2b above sought to undermine anti-racist and/or civil rights education.

The panel considered that the age of the pupils and the manner in which Mr Lawler's unbalanced remarks were made were significant issues in regard to this sub-allegation. It was demonstrative that Mr Lawler was seeking to advance his own viewpoint on a matter which fell outside the Key Stage 2 history national curriculum to pupils who would be unlikely to have the capability of understanding or being able to critically assess such information.

Accordingly, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

c. 2 above was despite having been given advice in respect of sharing your views and/or your language with students in or around 2 April 2019;

Before the panel was a copy of a document which had been taken from Mr Lawler's personnel file. Owing to it being in manuscript form, bearing a date and time of 2 April 2019 at 14:45, and being set out in a fashion which was entirely consistent with a set of notes being taken from a meeting, the panel was satisfied it was likely to be the contemporaneous notes of a meeting between members of Bede Academy's senior leadership team and Mr Lawler.

The notes set out that Mr Lawler was advised in the following terms:

"When giving your opinion [be] explicit – so [it] is really clear. There are a range of views. Some children [are] taking away just one perception. Be careful [with] sharing [your] own view."

In light of the clear terms of that advice, the panel found this sub-allegation proved.

d. 2d and or 2e and/or 2f and/or 2g and/or 2h and/or 2i above was despite having been issued with a warning in a letter of 19 July 2019.

As sub-allegations 2d and 2h were not found proved, they were not further considered in this allegation.

Before the panel was a copy of a letter from [REDACTED] to Mr Lawler dated 19 July 2019, which was sent following Witness B's investigation.

Within that letter, the following passages can found:

"Witness B has completed his investigation, and I can confirm that there is no disciplinary case to answer.

However, the investigation raises some very serious concerns relating to how you manifest your personal views, opinions and beliefs through conversations, with or remarks made to, colleagues. You must understand that should you express a position view or belief that has the effect of violating another person's dignity, or creates an intimidating or hostile environment for that person, no matter how deeply and sincerely you hold that belief, or how private you believe the conversation to be, you may be unlawfully harassing that person.

The investigation also raised some concerns on your ability to appropriately differentiate some of the positions you are presenting in the classroom. For example, the discussions around Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. I would not expect a year 6 student to have sufficient intellectual sophistication to recognise a "devil's advocate's position; and still less the confidence to challenge that position. This brings into question your ability to "Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils".

Finally, I am aware that you have had informal conversations previously with senior staff regarding similar matters following a similar theme."

Again, in light of the clear terms of the concerns articulated in the letter, the panel found this allegation proved.

4. Whilst employed and/or engaged as a Supply Teacher by Monarch Education Recruitment Agency in or around September 2022, you engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour in a lesson, including by;

- a. stating that there was no scientific proof of COVID-19;**
- b. stating that you can eat as much salt as you like without getting poisoned or using words to that effect and/or eating salt in front of one or more pupils.**

The panel heard evidence from Witness C, who at the material time was a [REDACTED] teacher at Bristol Brunel Academy. His evidence was that on around 21 September 2022, he had to arrange a supply teacher to cover his final lessons of the day.

Witness C recalled that on his return the following day, during his lesson he was approached by a pupil who explained that Mr Lawler had said during a GCSE lesson on statistics that there was no scientific evidence of Covid-19 and that you can eat as much salt as you like and proceeded to start eating salt in the classroom. Whilst Witness C said he had no reasons to doubt the account provided by this pupil, he also took steps to try and verify and double check the information by asking other pupils in the class about

what they had seen and heard. He asked two other pupils who he considered to be 'extremely trustworthy' who also confirmed the information he had received from the first pupil.

Although a hearsay account, the panel noted that Witness C had taken steps to verify the information he had obtained with other direct witnesses and therefore the panel was prepared to place significant weight on his account.

The panel noted the lesson was intended to be on mathematical statistics, and therefore topics on the scientific basis of any particular disease or the nutritional value of a food substance was completely outside the intended scope of the lesson. The evidence showed that on this occasion Mr Lawler had simply moved into advancing his own controversial views and did so in an unbalanced fashion. The panel considered this to be inappropriate and unprofessional.

Accordingly, the panel found this allegation proved.

5. Your conduct as may be found proven at 4 above was despite having been:

- a. given advice in respect of sharing your views and/or your language with students on or around 2 April 2019;**
- b. issued with a warning in a letter of 19 July 2019; subject to disciplinary action in or around December 2020.**

The panel has previously found above that Mr Lawler had received advice on 2 April 2019 and been issued with a warning letter on 19 July 2019.

Mr Lawler was also subject to disciplinary action in December 2020, having received a number of communications from Bede Academy about the disciplinary process, attending an interview to discuss the concerns and resigning his position during the course of that investigation.

Accordingly, the panel found this allegation proved.

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

Allegation 1 (Conduct outside the education setting)

Having found allegation 1 proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of this proved allegation 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 Lawler, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Lawler 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
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

The panel also considered whether Mr Lawler'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 involving "*intolerance and/ or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or any of the other protected characteristics*" were relevant.

The panel noted that the allegation took place outside the education setting and was conduct undertaken in what might be described as Mr Lawler's private life. The panel took into account the Advice which states that only conduct which affected the way the person fulfilled his or her teaching role or may have led to pupils being exposed to, or influenced by, the behaviour in a harmful way, would amount to unacceptable professional conduct when conducted in a teacher's private life.

In considering the first limb of this definition, the panel noted that the evidence before it covered a significant period of time and there was evidence of a number of complaints and concerns about Mr Lawler's actions in the classroom. The panel considered that it was particularly noteworthy that none of these concerns about Mr Lawler's conduct towards pupils in the educational setting could be said to be in the same vein as those found proved in allegation 1. They could not be directly attributed to the faith beliefs that Mr Lawler held. The panel therefore considered that on this evidence, it could not be said that Mr Lawler's actions in his private life affected the way he fulfilled his teaching role.

In regard to the second limb, the panel took into account that The Flock was openly available on the internet. Mr Lawler was publicly attributed as the author (or co-author) of these articles and there were also other articles which included images of himself. Mr Lawler had made no secret of his involvement with PEEP's website and had told Witness A about it. He could therefore be readily identified. The panel was satisfied that if pupils were to access such intolerant material presented by an identifiable teacher in such an unbalanced fashion, they would be exposed to it in a harmful way. Younger pupils are much less likely to have the cognitive ability to critically evaluate and challenge such

views, which may negatively impact their worldview relating to living in a multi-faith society and may in turn result in them adopting and expressing intolerant viewpoints. Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that the second limb was made out in this case.

In weighing these factors, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lawler 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 Lawler was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in relation to allegation 1.

In relation to whether Mr Lawler'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 Lawler'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 Lawler was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that offences involving "intolerance and/ or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or any of the other protected characteristics" as also relevant to the issue of bringing the profession into disrepute.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher. The panel considered that Mr Lawler's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher (including the perception of parents of pupils), as the public rightly expect teachers to respect the faiths and beliefs of others not just inside the classroom, but also outside it.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Lawler's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in regard to allegation 1.

The panel carefully kept in mind Mr Lawler's Article 9 (freedom of thought, belief and religion) and Article 10 (freedom of expression) convention rights when considering this allegation. Mr Lawler's faith and his beliefs emanating from his faith are not and cannot be subject to regulatory oversight. That element of his Article 9 right is unqualified. How Mr Lawler manifests those beliefs, which in this allegation also overlaps with his Article 10 right in relation to the publication of The Flock, can be qualified and subject to regulatory oversight in some circumstances.

The panel considered that seeking to protect pupils from the harm of being exposed to unbalanced, intolerant views openly expressed by an identifiable teacher as a legitimate

aim of the regulator. The same applies to maintaining public confidence in the profession, as the panel was of the view that the public would expect the regulator to act in such circumstances. The panel considered that these issues were sufficiently serious and important to justify a limitation (or qualification) on the exercise of a teacher's Article 9 and 10 rights. There was no less intrusive option open in these circumstances.

Allegations 2 – 5 (Conduct inside the classroom)

Having found a number of the sub-allegations at allegations 2 to 5 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 again had regard to the Advice.

The panel first considered whether the conduct of Mr Lawler, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Lawler 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 Lawler, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education ("KCSIE"). The panel considered that Mr Lawler was in breach of the following provisions:

In regard to all the proven sub-allegations at allegation 2, Mr Lawler's actions were not undertaken in a 'child centred' approach, did not consider what was in the best interests of the child and did not show an awareness of the school's code of conduct as required by Part 1 of KCSIE (all relevant versions).

In regard to allegations 2b, 2d-g, 2i-j and 4, Mr Lawler's actions did not safeguard children or maintain public trust in the profession (September 2020, paragraph 12 and September 2022, paragraph 12).

The panel also considered whether Mr Lawler'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 offences involving "*intolerance and/ or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or any of the other protected characteristics*" were relevant in relation to allegation 2bii and 2e only.

The panel did not consider Mr Lawler's classroom conduct towards pupils to be of a minor nature. They could not be reasonably considered as trivial, inconsequential or a mere temporary lapse. Mr Lawler repeatedly engaged in behaviour that sought to advance his own personal, often controversial, viewpoints over others, reduce the standing of his own pupils and give scant regard to their interests.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lawler 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 Lawler was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in relation to the proven sub-particulars of allegations 2 – 5. Whilst addressed collectively in these reasons, the panel considered each allegation on an individual basis.

In relation to whether Mr Lawler's actions amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, the panel again took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Lawler'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 Lawler was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that offences involving "*intolerance and/ or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or any of the other protected characteristics*" were relevant in relation to allegations 2bii and 2e only.

The public expects teachers to guide pupils through curriculum topics with balance, impartiality and in an age appropriate manner to critically analyse concepts. The public does not expect teachers to divert from curriculum topics and take up the position of an activist, lobbyist or advocate for any particular cause they may personally agree with. The trust placed in teachers to approach teaching in such a fashion would be significantly eroded if such conduct went unchecked. The panel considered that Mr Lawler's conduct would damage the public's perception of a teacher.

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

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

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

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

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

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

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Lawler, which involved distributing material which was intolerant of others' faiths and beliefs and not acting in a child centric approach in his classroom practice, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Lawler was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession. The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Lawler was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

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 Lawler.

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;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- violation of the rights of pupils;
- actions or behaviours that promote extremist political or religious views or attitudes, or that undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This would encompass deliberately allowing the exposure of pupils to such actions or behaviours, including through contact with any individuals who are widely known to express views that support such activity, for example by inviting any such individuals to speak in schools;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;

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 whether any mitigating factors were present. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

As Mr Lawler had not engaged with the regulatory process and not advanced any mitigating factors, the panel considered the evidence before to see if it could identify any relevant factors. The panel considered the list of factors at paragraph 43 of the Advice. The panel considered that none of those listed factors applied in this case. Mr Lawler's actions were deliberate. He was not acting under duress.

There was some evidence which spoke positively about Mr Lawler's abilities as an educator. Witnesses appearing before the panel (both colleagues and pupils) were able to identify good aspects of his practice. For example, colleagues mentioned his strong subject matter knowledge and quality of lessons. Witness A stated in her statement:

“Those boys he worked with in an intervention group: they all made progress and wouldn't have passed without him... He was good at behaviour management, and generally students engaged well. He was reliable and stepped up to help when you were short of a teacher.”

However, there was no evidence before the panel of an exceptional contribution to the profession or that he consistently demonstrated exceptionally high standards.

The panel noted the evidence which touched on difficult personal circumstances arising in Mr Lawler's life, [REDACTED]. Witness A's evidence was that she noticed a difference in him following this in terms of his classroom and workload management. Furthermore, Mr Lawler cited ongoing difficulties relating to these circumstances in his resignation later. In the absence of Mr Lawler's engagement with these proceedings, the panel was not able to explore this topic in any more detail.

In the absence of Mr Lawler's engagement with the regulatory process, the panel was not able to identify any evidence that Mr Lawler had any genuine remorse or had otherwise reflected on his practice and the concerns raised.

The panel's findings include that Mr Lawler has been previously subject to informal advice and a written warning about his conduct, yet these did not appear to have led Mr Lawler to modify his behaviour. In the absence of any evidence of Mr Lawler reflecting on this aspect of his practice, the panel considered there was presently a high risk of similar misconduct reoccurring, should Mr Lawler return to the classroom at this present time.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, 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 Lawler 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 Lawler. The current high 'risk of repetition' 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 for 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 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. These include "*intolerance and/or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or protected characteristics*".

In following this guidance, the panel considered that a review period of four years was sufficient to address the wider public interest factors present in this case. Should Mr Lawler seek a return to the profession (should the recommendation be imposed), any future panel should expect to be provided with clear evidence touching on the following points:

- Evidence that Mr Lawler has taken effective remedial steps to move away from what otherwise appears to be a deep-rooted attitudinal approach to advancing his own viewpoints towards pupils.
- Evidence that Mr Lawler has developed an understanding of the importance of the need to approach teaching in a child-centric fashion and within the parameters of the national curriculum.

The panel therefore 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 after a period of four 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 some 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.

In this case, the panel has also found some of the allegations not proven. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Lawler 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 Lawler 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 Lawler fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a teacher engaging in behaviour that sought to advance his own personal, often controversial, viewpoints over others, and reduce the standing of his own pupils.

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 Lawler, 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 offers this observation:

“In the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Lawler, which involved distributing material which was intolerant of others’ faiths and beliefs and not acting in a child centric approach in his classroom practice, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.”

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

“In the absence of Mr Lawler’s engagement with the regulatory process, the panel was not able to identify any evidence that Mr Lawler had any genuine remorse or had otherwise reflected on his practice and the concerns raised.

The panel’s findings include that Mr Lawler has been previously subject to informal advice and a written warning about his conduct, yet these did not appear to have led Mr Lawler to modify his behaviour. In the absence of any evidence of Mr Lawler reflecting on this aspect of his practice, the panel considered there was presently a high risk of similar misconduct reoccurring, should Mr Lawler return to the classroom at this present time.”

In my judgement, the lack of evidence of that Mr Lawler has developed full insight into his behaviour 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 comments as follows:

“The public expects teachers to guide pupils through curriculum topics with balance, impartiality and in an age appropriate manner to critically analyse concepts. The public does not expect teachers to divert from curriculum topics and take up the position of

an activist, lobbyist or advocate for any particular cause they may personally agree with. The trust placed in teachers to approach teaching in such a fashion would be significantly eroded if such conduct went unchecked. The panel considered that Mr Lawler's conduct would damage the public's perception of a teacher."

I am particularly mindful of the finding in this case of a teacher using their position to advance their own personal views without due regard to the interests of their pupils and the negative impact that such a finding may 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 Lawler himself. The panel comments as follows:

"There was some evidence which spoke positively about Mr Lawler's abilities as an educator. Witnesses appearing before the panel (both colleagues and pupils) were able to identify good aspects of his practice. For example, colleagues mentioned his strong subject matter knowledge and quality of lessons. Witness A stated in her statement:

"Those boys he worked with in an intervention group: they all made progress and wouldn't have passed without him... He was good at behaviour management, and generally students engaged well. He was reliable and stepped up to help when you were short of a teacher."

However, there was no evidence before the panel of an exceptional contribution to the profession or that he consistently demonstrated exceptionally high standards."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Lawler 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 lack of insight or remorse as well as the risk of repletion and consequent harm to pupils in the future.

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

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

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

In doing so, it has referenced the Advice as follows:

“The Advice indicates that there are certain 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. These include *“intolerance and/or hatred on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or protected characteristics”*.”

I have considered the panel’s concluding comments:

“In following this guidance, the panel considered that a review period of four years was sufficient to address the wider public interest factors present in this case. Should Mr Lawler seek a return to the profession (should the recommendation be imposed), any future panel should expect to be provided with clear evidence touching on the following points:

- Evidence that Mr Lawler has taken effective remedial steps to move away from what otherwise appears to be a deep-routed attitudinal approach to advancing his own viewpoints towards pupils.
- Evidence that Mr Lawler has developed an understanding of the importance of the need to approach teaching in a child-centric fashion and within the parameters of the national curriculum.

The panel therefore 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 after a period of four years.”

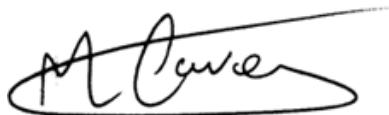
In this case, factors mean that I agree with the panel that a four-year review period is sufficient and appropriate to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found, the absence of evidence of either insight or remorse, and the risk to wellbeing of pupils in the future.

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

This means that Mr Patrick Lawler 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 22 December 2029, four 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 Lawler remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Lawler 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 'MCavey', enclosed in a thin oval border.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 17 December 2025

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