



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Mr Shaun Conrad Allison: 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 Shaun Conrad Allison

**Teacher ref number:** 0240617

**Teacher date of birth:** 20 May 1978

**TRA reference:** 20580

**Date of determination:** 2 December 2025

**Former employer:** Bude Park Primary School, Hull

## **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 30 June to 17 July, 4 August, and 2 to 3 December virtually, and also by way of hybrid means where the parties convened both virtually and in person at Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT to consider the case of Mr Shaun Conrad Allison [redacted].

The panel members were Mrs Melissa West (teacher panellist – in the chair), Ms Mona Sood (lay panellist) and Mr Duncan Tilley (lay panellist).

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

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Louisa Atkin of Capsticks LLP solicitors.

Mr Allison was present and was not represented.

Pursuant to the parties’ agreement, on 4 September 2024, the case of Mr Shaun Conrad Allison was joined with that of [redacted].

[redacted] was present and was represented by Mr Nicholas Kennan of Cornwall Street Barristers, instructed by Thompsons Solicitors.

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

## Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 10 March 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Allison was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that, while employed as Principal at Bude Park Primary School ("the School"):

1. Between around 19 April 2021 and 21 May 2021, he caused and/or allowed one or more colleagues to complete or amend the attendance records of one or more pupils inaccurately, as set out in Schedule A;
2. Further or alternatively, he failed to take any, or any adequate action in response to Person C raising her concerns with him that children were being marked present when they were not present in school, namely on or around:-
  - a. 22 April 2021;
  - b. 4 May 2021;
  - c. 18 May 2021;
3. His conduct as may be found proven at:
  - a. 1 and/or 2 above constituted a failure to adequately safeguard pupils; and/or
  - b. 1 above was dishonest, in that he knowingly caused or allowed attendance records to be completed or amended in a way which he knew did not accurately reflect the attendance of one or more pupils.

### SCHEDULE A

<b>Pupil</b>	<b>Attendance date</b>	
<b>Pupil 3</b>	19 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	20 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School

	22 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 4</b>	19 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	20 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	22 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	23 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	27 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	28 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	29 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 5</b>	20 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	22 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	23 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School

	27 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	28 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	29 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 6</b>	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 7</b>	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 8</b>	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 9</b>	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	10 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	11 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 10</b>	21 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	22 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 11</b>	22 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 12</b>	22 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School

<b>Pupil 13</b>	22 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 14</b>	22 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
	30 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 15</b>	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	27 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	13 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	14 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 16</b>	26 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 17</b>	26 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 18</b>	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	27 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
	28 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 19</b>	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus

<b>Pupil 20</b>	26 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	27 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	28 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	29 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	30 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 21</b>	27 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 22</b>	27 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
	28 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
	11 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
	14 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
	17 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
	20 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 23</b>	27 April 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 24</b>	30 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 25</b>	30 April 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School

<b>Pupil 26</b>	4 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 27</b>	4 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	5 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	6 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	21 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 28</b>	4 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 29</b>	5 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 30</b>	5 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	6 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 31</b>	7 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 32</b>	10 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	11 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus

	12 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	14 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 33</b>	10 May 2021 (PM)	Marked present (\) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	11 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	12 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	14 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 34</b>	10 May 2021 (PM)	Marked present (\) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	11 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	12 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	14 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 35</b>	11 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late

<b>Pupil 36</b>	12 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 37</b>	12 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	18 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 38</b>	13 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
	14 May 2021 (AM and PM)	Marked present (/ \) when not present in School in circumstances relating to coronavirus
<b>Pupil 39</b>	18 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when late
<b>Pupil 40</b>	18 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School
<b>Pupil 41</b>	18 May 2021 (AM)	Marked present (/) when not present in School

Mr Allison confirmed at the outset of the hearing that the allegations were denied. There was no admission by Mr Allison of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

## Summary of evidence

### Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology, list of key people and anonymised pupil list – pages 15 to 18

Section 2: Notices of proceedings and responses – pages 19 to 35

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 36 to 100

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 101 to 1761

Section 5: Documents provided by Mr Allison – pages 1762 to 1765

Section 6: Documents provided by [redacted] – pages 1766 to 1771

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

Bundle of Teacher Documents – Mr Allison – pages 2 to 18

Bundle of Teacher Documents – [redacted] – pages 2 to 32

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing and the additional documents that the panel decided to admit.

In the consideration of this case, the panel also had regard to the Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession updated May 2020 (“the Procedures”).

## **Witnesses**

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

1. Person C – [redacted]
2. Witness A – [redacted]
3. Witness B – [redacted]
4. Witness D – [redacted]
5. Witness E – [redacted]
6. Witness F – [redacted]
7. Witness G – [redacted]
8. Witness H – [redacted]
9. Witness I – [redacted]
10. Witness J – [redacted] The panel also heard oral evidence from Mr Allison and [redacted].

## **Decision and reasons**

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

In September 2016, Mr Allison commenced his role as Principal at the School.

On 15 April 2021, Witness I sent an email to Mr Allison noting that the School's daily attendance was the lowest in the Trust.

On 20 May 2021 ("Person D"), was made aware of concerns that attendance records at the School had been falsified.

On 21 May 2021, Mr Allison attended a pre-investigation meeting with Person D. Mr Allison was asked to take garden leave whilst an investigation was commenced. An investigation was commenced on the same date.

On 28 May 2021, Mr Allison attended a preliminary investigatory interview at the School. Mr Allison attended a further investigatory interview at the School which was spread across three dates on 28 September 2021, 30 September 2021 and 5 October 2021.

On 1 December 2021, Mr Allison attended a disciplinary hearing. Mr Allison was dismissed from his employment at the School.

Mr Allison was subsequently referred to the TRA.

## **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 19 April 2021 and 21 May 2021, you caused and/or allowed one or more colleagues to complete or amend the attendance records of one or more pupils inaccurately, as set out in Schedule A;**

The panel heard evidence from Witness A. The panel also had sight of Witness A's witness statement to the TRA dated 26 August 2024, the notes of Witness A's investigatory interview at the School on 26 May 2021 which Witness A had signed and dated 10 June 2021. Further, the panel had sight of the notes of Witness A's separate interview at the School dated 24 March 2022, which Witness A had signed and dated 4 April 2022, which were all in the hearing bundle.

Witness A explained that her role at the School involved reviewing the attendance registers once they had closed in the morning and identifying those pupils who had been marked as absent. Witness A advised that she would then contact the parents or carers of those pupils to find out why they were absent. Witness A advised that, once she had spoken to the parents or carers and ascertained the reason for a particular pupil's absence, she would then ensure that this was accurately recorded in the attendance

register on Scholar Pack (the software that was used by the School to record pupil attendance), using the corresponding absence code.

Witness A also explained how the class teachers or teaching assistants would typically complete the attendance registers in the morning and afternoon, using one of the following four marks:

- a 'present' mark if the pupil was in school during registration, using "/" for the morning and "\\" for the afternoon;
- a 'late' mark if the pupil had arrived before the registers had closed, which would be shown by a "L" code;
- an 'absent' mark if the pupil was not in school during registration, which would be shown by a "N" code for an 'unexplained absence'.

Witness A explained that teachers could only mark pupils as 'present', 'absent' or 'late' and that once those marks had been inputted and the registers had been closed, teachers could not amend those marks. It was only the administrative staff (Witness A, Person C, and Witness B) together with Mr Allison and [redacted], who could then amend the pupil attendance marks on the attendance register, using specific attendance codes, after the registers had been closed. Witness A advised that the morning registers would need to be closed by 09:30 at the latest and that any pupil who arrived after this time would need to be marked as an 'unauthorised absence' with a "U" mark, so that she could follow up with that particular pupil's parents or carers. Witness A explained that once the reason for a pupil's absence had been ascertained, there were multiple different codes that the administrative staff could input into the register, such as "I" for illness, or "M" for medical. There were also separate codes for Covid-related absences which would typically start with an "X" (which had been newly introduced), such as where a pupil was isolating or in a bubble that had been closed (which meant that a whole classroom had been locked down and the pupils were accessing online learning at home). The panel had sight of the applicable attendance codes in the hearing bundle, together with the new Covid-related codes, that had been set by the Department for Education.

Witness A explained that, as part of her role to monitor pupil absences, she would make a daily handwritten list of the pupils who were marked by the teacher in the statutory register as absent from the School. She would then work through that list and contact each of the parents or carers and make a detailed note of the reason for their absence in that list, in addition to updating the attendance register. Witness A stated that she would have daily attendance meetings with Mr Allison to discuss the pupil absences.

Witness A explained that, in or around April 2021, Mr Allison came to the administrative office to discuss attendance with her. In particular, he had mentioned that the School had the worst attendance in the Trust. Witness A advised that Mr Allison had worked out that the School had less than 95% attendance each day, and he had stated that it should be over 95%. Witness A further told the panel that Mr Allison then went through her

handwritten list of pupils who were marked as absent, pointed out certain pupils and advised that they had been given work packs at home so technically they were receiving an education, before instructing her to “mark them as present”. Witness A advised that Witness B was present in the office during this initial conversation, and that she would be present on a few occasions when Mr Allison came to discuss attendance marks with her.

Witness A explained that, from that point on, during their daily discussions around pupil absences, Mr Allison would instruct her to mark as present pupils who were absent (for various reasons, such as Covid or illness) or late. She explained that, on the days when attendance was “quite good”, Mr Allison would instruct her to “leave the pupils as absent”. However, when attendance was bad, Mr Allison would instruct her to “mark the pupils as present”. Witness A confirmed that she would then change the pupil attendance marks on Scholar Pack “as instructed by Mr Allison”.

Witness A referred to Pupils 4 and 5 as an example and explained that these pupils [redacted] had left the School following their last day [redacted]. Witness A explained that she had understood that the pupils were to remain on the School roll until the School had received confirmation that they had started at their new school. Witness A explained that, whilst they were still on the roll, they were not present in the School. However, she stated that she was still instructed to “mark them as present” by Mr Allison.

Witness A also referred to Pupil 22, who had arrived at the School after 11:00 on 14 May 2021. Witness A stated that the pupil should have been marked as an ‘unauthorised absence’, but instead, she was instructed to mark Pupil 22 as ‘present’ by Mr Allison. The panel had sight of an email dated 14 May 2021 from Witness A to Mr Allison, at 11:13am, which stated: “Pupil 22 has just turned up – Would you like him marking as late or present?”. In response to this on the same day, Mr Allison stated: “Present please x”.

Witness A advised that, except for the single email relating to Pupil 22, Mr Allison’s instructions to mark pupils who were absent or late as present were verbal.

Witness A advised that she would question Mr Allison many times over his instructions to mark pupils who were absent as present. Witness A explained that Mr Allison advised her that if she was concerned or if anyone was questioning her, he could send her an email setting out the expectations of what she had been asked to do. Witness A stated that she specifically asked Mr Allison to provide this email so that she had his instructions in writing, however, that email was never received. Witness A advised that she would often send Mr Allison a question relating to marking pupils who were absent or late as present by email so that she could receive his instructions in response in writing, but he would come and speak to her directly instead of responding in kind (except for the email in respect of Pupil 22).

Witness A advised that from her initial discussion with Mr Allison in or around April 2021, she started to retain copies of her handwritten lists of pupils who were absent, and she

would also update these lists to include pupils who were marked as present when they were either late or absent. Witness A advised that she would also record the reason for a pupil's absence on this list. Witness A stated that the instructions from Mr Allison had concerned her from a safeguarding and fire safety perspective, and so she wanted there to be an accurate record of the children who were not actually in the School but who were marked as present, in case this was needed in the event of a fire. The panel had sight of Witness A's separate handwritten notes in the bundle, which Witness A confirmed were the notes that she was referring to. The panel accepted that these were Witness A's contemporaneous notes and was satisfied that they had not been amended in any way after the day on which they had been compiled.

Witness A advised that she started to instruct other members of staff to mark pupils who were absent as present, "at the request of Mr Allison", by email. Witness A advised that she specifically stated in each email that the instruction had come from Mr Allison so that they knew the instruction was not originating from her. The panel had sight of these emails in the hearing bundle. By way of an example, the panel considered an email dated 26 April 2021 from Witness A to named teaching staff, which stated: "I just wanted to make you aware that I have been asked by Shaun to mark some pupils as present that are absent. I didn't want any of you to think that you had put the wrong mark in ...". The panel also had sight of additional emails which are referred to below.

Witness A confirmed that she had never heard Mr Allison instruct anyone directly to amend pupil marks or to complete pupil marks inaccurately on the attendance register. However, in Witness A's written witness statement to the TRA, she stated: "During a conversation I had with Mr Allison towards the beginning or middle of May 2021, he said that he wanted teaching staff to record certain absent pupils as present whilst teaching staff were taking the register." Witness A also stated that: "I therefore began emailing members of staff including [redacted] and Witness G to say that Mr Allison had asked for these pupils to be marked as present ...".

The panel found Witness A to be a credible witness. In particular, the panel noted that Witness A gave consistent evidence to the panel throughout her testimony, which was also consistent with the account given in her witness statement to the TRA, and the account that she gave in her investigatory interview which occurred shortly after the events on 26 May 2021. The panel found that Witness A's testimony was corroborated by contemporaneous evidence within the bundle, including the email from Mr Allison instructing her to mark Pupil 22 as present when they had arrived after 11:00, and the emails that she had been sending out to other members of staff advising them that Mr Allison had instructed her to mark certain pupils who were absent as present. The panel also noted that Witness A had accepted that she had changed the pupil attendance marks and did not try to minimise her involvement in the matter.

The panel noted that Witness A's evidence was also corroborated by the evidence of other witnesses. In particular, the panel heard evidence from Person C. The panel also

had sight of Person C's witness statement to the TRA dated 4 April 2025, and the notes of Person C's investigatory interview at the School on 26 May 2021, which had been signed and dated by Person C on 13 June 2021.

Person C explained that, upon reviewing the attendance report in around 22 April 2021, she had noticed that some pupils were recorded as having 100% attendance when she was already aware that some of those pupils (such as Pupils 32, 33, 34 and 27) had been absent due to illness. Person C advised that she discussed this with Witness A, who stated that she had been asked to change their attendance marks to present by Mr Allison.

Person C also advised that Witness A provided her with a copy of her handwritten list of pupils that were absent from the School. Person C advised she would meet with Witness A regularly to review these lists, and she began to highlight pupils on that list who had their attendance mark changed, and who were marked present when they were not present at school.

Person C advised that she was very concerned that attendance marks were being falsified, particularly from a safeguarding perspective, and so she raised this informally with Witness F, who was the [redacted]. After this, Person C advised that, on or around 22 April 2021, she had a meeting with Mr Allison where she raised her concerns that pupil marks were being changed. Person C advised that Mr Allison told her that he had "been asked to do it by the Trust". The panel noted that Person C's account to the panel was consistent with her earlier account that she gave in her witness statement to the TRA, and the account that she gave to Witness J during her investigatory interview on 26 May 2021. The panel noted that whilst Person C was unsure on certain dates (which the panel appreciated would be due to this matter having taken place over 4 years ago), Person C confirmed that she was sure of the factual events that had occurred. Person C also confirmed that she had not heard Mr Allison directly instruct any members of staff to change pupil marks or to mark pupils who were absent as present.

The panel also heard evidence from Witness B. The panel had sight of Witness B's witness statement for the TRA dated 26 September 2023, together with the notes of Witness B's investigatory interview at the School on 28 May 2021 which she had signed and dated 16 June 2021.

Witness B advised that in or around April 2021, she was in the administrative office with Witness A, when Mr Allison came to speak to Witness A about pupil attendance. Witness B advised that Mr Allison used a calculator to calculate attendance and to identify the percentage of pupils who were absent, and after that, she heard Mr Allison instruct Witness A to change certain pupils' marks from absent to present. Witness B also advised that there were also children who had arrived late, where Mr Allison had asked Witness A to change their attendance marks to present. Witness B stated that Witness A would then change the pupil marks as instructed once Mr Allison had left the room.

Witness B advised that she had not heard Mr Allison ask any other member of staff to change pupil attendance marks, however, she confirmed to the panel that she did hear Mr Allison plainly state to Witness A that she was to change the attendance record of a pupil known not to be at school to a present mark.

In particular, Witness B advised that she was aware of the attendance marks for Pupils 4 and 5 being changed from absent to present. Witness B advised that Mr Allison had asked Witness A to mark those pupils as present even though they were no longer attending the School. Witness B stated that she could not recall the details of this conversation between Mr Allison and Witness A, nor could she recall conversations relating to any other pupils.

Witness B advised that she would discuss Mr Allison's requests with Witness A and would state that changing pupil attendance marks on the attendance register was "wrong as it is a legal document", and it also "posed a fire risk". Witness B advised that her assumption was that Witness A was asked to change the marks in order to "improve the School's attendance data" and to "make the marks look better". The panel noted that Witness B's evidence to the panel was consistent with the account that she gave in her witness statement to the TRA, and during her investigatory interview with Witness J. The panel also noted that Witness B's account corroborated the account provided by Witness A in respect of her discussion with Mr Allison about pupil attendance marks and changing pupil absent marks to present.

The panel also heard evidence from Witness D. The panel had sight of Witness D's witness statement to the TRA dated 12 February 2024, together with the notes of Witness D's investigatory interview on 27 May 2021 which she had signed and dated 21 June 2021.

Witness D advised that there was an end of week meeting in the hall after school between March and June of 2021. During this meeting, Witness D stated that Mr Allison was standing in the middle of the hall, and he told members of staff that full class absences were being marked as present so that it would not impact the attendance rates. Witness D stated that Mr Allison said that he was "doing something he shouldn't be" or words to that effect. Witness D also stated that, during the meeting, Mr Allison implied that he was falsifying the attendance data as he said that the School's attendance data is "not as good as it looks", but stated "as long as something looks good on the surface" or words to that effect. Witness D advised that she did speak to other members of teaching staff about this but did not report it officially as she found it very difficult to challenge Mr Allison. The panel noted that Witness D's testimony was consistent with her witness statement that she provided for the TRA. However, it had been put to Witness D during her evidence that, during her investigatory interview when she was asked about whether she had attended a particular meeting that made her feel uncomfortable, she did not describe the meeting held by Mr Allison to discuss attendance and instead referred to a different meeting. However, the panel noted that Witness D did refer to the meeting in her

investigatory interview. Witness D also confirmed in her oral evidence that whilst she did not refer to this particular meeting as having made her feel uncomfortable, this did not mean that the meeting did not happen. Witness D confirmed that the meeting did take place as she had described.

Witness D also advised that on 21 April 2021, when taking the afternoon register, she had noticed that Pupil 10's mark for the morning was incorrectly recorded as present when she knew they were absent. Witness D stated that she had then emailed Witness A, and that Witness A advised that she had been instructed by Mr Allison to mark them as present. The panel had sight of an email dated 21 April 2021 from Witness D to Witness A, stating: "I've just done my pm register and Pupil 10 is marked as present this morning. I really thought I'd double checked it and [they were] absent when I completed it. [Pupil 10] is absent." The panel also had sight of a response from Witness A on the same day, stating: "I have been asked by Shaun to mark [them] as present, so it was me that changed the mark. Sorry for making you worry I should have let you know. I will mark [them] as present this afternoon too as instructed."

The panel also heard witness evidence from Witness H. Witness H advised that, on 27 April 2021, she noticed there had been a mistake on the register as Pupil 15 had been marked as present when they were absent. Witness H explained that she spoke to Witness B to notify her that Witness H herself had made a mistake with the attendance mark. Witness H told the panel that she then received an email from Witness A, in which Witness A stated that Mr Allison had asked for Pupil 15's mark to be changed. The panel had sight of an email in the bundle from Witness A to Witness H on 27 April 2021, which stated: "Vicki just told me that you called across regarding Pupil 15 mark from this morning. I had been asked to change this mark by Shaun. Sorry, I should have made you aware." Witness H confirmed that she had thought this instruction came from Mr Allison although she did not hear it from Mr Allison directly.

The panel had sight of a code change report in the hearing bundle which had been exhibited by Witness J, which he had generated from Scholar Pack as part of his investigation. The code change report set out a list of pupils whose attendance mark had been changed, together with the original mark provided for that pupil, the date and time that the mark was changed, what the mark was changed to, and who it was changed by.

The panel also had sight of a falsification report in the bundle, which had been prepared by Witness J as part of his investigation into the concerns raised. The panel heard evidence from Witness J, who advised that he reviewed the attendance records relating to each pupil, Witness A's handwritten notes, the School's Covid-19 testing book, and Witness A's emails to named teaching staff. Witness J described how he was able to triangulate the information from all of these documents to identify which pupils had their attendance codes altered or incorrectly recorded. Witness J explained that he then highlighted those pupils in green on the report, where he was satisfied that their attendance mark was correct on certain dates. Witness J also explained that he

highlighted other pupils in red on the report where they had been marked as present, and where he was satisfied that it was a falsification. For those marks that had been identified as a falsification, Witness J also inputted the correct attendance code which should have been used.

Witness J confirmed that he provided a copy of the falsification report to Mr Allison and Mr Allison's trade union representative during his second investigatory interview and gave them an opportunity to scrutinise the data. However, Witness J advised that Mr Allison confirmed that he did not need to scrutinise the data as he had accepted the findings of the falsification report. Witness J also confirmed that at no point did Mr Allison try to deny the factual data in the falsification report, other than to disagree with how it arose. Mr Allison also confirmed during his testimony that he accepted the findings set out in the falsification report to the extent that those findings had revealed that attendance data was falsified and that they were not amended or altered by Witness J.

The panel reviewed all of this documentation, and carried out an extensive analysis of the pupil attendance marks as set out in Schedule A. Whilst the panel noted that it did find some anomalies and could not verify that every single pupil in Schedule A had been incorrectly marked as present when they were absent or late (due to an absence of evidence in the bundle); this was a very small number. Overall, the panel was satisfied that there had been a large number of pupils who were either not present at school (due to various reasons, including Covid-related absences) or were late and had arrived at school after registers had closed, who had been marked as present or had their mark changed to a present mark. The panel noted the following examples:

In respect of Pupil 3:

- In their attendance report, Pupil 3 had been marked as present in both the morning and afternoon of 19, 20, 21 and 22 April 2021.
- In the code change report, the following changes were made to Pupil 3's attendance marks:
  - On 19 and 20 April 2021, the attendance mark was originally inputted as an 'N' code on both days (AM and PM), but this was changed to present marks for both days (AM and PM) ("/" and "\") by Witness A at 10:58 on 21 April 2021;
  - On 21 April 2021, the attendance mark was originally inputted as an 'N' code (AM and PM), but was changed to present for the morning ("/") by Witness A on 21 April 2021 at 10:58, and was also changed to present for the afternoon ("\") by Witness A on 23 April 2021 at 09:57;
  - On 22 April 2021, the attendance was originally inputted as an 'N' code (AM and PM), but was changed to present for the morning ("/") by Witness A on 22 April 2021 at 11:07, and was also changed to present for the afternoon ("\") by Witness A on 23 April 2021 at 09:57.

- In the falsification report, Witness J has marked Pupil 3's attendance mark as a 'falsification' across these dates, with the reason stating: "Other absence code applicable when a pupil is not present in school".
- In Witness A's handwritten notes for these dates, Pupil 3 is named and is highlighted as having been marked as present when they were absent. There are also notes next to their name which state: [redacted].

In respect of both Pupils 4 and 5 [redacted]:

In their attendance reports, the following marks were recorded:

- Pupil 4 was marked as present on 19, 20, 21, and 22 April 2021 (AM and PM), on 23 April 2021 (PM only), and on 26, 27, 28 and 29 April 2021 (AM and PM).
- Pupil 5 was marked as present on 20, 21, and 22 April 2021 (AM and PM), on 23 April 2021 (AM only), and on 26, 27, 28 and 29 April 2021 (AM and PM).
- In the code change report, both Pupils 4 and 5 were originally recorded using an 'N' code across all of these dates, but these codes had all been changed to a present mark ("/" and "\") by Witness A.
- In Witness A's handwritten notes, Pupils 4 and 5 are highlighted as being marked as present when they were not present at school. On 20 April 2021, Witness A also added a comment for Pupil 4, which stated: "Awaiting confirmation that [Pupil 4] [redacted] to take off roll", and a similar comment for Pupil 5, which stated: [redacted] then can take off roll."
- The panel also had sight of an email dated 29 April 2021 from Witness A to teaching staff, which stated:  
"please can you mark the following as present when doing the register in an afternoon. Shaun has requested this.  
Pupil 20 [redacted] – [they are] due back on Tuesday  
Pupil 5 [redacted] – [they] will be off roll from tomorrow [redacted], so it is just for today.  
Pupil 4 – [redacted] – as above".
- In the falsification report, Witness J has marked both Pupil 4 and Pupil 5's attendance mark as a 'falsification' across these dates, with the correct code stated as: "Other absence code applicable when a pupil is not present in school".

In respect of Pupils 6, 7 and 8 [redacted]:

- In their attendance records, Pupils 6, 7 and 8 were marked as present (AM and PM) on 21 April 2021.
- In the code change report, the attendance marks for Pupils 6, 7 and 8 in the morning were originally recorded as an 'N' code. However, these were changed to a present ("/") mark by Witness A on the same date just after 11:00. The attendance marks for the afternoon were also originally recorded as an 'N' code,

but these were changed to a present ("\\") mark by Witness A on 23 April 2021 at around 10:00.

- In Witness A's handwritten notes, Pupils 6 and 7 were highlighted as being marked as present when they were absent on 21 April 2021. Witness A had also stated "Awaiting [redacted] covid result" next to their names. Pupil 8 was also highlighted as being marked as present when they were absent on 21 April 2021, but there were no additional notes. However, the panel noted that on 20 April 2021, Witness A had included Pupil 8 in her handwritten list of absent pupils and had written "Awaiting results from covid test" next to their name.
- The panel also had sight of an email from Witness A to Mr Allison, and other members of teaching staff, dated 21 April 2021 which stated: "Just to make you all aware, Pupil 8's covid test result was negative so all 3 [pupils] will be returning tomorrow."
- In the falsification report, the attendance marks for Pupils 6, 7 and 8 on 21 April 2021 were marked as a 'falsification', with the correct code being stated as: "Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)".

In respect of Pupil 10:

- In their attendance record, Pupil 10 was marked as present on 21 April 2021 (AM and PM), and was also marked as present on 22 April 2021 (AM and PM).
- In the code change report, the following attendance marks were changed:
  - On 21 April 2021, the attendance mark was originally stated as an 'N' code (both AM and PM), but the morning mark was changed to a present mark ("/") at 11:05 on the same date by Witness A, and the afternoon mark was changed to a present mark ("\\") on 23 April 2021 by Witness A;
  - On 22 April 2021, the attendance mark was originally stated as an 'N' code (both AM and PM), but the morning mark was changed to a present mark ("/") at 11:05 on the same date by Witness A, and the afternoon mark was changed to a present mark ("\\") on 23 April 2021 by Witness A.
- Pupil 10 was not included on Witness A's list of absent pupils on 21 April 2021. However, the panel noted that Pupil 10 had been included on the list the day before on 20 April 2021, and that Witness A had added a comment which stated: "loss of taste – awaiting results from a covid test". There is also a note for Pupil 10 on Witness A's list for 22 April 2021, which states: "call from mum – is hoping she will get results back today."
- The panel also had sight of the email thread between Witness A and Witness D, relating to Pupil 10's attendance mark on 21 April 2021 and in which Witness A advised that she had been instructed by Mr Allison to mark Pupil 10 as present, which is referred to above.
- In the falsification report, the attendance marks for Pupil 10 on 21 April 2021 and 22 April 2021 were marked as a 'falsification', with the correct code being stated as: "Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)".

In respect of Pupil 11:

- The panel noted from Pupil 11's attendance record that Pupil 11 was marked as present ("\\") on 22 April 2021 (AM).
- In the code change report, Pupil 11's attendance mark for 22 April 2021 (AM) was originally recorded as an 'N' code. However, this was changed by Witness A to a present ("/") mark on the same date at 11:01.
- In Witness A's handwritten list of absent pupils on 22 April 2021, Pupil 11 is named and is highlighted as a pupil who has been marked as present when they were not present. There is also a comment which states: "mum forgot it is mornings on a Thursday – [redacted] at dentist so will bring them both in around 10:30am."
- In the falsification report, Pupil 11's attendance mark is highlighted as a "falsification" with the correct code being stated as: "Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed or Code U: Arrived in school after registration had closed."

In respect of Pupil 22:

- In their attendance record, Pupil 22 was marked as present on 27 and 28 April 2021 (AM only), and also on 11, 14, 17 and 20 May 2021 (AM only).
- In the code change report, the following attendance marks were changed:
  - On 27 April 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning, but this was changed to a present mark ("/") by Witness A on the same date at 09:58;
  - On 28 April 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning, but this was changed to a present mark ("/") by Witness A on the same date at 10:20;
  - On 11 May 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning, but this was changed to a present mark ("/") by Witness A on the same date at 10:30;
  - On 14 May 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning. This appears to have been changed to another "N" code by Witness A on the same date at 10:36. However, this is then changed again to a present ("/") mark by Witness A on the same date at 11:14;
  - On 17 May 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning. This appears to have been changed to another "N" code by Witness A on the same date at 10:19. However, this is then changed again to a present ("/") mark by Witness A on the same date at 10:29. The code then appears to be changed again to another present ("/") mark by Witness A on the same date at 10:31.
  - On 20 May 2021, Pupil 22 had originally been given an attendance code of "N" for the morning, but this was changed to a present mark ("/") by Witness B on

the same date at 10:07. This is then changed again to another present ("/) mark on the same date at 10:08.

- In Witness A's handwritten notes for 27 April 2021, Pupil 22 is marked as "Now in – arrived 9.55am". On 28 April 2021, Pupil 22 is marked as "In – 10am". Pupil 22 is also marked as late to school across all of the other dates.
- The panel also had sight of the email from Mr Allison to Witness A on 14 May 2021 relating to Pupil 22, in which Mr Allison instructed her to mark Pupil 22 as present after they had arrived to school after 11:00.
- In the falsification report, Pupil 22's attendance mark across all of these dates is highlighted as a 'falsification' with the correct code being stated as: "Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed or Code U: Arrived in school after registration had closed."

In respect of Pupil 27:

- In their attendance record, Pupil 27 was marked as present on 4, 5, and 6 May 2021 (AM and PM), and on 21 May 2021 (AM).
- There were also separate electronic attendance notes recorded for Pupil 27. In particular, there were the following:
  - A note on 4 May 2021 which stated: "Persistent cough, Booking test";
  - A note on 6 May 2021 which stated: "Tested Negative but is still coughing";
  - A note on 7 May 2021 which stated: "Call from mum asking if [Pupil 27] can return today – Mum called track and trace who confirmed [Pupil 27's] test was negative, however, she has not received a text or email to confirm. Asked mum to try and get this from them over the weekend. [Pupil 27] heard coughing in the background – JM."
  - A note on 21 May 2021 which stated: "Mum and [Pupil 27] seen this morning – mum taking [Pupil 27] [redacted]
- In the code change report, the following attendance marks had been changed:
  - On 4 May 2021, Pupil 27 was originally marked with an "N" code. However, the morning mark was changed by Witness A to a present "/" mark on the same date at 10:56. The panel noted that the mark for Pupil 27 appeared to have been changed multiple times by Person C, including to an "X02" code. The panel noted from the guidance provided by the Department for Education that X02 meant "Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms".
  - On 5 May 2021, the panel was unable to see that any marks were changed to a present mark but noted that the mark had eventually been changed by Person C from a present mark to an "X02" code on 18 May 2021.
  - On 6 May 2021, the panel was unable to see that any marks were changed to a present mark but noted that the mark had eventually been changed by Person C from a present mark to an "X02" code on 18 May 2021.

- On 21 May 2021, the attendance mark changed from an 'N' code to an 'I' code at 11:04, then changed from an 'I' code to an 'M' code. The attendance mark was then changed from an 'M' to a present mark at 11:56 by Witness A.
- The panel had sight of an email from Witness A to other members of teaching staff [redacted] on 4 May 2021 which stated:  

"As requested by Shaun, I have changed the following marks to present...can you please mark them present this afternoon when doing the register.

..."

Pupil 27 [redacted] – (Bad cough, mum booking covid test)"
- In Witness A's handwritten notes, the following notes were made:
  - On 4 May 2021: "persistent cough. Booking a test – In"
  - On 6 May 2021: "Tested negative – still unwell"
  - On 21 May 2021: "popped in – going to take to hospital [redacted]. IN first thing – absent PM".
- In the falsification report, the attendance marks for Pupil 27 on 4, 5 and 6 May 2021 were marked as a 'falsification', with the correct code being stated as: "Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)". On 21 May 2021, the attendance mark for Pupil 27 was also marked as a 'falsification' with the correct code being stated as: "Other absence code applicable when a pupil is not present in school".

In respect of Pupil 31:

- In their attendance records, Pupil 31 is marked as present on 7 May 2021 (AM and PM).
- In Witness A's handwritten notes, Pupil 31 is highlighted as being marked as present when not in school. Witness A also included the following comment next to Pupil 31's name: "Medical checks this morning – coming in after – IN".
- The panel had sight of an email from Witness A to Witness E and Witness G dated 7 May 2021, which states: "Just to make you aware, I have been asked to mark Pupil 31 as present. [They were] going to be coming in after a medical appointment, however, [redacted] [they] will be off all day. Are you able to please mark [them] as present this afternoon – requested by Shaun."
- In the code change report, the attendance mark was originally marked as an 'N' code for 7 May 2021, but this was changed to an 'M' code by Witness A on the same date at 10:29. However, this was changed again to a present mark ("/") by Witness A on the same date at 10:30. There is no change in attendance mark recorded for the afternoon, but the panel considered that this was likely due to Witness A instructing Witness E and Witness G to mark Pupil 31 as present in the afternoon by email, and so there would be no need for a change of code.
- In the falsification report, the attendance mark for Pupil 31 was marked as a 'falsification' with the correct code being "Other absence code applicable when a pupil is not present in school."

The panel heard evidence from Mr Allison. The panel also had sight of the notes of Mr Allison's investigatory interview on 28 May 2021, together with the notes of Mr Allison's secondary investigatory interview which took place on 28 September 2021, 30 September 2021 and 5 October 2021. Further, the panel had sight of Mr Allison's written personal statement provided on 13 June 2025, and his written submissions and responses to the allegations provided on 17 June 2025 (both of which the panel had agreed to admit as late documents).

In his oral testimony, Mr Allison accepted that there were four pupils in particular that he had instructed to be marked as present when they were absent or late.

Firstly, Mr Allison referred to Pupil 3. Mr Allison advised that Pupil 3 [redacted].

Mr Allison advised that on 19 April 2021, [redacted]. Mr Allison stated that he then went into the office and asked the office staff to mark Pupil 3 as present and had also asked them to put Pupil 3 down for a lunch in case he stayed for the afternoon. Mr Allison explained that having spoken to Pupil 3 later that day, [redacted]. Therefore, Pupil 3 was marked present in the afternoon when they were not on school site. Mr Allison advised that the office staff had not checked this with him but must have assumed this was the case.

Mr Allison advised that on the following day, Pupil 3 again attended school in the morning but did not attend afternoon registration. Mr Allison advised that he asked Witness A what they did the day before in relation to attendance marks. [redacted], he had seen Pupil 3 that day, and it was nearly lunch time, Pupil 3 would be marked as present again for the afternoon. Mr Allison accepted that on this occasion, Pupil 3 was marked as present when they were not on the School site.

[Redacted]. Mr Allison denied Witness A's account to Witness J.

During cross-examination, the presenting officer referred to the code change report and advised that Pupil 3's attendance marks for 19 and 20 April 2021 were changed from an 'N' code to present for both the morning and the afternoon on 21 April 2021. The presenting officer also noted that Pupil 3's mark for 21 April 2021 was changed on 23 April 2021 from an 'N' code to present in both the morning and the afternoon. Mr Allison accepted that he had instructed Witness A to change the attendance codes, but he did not agree that Pupil 3 was not at School on those days, as Pupil 3 was not in class but was in School. It was put to Mr Allison that his evidence conflicted with that of other teaching staff, in that the teaching staff thought that Pupil [redacted]. Mr Allison advised that other members of staff would not know if Pupil 3 was in school that week, as Pupil 3 [redacted]. It was noted that Mr Allison provided inconsistent accounts relating to Pupil 3. In particular, he did not refer to Pupil 3 [redacted] at all during this period in his interview with Witness J on 28 May 2021. However, Mr Allison advised that this was the case and that Pupil 3 had attended school on some occasions throughout that week.

Mr Allison also referred to Pupils 4 and 5, [redacted]. Mr Allison advised that they "did not come onto his radar as being absent for quite a while". Mr Allison stated that he had noted that "they were going down as a 'Y' code for quite some time". Mr Allison also stated that he had asked Witness A why the pupils were absent, and Witness A advised that they had left the School. Mr Allison [redacted], but Witness A [redacted], that she had spoken to their carer that morning, and they were going to come in to speak with people at the School that day. Mr Allison advised that he would have said to mark them in if they are still here and present. Mr Allison also advised that he did not know what to do about their attendance marks whilst they were still on the School's roll, and so he asked Witness I what to do. He advised that Witness I told him that she did not think he could mark them as absent, but she did not know if there was a code for it. Therefore, Witness I advised Mr Allison to speak to [redacted] (who [redacted] at Hull City Council) about it. Mr Allison advised that he had emailed [redacted] and did not hear anything back for a while. He also advised that the next day, [redacted] had confirmed that the [redacted] School could take them off the roll. Mr Allison advised that there were two days where the attendance marks were messed up for Pupils 4 and 5, which to the best of his knowledge was "caused by confusion with pupils being on site and not".

The panel noted that, in his interview with Witness J, Mr Allison had previously stated that he believed Pupils 4 and 5 were being marked as present because [redacted] was arranging work for them and they were getting an education. Mr Allison acknowledged that this was the case. Mr Allison had accepted that he had instructed Witness A to mark these pupils as present for the remainder of the week, when he knew that the pupils were not present on the School site. However, Mr Allison advised that there was still some confusion in respect of how these pupils should have been marked whilst they were on the School's roll.

Mr Allison also referred to Pupil 22. Mr Allison advised he accepted that Pupil 22 was marked as present instead of late or absent. Mr Allison advised that this was technically right and would not have made a difference to the register, as 'L' codes did not affect the attendance percentage. Mr Allison advised that Witness A only put the code in once Pupil 22 arrived at the School and that he believed this was in error and not deliberate. The panel had sight of Mr Allison's email to Witness A on 14 May 2021, in which he instructed Witness A to mark Pupil 22 as present when they had arrived at the School after 11:00. Mr Allison accepted that he instructed Witness A to use the incorrect code knowing that the mark was incorrect. Mr Allison also accepted that, during his interview with Witness J, he spoke about the importance of getting this pupil into school and he did not want to punish him for being late. Mr Allison also accepted that this did not offer a justification for falsifying the attendance mark from a "statutory point of view".

Other than these four particular pupils, Mr Allison denied that he had ever instructed a member of staff to change or inaccurately complete pupils' attendance records. Mr Allison advised that, for the remainder of the pupils who had been marked as present

when they were absent, there had been a clear confusion and misunderstanding by Witness A in respect of his instructions. Mr Allison explained to the panel that there were three different sets of attendance data that needed to be completed by the School. Firstly, there was the attendance register which was completed on Scholar Pack by class teachers every morning and afternoon, which was also referred to as the “statutory register”. Secondly, Mr Allison advised that the Local Authority issued a request to all schools to submit attendance data to them directly. Thirdly, Mr Allison advised that as a result of the Covid pandemic, he began to receive requests from the Trust (which came via Witness I) to send a further third set of attendance data. Mr Allison advised that he had understood that the purpose of this data was to provide a snapshot of attendance during the pandemic, to include Covid-related absences, and was so that the Trust could compare, monitor, advise and support the schools in the Trust, in ensuring that the national attendance benchmarks were being met. Mr Allison advised that, at the time, he had understood all three data sets to be “registers”. As a result, in evidence, he also erroneously referred to what he now understood to be the Trust data report as a “register”.

Mr Allison advised that the form of the Trust data report that had to be completed was “ever-changing”. For example, sometimes the Trust would request a whole school snapshot, and sometimes the Trust would request a separate snapshot on a different form. In addition, sometimes extra columns would be added for further information to be included, such as “bubble closures”. Mr Allison advised that he was often confused as to how he was expected to report the data. In particular, Mr Allison advised that he found his instructions from Witness I to be “very muddled”, “inconsistent” and the communication was “not fantastic”. He stated that the information he was receiving was “stunted” and “confusing” at the time.

Mr Allison advised that this would have “hit Witness A the hardest”, as all attendance questions were funnelled to her as part of her role at the School. Mr Allison advised that the School would often receive telephone calls from Witness I, relaying queries relating to the attendance data from the Trust, and Witness A would have to address these straight away which is something that she was unable to do.

Mr Allison explained that the data report for the Trust was manually generated by the School. Mr Allison stated that, in their daily conversations about attendance data, Witness A was completing the Trust dataset. During questioning, Mr Allison confirmed his understanding at the time was that the Trust dataset would be completed by populating information that was taken from the Local Authority dataset, and that this data had come from the statutory register.

Mr Allison explained to the panel that, following conversations with Witness I, it was his understanding that children who were isolating at home due to Covid, or children who were in Covid bubbles, but were being provided with IT links, work packs and lunch from school to have at home, were being added back on to the Trust dataset before that data

was provided to the Trust. As a result, these pupils were being included within the School's overall attendance data that was reported to the Trust. Mr Allison advised that he explained this to Witness A, so that any instructions to add pupils who were in Covid bubbles back on to the "register" was to add those back onto the Trust dataset only. Mr Allison advised that he did not instruct Witness A to amend these pupils' marks on the attendance register. Mr Allison accepted that he did tell Witness A to change attendance marks pertaining to this, but "that she could only go back to the statutory register".

Mr Allison advised that he had daily contact with [redacted] which mostly related to the discussion of persistent absentees and completion of the Trust dataset. Mr Allison stated that he had made it clear to Witness A what should be recorded and why. Mr Allison advised that any instructions to Witness A about changing attendance records was solely in relation to updating the Trust dataset, to include those pupils who were isolating with Covid or in Covid bubbles. Mr Allison advised that Witness A appeared to be confused by this and appeared to think that she was doing something wrong. He explained that he was also confused by this at the time, as he had thought she knew that she was only being asked to amend the Trust data. Mr Allison accepted that he had offered to send Witness A an email setting out his instructions to her in this regard, however, he stated that "other things came along" which meant he did not manage to send this email. Mr Allison advised that when Witness A contacted him by email, he did not find email communications to be effective and he wanted to address her in person as she "often required longer, smaller steps to take on a new concept or address an issue, through want of getting it right".

Mr Allison stated to the panel that he did not at all instruct Witness A to mark pupils who were absent as present on the statutory attendance register or on the Trust dataset. He stated that Witness A was only asked to add pupils back on to the dataset. However, during his cross-examination, Mr Allison also accepted that at no stage had Witness I or anyone else told him that it was fine to add back on individual pupils who were off for Covid related reasons. Whilst it was noted that bubbles would be added back on to the attendance data, Mr Allison acknowledged that this did not apply to individual children.

The panel heard evidence from Witness I. Witness I advised that she would send the Trust data report to be populated to Mr Allison, which would need to be completed for the Trust. Witness I did accept that the pro forma would change over time but did not accept that it would change "quite regularly" as put to her by Mr Allison. She also did not agree that it was overly complicated. The panel had sight of an example of the report that would be sent to the Local Authority and the Trust in the bundle. The panel noted that the report required the School to report data relating to the number of pupils attending school, whether there were any bubbles or year group closures for Covid-related reasons, the percentage of pupils on roll, together with staff absences. Witness I advised the information required to populate these reports would need to be taken from "the register undertaken by the teacher".

The panel noted that the Trust data report did not refer to individual pupil attendance records or marks and did not refer to any attendance codes being used. The Trust data report contained numerical attendance data only. Mr Allison advised that he had not previously seen a copy of the Trust dataset pro-forma that would have to be completed, but it was his understanding at the time that codes could be entered on the Trust dataset.

Mr Allison advised that he only became aware that his instructions to Witness A were affecting the other registers on 4 May 2021. In particular, Mr Allison advised that Person C came to him to raise concerns after coming to the conclusion that his instructions to Witness A were affecting the other reporting systems and the statutory register. Mr Allison advised that, after this, he instructed both Witness A and Person C not to put children back onto the Trust data report. Mr Allison advised that he “did not believe for one second that she was changing the legal attendance codes”. Mr Allison also stated that, when Witness A and Person C would raise questions after they had been asked to include absent pupils on the Trust dataset, “never did they come with a printout or refer back to the statutory register.”

However, Mr Allison accepted that in “not structuring recorded meetings” with both Witness A and Person C, he had led them to a position in which they “chose between themselves how to interpret their roles regarding attendance as they had never had to before”. Mr Allison advised that his “demands of Witness A to exact the Trust’s wishes in terms of the Trust dataset”, meant that in order to complete her tasks, “she had to go back to the more statutory and reliable familiar reports in order to publish the data.” Mr Allison described this as a “leak” in the data from one report to the other. Mr Allison advised he had no understanding that, at that time, he was requesting her to amend the statutory register.

Mr Allison advised that from 4 to 7 May 2021, he “pulled the plug” on putting “isolated” and “bubbling” children back on to the Trust dataset. By the end of the first week of May, he had understood that “this was not the instruction”. Mr Allison advised that Witness A had never mentioned which version of the data, or which register, she was working on when they had been discussing attendance, he had always assumed that she was working from the Trust or Local Authority datasets. Mr Allison had accepted that he did go into the administrative office to discuss attendance with Witness A, and that he would sit across from her and use a calculator when discussing attendance, however, he thought this was in relation to the Trust data which would have been prepared using the register that would have been “long sent to the Local Authority”. In particular, Mr Allison described how on one occasion he had stood over Witness A’s shoulder in her office for one minute, and he could see that she was “completing some sort of grid”, which he thought was the Trust dataset.

Mr Allison advised that, once he had become aware of the misunderstanding, he held an end-of-week staff meeting to discuss attendance after school. Mr Allison rejected Witness D’ account of what was discussed at the meeting, in that he denied that he had stated or

implied to staff that he was falsifying attendance data. Mr Allison advised that he had called the meeting to discuss his concerns about attendance and that at the meeting, he stated there had been “issues with registration marks and codes in terms of inaccuracies”. Mr Allison advised that he told the teaching staff to make sure that the registers are accurate, and he also asked them to make a real effort to support office staff in ensuring that children come into school on time and regularly. Mr Allison also stated that the key message was for staff to “take greater responsibility in the first instance of a child being absent”, to take “more accountability” in respect of pupil absences, and “to check on pupils where appropriate”. Mr Allison advised that there was also a reward scheme introduced in order to drive attendance levels.

The panel noted that there were inconsistencies in the accounts of this meeting given by Mr Allison. In particular, it was pointed out by the presenting officer that during his investigatory interview with Witness J, he did not mention that he had spoken to staff about errors occurring with codes in the register. At that time, Mr Allison had only said that the meeting was about improving pupil attendance and how staff needed to challenge parents. However, Mr Allison insisted that he did describe the issues in respect of coding at the meeting, and he had called the meeting to ensure that staff were properly complying with procedures. Mr Allison advised that, after that week, he had believed that things were “on track”, and Witness A was “on board” with what she had been asked to do.

It was put to Mr Allison that even after the week of 4 May 2021, pupils who were absent from school or were late were still being marked as present on the attendance register. In particular, the panel had sight of an email in the bundle dated 12 May 2021 from Witness A to Mr Allison, which stated: “We have 12 children off today (not including FS1) 3 of them being the Pupils 32, 33 and 34, mum is still waiting for [their] test to arrive and is chasing this up today. You asked me to mark these as present yesterday, should I do the same today?”. There was no response from Mr Allison in the bundle. Mr Allison confirmed that he would have gone to see Witness A to discuss this with her in person.

Mr Allison was then asked why, if there had been a confusion or misunderstanding previously, and upon receiving this email, he did not go back to Witness A immediately to explain that she was still misunderstanding what she had been asked to do. Mr Allison advised that he should have told her and that on reflection, this email should have prompted investigation and interrogation of what was happening from the previous week. The panel also pointed Mr Allison to the email between him and Witness A on 14 May 2021, where he instructed Witness A to mark Pupil 22 as present despite being late and arriving after 11:00. Mr Allison advised that on this occasion, he “felt the importance of getting this pupil into school” and “did not want to get them into trouble”. However, Mr Allison advised that it was his understanding that the number of pupils being incorrectly marked as present when they were late or absent had started to decrease after the week of 4 May 2021.

The panel noted that during Witness A's testimony, she did not appear to be confused about the completion of data for the Trust, or completion of the statutory attendance register. Witness A had explained that in respect of the Trust data, she just needed to input the number of pupils who were in school and the number who were "off due to Covid". Witness A advised that Mr Allison would instruct her to mark specific pupils as present. As a result, Witness A advised that Mr Allison could not have meant the Trust data report as the data report only shows the aggregated data of how many pupils were absent overall and made no reference to individual pupils. Witness A advised that Mr Allison would refer to specific attendance codes in his instructions, which did not appear on the daily Trust report. Witness A appeared to be adamant that Mr Allison's instructions related to changing marks for specific pupils on the statutory register, and not in relation to the Trust data report. Witness A also advised that she could not recall Mr Allison confirming to her that if a child is not present, then they must be marked as absent.

In respect of pupils who were late (and had arrived after registers had closed) and were marked as present, Mr Allison advised that he was confused as the school had been adopting staggered start times for different classes during Covid. As a result, he was unsure about leaving registers open. Mr Allison advised that he had asked Witness I for some guidance on this, and that she had also obtained guidance from the Local Authority attendance team, who advised that leaving registers open for a slightly longer period (for around 30-45 minutes) would be acceptable. Mr Allison advised that Witness I had told Mr Allison to use his discretion. Mr Allison also stated that Witness I had also advised him to be a bit "naughty" with leaving the registers open for longer. It was under the remit of this explanation that Mr Allison was telling Witness A to mark pupils who were late after close of registration, and pupils who were attending medical appointments, as present. However, in her evidence, Witness I advised that she did not instruct Mr Allison to mark pupils as present if they were late. In particular, Witness I advised that the present mark meant that the pupil had to be present at the time that registers were taken, and thereafter, it would be an 'N' code or an 'L' code. Witness I advised that even if pupils were being marked as late with an 'L' code, this would not affect the attendance mark as the child would still be present. Witness I advised that when the register was taken, those pupils who were in class at that time up until the register was closed, would be marked as present. However, the register could not be left open for the duration of the morning session, and had to be closed with "some sort of mark in it".

Witness I also denied that she told Mr Allison to be a bit "naughty" in respect of leaving registers open for longer. Witness I clarified that she had referred to a particular instance where parents would bring a child in to school for 10 minutes to obtain their present mark in the morning, before taking them out of school to a medical appointment, as "naughty", but nothing other than that.

Mr Allison advised that these incidents occurred towards the end of an "unprecedented global pandemic", during "ever-changing demands" from the Trust, and there were

“constant changes expected” of Mr Allison in his role with regard to attendance. Mr Allison advised that he “had to and was expected to prioritise attendance data in a way that he had never had to before”, and in “multiple various ways that had not been well established previously and would not be expected of schools should the Covid pandemic not have happened, within months of introduction”. Mr Allison also advised that he was receiving multiple telephone calls from Witness I, sometimes at night, to discuss attendance. Witness I accepted that she would need to contact Mr Allison regularly to discuss attendance. When she could not reach him during the school day, she would have contacted him after school hours, but she did not accept that she would contact him at night.

Witness I advised that, from March 2021, she had raised concerns with Mr Allison about the School’s attendance rate being so low. Witness I recalled in her witness statement that Mr Allison explained that staff, particularly in the office, were not as “familiar and robust with procedures” as the staff had been at his previous school. Witness I also stated to the panel that culturally, the School was in a deprived area, and it had often suffered with low attendance. However, Witness I noted that after this discussion with Mr Allison, attendance at the School improved significantly. Witness I advised that she thought she had discussed the improvement of the data with Mr Allison but could not remember the contents of this discussion.

The panel considered Mr Allison’s account carefully. Although Mr Allison had put forward a single explanation that he was referring to Trust data and not the attendance register, the panel did not find this credible for a head teacher with his experience. The panel did not accept Mr Allison’s explanation that, when he was instructing Witness A to mark certain pupils as present, that this was only for the purposes of adding pupils back on to the Trust data report, and that he did not realise that he was asking her to amend the statutory attendance register. The panel also did not accept that Mr Allison only became aware of this on 4 May 2021.

The panel accepted that Mr Allison had been working in difficult circumstances during Covid, and that sometimes the guidance from the Trust was unclear. However, whilst the panel also accepted that the Trust data pro-forma would have changed over time, it did not appear to be the case that it changed constantly or substantially, and it was clear what data needed to be provided to the Trust.

The panel considered completion of the Trust data report to be a straightforward task. The panel also noted that Witness I and Witness A appeared to agree that it was an administrative task. The panel also noted that the Trust data report did not refer to any attendance marks or codes for individual pupils, it only asked for figures that related to overall attendance and absences. However, the panel noted that Mr Allison would still instruct Witness A to change individual pupil marks to present despite the Trust data report not containing this level of granularity. The panel also noted the email from Mr Allison to Witness A directly on 14 May 2021, where he clearly stated that Pupil 22 was

to be marked as present after arriving at school after 11:00. The panel could not see how this could be interpreted as being for anything other than the statutory attendance register, as these instructions could only ever be applicable to this legal document. The panel considered that any reference to changing “marks” was clearly to changing individual pupil marks on the statutory attendance register.

The panel found that Witness A was a credible witness, and that she did not appear to be confused about the data. In particular, she knew how to use the applicable attendance codes, and what codes were to be used when pupils were late or absent. The panel noted that Witness A appeared to know at the time of the investigation that being asked to mark pupils who were absent as present was wrong for safeguarding and fire safety reasons. This is why she retained copies of her own daily handwritten records of pupils who were absent, which had also included those pupils who were being marked as present when they were absent. This is also why she raised concerns to Mr Allison. The panel did not consider that Witness A would have had these concerns, particularly in respect of fire safety, if she was only being asked to amend the Trust data report (as the Trust data report would have no bearing on the School’s attendance records in the event of a fire). The panel also had sight of emails from Witness I to Mr Allison and other headteachers in the Trust, in which she would send the spreadsheet to them to complete, and noted that this was never referred to as a “register”.

The panel also considered that Witness A would have been clear when raising her concerns to Mr Allison that she was worried about amending the statutory attendance register. In particular, the panel noted that Witness A’s email to Mr Allison on 12 May 2021 clearly referred to marking individual pupils as present and therefore could not have been in relation to the Trust data report. The panel noted that Mr Allison appeared to continue to allow Witness A to mark pupils who were absent as present and did not seek to clarify his instructions with her at this stage.

In respect of the staff meeting which related to attendance, the panel noted that it had limited evidence to support the accounts of both Witness D and Mr Allison and the majority of the evidence that it did have, was hearsay evidence which could not be tested. The panel did note that [redacted]’s account of this meeting was generally supportive of Mr Allison’s account of the meeting. However, the panel found that it had insufficient evidence to ascertain what exactly was discussed at this meeting due to the varying accounts. Therefore, the panel confined its deliberations to whether or not Mr Allison had instructed Witness A to mark pupils who were present as absent, and consequently whether he had vicariously instructed other staff members to do so through Witness A.

The panel took into account Witness A’s oral testimony which the panel found to be credible, and was supported by the witness testimony of Person C and Witness B. The panel also considered the contemporaneous documents in the bundle, namely, Mr Allison’s email to Witness A on 14 May 2021, Witness A’s handwritten attendance notes,

and Witness A's emails to other members of staff. The panel found the evidence provided by Witness A and Person C to be inherently probable. The panel accepted these accounts.

After careful deliberation, taking into account its knowledge and experience of the teaching profession, the panel found that by referring to individual pupil marks, Mr Allison must have known that he was referring to the statutory attendance register as none of the other datasets that were compiled by the School required individual pupil level data. The panel found this to be the only credible explanation. The panel did not accept that the Local Authority data report and the Trust data report were registers or could reasonably have been believed to be registers by Mr Allison in April-May 2021. The panel did not find the narrative provided by Mr Allison, which was that Witness A was extremely confused over which dataset she had been asked to complete, to be a plausible one.

The panel also noted that Mr Allison had accepted that for Pupils 3, 4, 5 and 22, he did instruct Witness A to mark those pupils who were absent or late as present, at times when he knew that those pupils were not on site. However, for the reasons set out above, the panel did not accept that these were the only four pupils for whom he gave such instructions.

Taking into account the above, the panel found that, on the balance of probabilities, it was more likely than not that Mr Allison caused and allowed one or more members of staff to complete or amend the attendance records of one or more pupils inaccurately, as set out in Schedule A.

The panel found this allegation proven.

**2. Further or alternatively, you failed to take any, or any adequate action in response to person C raising her concerns with you that children were being marked as present when they were not present in school, namely on or around:-**

**a. 22 April 2021**

The panel heard evidence from Person C. The panel heard from Person C that, on or around 22 April 2021, she became aware from Witness A that Mr Allison had instructed her to mark pupils who were absent as present on the attendance register. Person C advised that she was so concerned about this from a safeguarding perspective, that she messaged Witness F privately to seek her guidance.

The panel had sight of screenshots of a WhatsApp thread between Person C and Witness F on 21 April 2021. In particular, the panel had sight of the following messages:

- A message from Person C to Witness F at 20:43, which stated: "Sorry to bother you on an evening! But if a child/ family where [sic] off school awaiting covid test or

test results and you are been [sic] told to mark them as present in school!!!! would this be breaking any rules or regulations? Asking for a friend"; and

- A response from Witness F to Person C at 20:56, which stated: "YES!!!! OMG. Seriously, if Shaun is asking this of you then this is breaking every rule and you should tell him so. If it is for a friend, the same applies. Not only does it break health and safety rules – what if there is a fire and the fire brigade are looking for this child who is marked present but it's not accounted for on the playground. It also breaks the law on school attendance ( I don't know exactly what law but school registers are legal documents and falsely marking pupils is a gross breach of that. It sounds extreme but honestly we have had some cases which have been through the criminal courts [redacted] and it was an honest mistake rather than a complete fraudulent mark but the point is that the register IS a legal document..."
- Later on in the thread, there is a message from Person C at 21:18 which stated: "I am going to speak with him again tomorrow!".
- A message from Witness F to Person C at 22:29 which states: "It's it [sic] just one child/family and if so why just this one can I ask?"
- A message from Person C at 22:36 which states: "No all kids who are ill or isolating! But we have some big familys [sic] so when one goes down, they all do!"
- A message from Witness F at 22:41: "Are they doing it retrospectively or on the days they are absent? X"
- A message from Person C at 22:46, which states: "So we had about 6 kids who wasn't [sic] in school but was [sic] marked in as present".

Person C confirmed that these were the WhatsApp messages she had exchanged with Witness F at the time. The panel also heard evidence from Witness F, who separately confirmed that these were the messages she had exchanged with Person C at the time.

Person C confirmed that, on 22 April 2021, she went to raise her concerns directly with Mr Allison. Person C advised that the meeting took place at Mr Allison's office, which he shared with [redacted], and that [redacted] was present during this meeting. The panel had sight of a timeline which had been prepared by Person C, and which Person C confirmed was provided to Witness J during her interview with him on 26 May 2021. The panel noted that there was an entry within this timeline which referred to "Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021" and therefore after Person C's interview with Witness J. However, the panel was satisfied that this was likely a typographical error which in fact meant to refer to "Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021". The panel noted that the 18 May 2021 was in fact a Tuesday, whereas 28 May 2021 was a Friday. The panel also noted that the entry for 18 May 2021 matched an email that was in the bundle, and that was sent by Person C to Mr Allison relating to attendance marks on this date.

The panel noted that within this timeline document, there was an entry dated 22 April 2021, which stated: "Discussion with both SA and [redacted] about my concerns regarding the present marks. This was a heated conversation between myself and SA.

[redacted] witnessed SA [sic] behaviour and would not engage with me." The panel was satisfied that 'SA' referred to Mr Allison, and [redacted] referred to [redacted].

Person C advised that, during this meeting, she had raised concerns that pupils were being marked as present when they were absent from school. In particular, Person C advised that she had referred to specific pupils such as Pupils 32, 33, 34 and 27. Person C explained that she asked Mr Allison why they were being marked as present as the "X" codes for Covid-related absences did not affect the attendance. Person C advised that Mr Allison had told her that he had been instructed to do it by the Trust.

Person C also advised that she saw safeguarding as part of her role, and she also particularly referred to concerns in respect of Pupils 4 and 5 [redacted] were being marked as present when they were absent.

Person C also advised that she had relayed the example that had been raised by Witness F in her WhatsApp message, in respect of a [redacted]. Person C advised that the conversation did get quite heated as she felt that Mr Allison was not taking her concerns seriously.

Mr Allison agreed that he spoke to Person C on 22 April 2021 and that she relayed concerns to him. However, Mr Allison advised that he did not understand what these concerns were, as Person C "did not indicate which register" she was referring to. Mr Allison advised that typically Person C had "no control over registers". Mr Allison advised her role "did not involve attendance" and she would just choose which parents to approach from the daily lists of absent pupils list. As a result, it was not clear which "register" she was referring to. Mr Allison advised that, it was his understanding that his instructions to Witness A related solely to the Trust dataset, and so he did not understand why Person C was raising concerns in respect of individual pupils.

Mr Allison did recall that Person C mentioned Pupils 4 and 5 but thought that she was aware of the reasons as to why those issues with attendance marks had occurred. Mr Allison advised that at no point did it become clear to him during his conversation with Person C that the statutory register was being inaccurately amended for individual pupils.

Mr Allison advised that he tried to explain to Person C that "this bit is just for the Trust" and that "all schools within our Trust were part of this dataset". Mr Allison stated that he did not know why she was so concerned that pupils working from home were on the Trust dataset, as this did not affect Person C's task at all. Mr Allison advised that he felt that Person C was complaining "just for the sake of it" and she did not understand what they were trying to achieve.

Mr Allison explained that Person C did not take him through what she was trying to say, she had just referred to another principal being sacked for falsifying the register, but he did not have any contextualisation of what she was trying to get at. Mr Allison advised

that “she referred to the fact that data leaked on to other registers” but again, this was not clear. Mr Allison accepted that he did make a sarcastic comment in response to Person C’s concerns about [redacted]. However, Mr Allison advised that he made this comment in order to make light of the situation as he thought it sounded preposterous.

Mr Allison also agreed that the conversation was very heated. He advised that Person C was speaking in a raised tone, and that she was also raising multiple concerns, including some relating to her job role, so he did not properly understand what her specific points were. Mr Allison accepted that the quality of the meeting was “poor” and it was not very productive. As a result, Mr Allison stated that he had not become aware during this conversation that pupils who were absent from school were being marked as present on the statutory attendance register.

The panel carefully considered the accounts of both Person C and Mr Allison. The panel noted that there were some inconsistencies in the bundle in respect of the timing of this particular meeting and what was discussed. In particular, the panel noted that in Person C’s witness statement to the TRA dated 4 April 2024, Person C refers to raising concerns in respect of the pupil attacking an elderly lady in a later meeting on 18 May 2021. However, the panel noted that in Person C’s investigatory interview on 26 May 2021, Person C described this conversation as all taking place on 22 April 2021. The panel found that the contemporaneous documents and notes of the investigatory interview were more reliable than Person C’s recent testimony, as these were taken from nearer the time. However, the panel was satisfied that, whilst there had been some inconsistencies in respect of the specific dates, the content of the complaints raised remained consistent throughout the entirety of Person C’s evidence.

The panel also found Person C’s account of the meeting on 22 April 2021 to be inherently probable. The panel noted that the WhatsApp messages to Witness F on 21 April 2021 were particularly compelling and demonstrated that Person C had pressing concerns that pupil marks were being changed on the attendance register. The panel felt that Person C’s concerns in these messages were clear, and the panel accepted that these would have been the same concerns raised to Mr Allison on 22 April 2021. Therefore, the panel did not find Mr Allison’s account, which was that he did not understand that Person C’s concerns related to the statutory attendance register, to be plausible. The panel accepted Person C’s account of this meeting over the account of Mr Allison. Overall, the panel had no reason to doubt Person C’s credibility.

The panel also noted that during this meeting, Person C had referred to the example of a [redacted], and that this had come from her WhatsApp exchange with Witness F the day before. The panel noted that Mr Allison had also accepted that this comment had been made, and so he clearly must have known that Person C was talking about individual pupils. The panel advised that this example, and Person C’s concerns relating to individual pupils (such as Pupils 4 and 5) would not be relevant if she was talking about the Trust data report, as the Trust data report did not relate to individual pupils.

As a result, the panel found it more likely than not that Person C's concerns were clear during this conversation and that Mr Allison was aware that she was referring to pupil marks being changed on the statutory attendance register. The panel noted that Mr Allison did not appear to take any action in relation to these concerns raised. The panel also noted that there were instances after this date where pupils were being marked as present when they were absent, and so this also demonstrated that no action had been taken as the practice continued.

The panel found this allegation proven.

**2. Further or alternatively, you failed to take any, or any adequate action in response to person C raising her concerns with you that children were being marked as present when they were not present in school, namely on or around:-**

**c. 18 May 2021;**

In her witness evidence, Person C advised that, on 17 May 2021, she had a meeting with Witness F to discuss the attendance marks of Pupil 27. Witness F also confirmed that this meeting took place in her evidence to the panel. Person C advised that she had identified Pupil 27 as having inaccurate attendance data and wanted to raise this specifically with Witness F. Person C advised that during her meeting with Witness F, they had identified that Pupil 27 had been marked as present when they were not in School. Person C advised that she changed the pupil's records back to absent, using the appropriate code, as the School would be writing to Pupil 27's mother about Pupil 27's attendance which would also include a copy of Pupil 27's attendance report. As a result, Person C advised that she wanted this report to be accurate. During this meeting with Witness F, Person C advised that Witness F had become aware of additional pupils who were being marked as present when they were absent, and Witness F strongly advised Person C to speak to Mr Allison.

Person C advised that, after this meeting with Witness F, she sent an email to Mr Allison on 18 May. The panel had sight of Person C's email to Mr Allison in the bundle dated 18 May 2021, which stated:

"Yesterday I had a meeting with [redacted] our [redacted]. During this meeting we discussed Pupil 27 as Pupil 27's attendance had been a concern in previous meetings. I spoke about Pupil 27's recent isolation and covid test but we agreed that [redacted] would send mum a letter as [Pupil 27's] attendance was still of concern.

Along with the letter, [redacted] needs a copy of the child's attendance report. On the report this showed that Pupil 27 was present when in fact [they were] absent. I explained to [redacted]. [redacted] strongly advised that we do not put the present mark down if a child is not physically present in school. She informed me that the Covid X codes should be used in this instance, as this does not affect the overall attendance.

I also want to bring it to your attention that previously two class teachers have put the present mark in themselves which meant me nor the office staff knew that the child wasn't in the school, which really concerns me as I feel it's my responsibility to make sure the registers are completed accurately and this also makes it difficult to track attendance .... .

In the email above, Person C also asked Mr Allison if they could discuss this further. In response to this email, on the same date, Mr Allison responded: "Pop and see me".

Person C advised that she did go and meet with Mr Allison that same day to discuss her concerns. Person C explained that Mr Allison had told her, "don't worry about it" and that "he would sort it". Mr Allison agreed that Person C had raised her concerns with him on 18 May 2021. Mr Allison also advised that he had previous discussions with Person C about attendance.

Mr Allison explained that, when Person C raised these concerns with him, his initial reaction was "how was this still happening" as he had believed that he had put an end to this practice on 4 May 2021 after he became aware that pupils who were absent were being marked as present on the attendance register.

Mr Allison advised that he could have explored this further with Person C during that meeting, in respect of what teachers were still marking pupils as present. However, Mr Allison advised that at that time he did not escalate it further with staff, as in "some cases he will still get a couple of incorrect attendance marks". However, Mr Allison accepted that, given he thought the previous issues had been resolved on or after 4 May 2021, he should have raised more concerns and identified which pupils were still being marked as present.

The panel noted that there was no evidence that Mr Allison took action at this point. However, the panel accepted that on 21 May 2021, three days after the date of the meeting on 18 May 2021, Mr Allison was asked to go on garden leave and so there was no opportunity for him to take any further action after this date.

The panel found this allegation proven.

### **3. Your conduct as may be found proven above at:**

- a. 1 and/or 2 above constituted a failure to adequately safeguard pupils;**

The panel considered that the attendance register is an important part of any school's safeguarding process. In particular, the panel noted that the school attendance system is set up to respond to pupils who do not attend school as expected, and to allow schools to take action where there is no reason for a pupil's absence, in order to safeguard those pupils and ensure that they are safely accounted for. The panel considered that, by

failing to adhere to the correct attendance policies and procedures, Mr Allison was not adequately providing a safe environment for pupils.

The panel also considered that, when pupils are marked as being present at school, they fall under the direct responsibility of the school. The school is then accountable and responsible for that child during that time. The panel noted that this was the case for the pupils in this instance that had been marked as present, and they fell under the responsibility of the School. However, the panel noted that as those pupils were in fact not in school, the School was unable to ensure that their safeguarding duties for those pupils were met. The panel noted that this posed a risk to the Trust, which was responsible for pupils who were recorded as being under its care on the legal register. The panel noted that there were certain pupils who were known to social services and required additional safeguarding measures. However, the School could not ensure that these measures were adequately in place when their attendance data was not accurate and their whereabouts not fully known.

The panel noted that Pupil 3, as an example, was marked as present even though [redacted]. However, the School did not know where the pupil was or what had happened to them. The present mark indicated that the pupil was under the direct supervision of the School as opposed to parental responsibility, but this was in fact not the case.

The panel also noted the concerns that has been raised by Person C in respect of fire safety. The panel agreed that pupils could have been put at significant risk, as if there was a fire alarm, children who had been incorrectly marked as present could not be accounted for safely, and staff and other adults could be put at risk searching for "missing" pupils who were never actually on site. The panel did note that Mr Allison had previously advised that he believed the attendance records would be up to date in the case of a fire, but the panel did not accept that this would have been the case.

The panel noted that whilst Witness A was aware of pupils not being physically present on site due to her role in monitoring pupil absences, this was not the case for class teachers or any other staff. Whilst Mr Allison advised that he knew the pupils were "at home doing work", they were "safe", and that "no harm ever came" of this, the panel noted that Mr Allison could not guarantee that this was the case and his actions did place those pupils at potential risk of harm. However, the panel also noted that there had been no evidence to suggest that pupils were harmed as a result of being marked present when they were absent.

The panel also noted that Mr Allison had failed to respond on multiple occasions to clear safeguarding concerns that had been raised by Witness A and Person C. The panel found that this constituted a failure to adequately safeguard pupils.

The panel found this allegation proven.

**3. Your conduct as may be found proven at:**

**b. 1 above was dishonest, in that you knowingly caused or allowed attendance records to be completed or amended in a way which you knew did not accurately reflect the attendance of one or more pupils.**

The panel considered the test as set out in the case of *Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd*. Firstly, the panel was required to ascertain the actual subjective state of Mr Allison's mind as to his knowledge or belief as to the facts.

Mr Allison denied that he had instructed Witness A to amend pupil marks in a dishonest matter, or to gain something from it. Mr Allison advised that he genuinely believed that he was only instructing Witness A to update the Trust data report, and he did not know that this meant that Witness A was also having to amend the statutory register.

Mr Allison explained to the panel that at the time of actions alleged, he was going through difficult circumstances in both a professional and personal capacity. In a professional capacity, Mr Allison advised that he felt an immense pressure to succeed as a school. Mr Allison also advised that he did not feel supported by the Trust or the School, and he did not feel as though he could raise any concerns. Mr Allison advised that he felt that he was being "watched and spied on" by the Trust, and he felt "targeted" by the senior Trust leaders.

From a personal point of view, Mr Allison also advised that he was experiencing medical issues and issues in his personal family life. [redacted]. Mr Allison advised that he received no support from the Trust for these issues, although he advised that he likely could have received support from them had he asked for it. Mr Allison advised that these events put him under considerable stress at the time. However, Mr Allison advised that he did not correlate this stress and these events to the decisions that he was making at the time.

During his evidence, Mr Allison accepted that knowingly instructing Witness A to mark pupils 3, 4, 5 and 22 as present when he knew they were absent was dishonest "in a roundabout way".

The panel acknowledged that Mr Allison would have been under considerable pressure at the time. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Allison no longer had a deputy headteacher and only had one Assistant Vice Principal rather than two, which meant that he was personally taking on more active responsibility at the School. The panel also acknowledged that Mr Allison was experiencing personal difficulties at the time which would have added to the stress caused by his role, during a time which was exceptionally challenging for all teaching staff, including Mr Allison.

However, the panel did not accept Mr Allison's account that he did not know that he was instructing Witness A to amend the statutory attendance register to mark pupils who were

absent as present. The panel found that Mr Allison knew he was being dishonest. In particular, the panel considered that Mr Allison was an experienced teacher and leader at the School, and he clearly knew what was right and wrong in respect of attendance registers and pupil marks. The panel noted that Mr Allison had been advised by Witness 1 that pupil attendance was low from March 2021 onwards. Subsequently, in response to the pupil attendance marks which from this point were being amended, the reported attendance began to improve noticeably. The panel found that Mr Allison knew that his instructions to Witness A affected individual pupil attendance. The panel noted that Mr Allison had advised that he thought the actions he took were justified, such as adding "Covid bubbles" back on to the Trust data. However, the panel found that Mr Allison had also decided to add other pupils into this same bracket (i.e., individual pupils who were isolating with Covid, or pupils who were absent to a medical appointment). The panel found that Mr Allison knew that he could not do this and he had not been instructed to do this. However, he continued to instruct Witness A to mark those pupils as present when he knew they were not on site. The panel found that Mr Allison was aware that he was asking Witness A to falsify attendance data, and mark pupils who were absent as present on the statutory attendance register.

The panel then went on to consider whether Mr Allison's state of mind was dishonest, applying the objective standards of the ordinary honest person. The panel considered that Mr Allison's conduct was dishonest and that an ordinary honest person would think that allowing and instructing a pupil to be marked as present at school when they were knowingly absent, was dishonest.

The panel found this allegation proven.

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

**2. Further or alternatively, you failed to take any, or any adequate action in response to person C raising her concerns with you that children were being marked as present when they were not present in school, namely on or around:-**

**b. 4 May 2021**

Mr Allison advised that he finally became aware that his instructions to Witness A had the unintended effect of amending the statutory register on 4 May 2021. In particular, Mr Allison advised that Person C came to speak to him on or around this date to explain that his instructions were causing Witness A to mark pupils who were absent as present.

Mr Allison advised that, at this point, he had become aware that some pupils had been inaccurately marked as present on the register when they were in fact absent. Mr Allison explained that whilst he did not understand Person C's concerns on previous occasions, on this particular occasion, Person C's concerns were more succinct, clear and

specifically referred to a “leak” from what he was asking Witness A to do to the other datasets and the “actual register”. Mr Allison advised that Person C provided a slightly more “focused reasonable description” of what her concerns were. Mr Allison advised that he did not know whether that “had become the norm”, or if it was the original point that Person C was trying to make. Mr Allison advised that after this meeting, he put a stop to the practice of marking absent pupils as present. Mr Allison advised that he instructed Witness A and Person C not to mark absent pupils as present, and he also called a staff attendance meeting to raise these concerns with members of staff, and to advise them that attendance registers must be accurate at all times.

The panel noted that Mr Allison had consistently referred to this discussion with Person C. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Allison had referred to this discussion with Person C on 4 May during his interview with Witness J. However, the panel noted that his reference to this discussion was vague in comparison to his recollection of his earlier meeting with Person C on 22 April 2021.

The panel also noted that there was no additional evidence to corroborate Mr Allison’s account of this discussion. In particular, Person C had no recollection of this meeting ever occurring on this date and advised that Mr Allison’s account was untrue. There is also no reference to this meeting in any other contemporaneous document in the bundle, including in Person C’s investigatory interview notes or in her witness statement to the TRA.

As a result, the panel found that it had insufficient evidence to find that, on the balance of probabilities, this discussion occurred on or around 4 May 2021. The panel was not satisfied that Person C made Mr Allison aware of her concerns on or around 4 May 2021. As a result, the panel could not go on to consider remainder of the allegation.

The panel found this allegation not proven.

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

Having found a number 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 Allison, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

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

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

The panel was also satisfied that the conduct of Mr Allison, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education ("KCSIE"). In particular, the panel noted that KCSIE required there to be appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. The panel considered that this would include taking appropriate action in respect of pupil attendance. The panel also noted that KCSIE required schools to have "appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from education". However, the panel noted that the School could not do this where its attendance data was inaccurate.

The panel also considered whether Mr Allison'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 offence of ... serious dishonesty was relevant.

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

In relation to whether Mr Allison'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 Allison'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

Allison was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that the offence of ... serious dishonesty was relevant.

The panel considered that Mr Allison's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher. In particular, the panel considered that the public would be concerned that Mr Allison was dishonest and had failed to adequately safeguard pupils by allowing absent pupils to be marked as present, and that he had also caused multiple teachers at the School to breach their safeguarding duties by incorrectly marking absent pupils as present.

For these reasons, the panel did find that Mr Allison's actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Having found the facts of particulars of allegations 1, 2(a) and (c), and 3 proved, the panel further found that Mr Allison's conduct amounted to both unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

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

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

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

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

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Allison, which involved serious findings of a failure to safeguard pupils, 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 Allison was not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.

The panel was also of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was present as the conduct found against

Mr Allison was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated, given that it had made serious findings of dishonesty.

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 Allison in the profession. The panel decided that there was a public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator and he is able to make a valuable contribution to the profession. However, in light of the serious findings made, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Allison in the profession since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard of conduct expected of a teacher and involved such clear breaches of KCSIE.

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 it had made serious findings of dishonesty which occurred on more than one occasion (albeit the panel accepted that these occasions were over a short one-month period). In particular, the panel found that Mr Allison had set out to deliberately deceive the Trust and his actions had also caused other members of staff to break the rules, despite their vocal objections to doing so. The panel noted that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position in this way should be viewed very seriously 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 Allison.

The panel took further account of the Advice, which indicates 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, ... ;
- abuse of position or trust ...;
- 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);
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions ..., especially where these behaviours have been repeated or had serious

consequences, or involved the coercion of another person to act in a way contrary to their own interests;

- collusion or concealment including:
  - any activity that involves knowingly substantiating another person's statements where they are known to be false;
  - failure to challenge inappropriate actions, defending inappropriate actions or concealing inappropriate actions;
  - encouraging others to break rules;
  - lying to prevent the identification of wrongdoing;
- knowingly manipulating a school's attendance or admission registers, or data to benefit and/or enhance a school's attendance ....

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.

Mr Allison's actions were found to be deliberate. There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Allison was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation.

The panel did not have sight of any independent evidence to show that Mr Allison demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct, or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. However, the panel accepted that Mr Allison's practice in School improvement had been acknowledged locally, and that he did have a previously good history and an unblemished previous record.

The panel acknowledged that Mr Allison's conduct occurred during a unique confluence of circumstances, which resulted in ongoing challenges. In particular, the panel heard that the School was attended by pupils from the top 10% of the most deprived communities in the country, and pupils had started to return to school post-Covid. Further, the panel noted that the senior leadership team at the School at the time was skeletal, for example, Mr Allison no longer had a deputy headteacher and only had one Assistant Vice Principal rather than two, which meant that he was personally taking on more active responsibility at the School. The panel also acknowledged that Mr Allison was under considerable pressure from the Trust, with regard to both pupil attendance (which was an ongoing challenge at the School) and his own performance.

The panel also acknowledged that at the time, Mr Allison was [redacted]. Whilst Mr Allison advised that he did not correlate these events to the decisions that he was making

at the time, the panel found that these circumstances would have contributed to the stress and pressure that Mr Allison was already under. The panel considered that Mr Allison did not appear to have received the appropriate support from the Trust, although also noted that Mr Allison had accepted that he could have asked for more support where it was needed. However, Mr Allison had also stated to the panel that he at times felt “spied on” by the Trust as a result of what was going on in his personal and private life. Overall, the panel acknowledged that whilst Mr Allison’s actions were plainly deliberate, they were likely predisposed by the significant pressure that he was under at the time.

The panel heard submissions from Mr Allison at this stage. Mr Allison explained that, in respect of the “select 4 or 5” pupils for whom he accepted that he had instructed other members of staff to inaccurately record them as present when they were absent, he “knew their areas of need very well” and he felt that at the time, “he was doing the very best for them and their families.” Mr Allison also explained that, at the time, there was a “monstrous amount of change happening” at the School. The panel accepted that Mr Allison no doubt had intentions to act in the best interests of the children and there was no malice in his actions, however, it also noted that given the very nature of the children who were vulnerable, Mr Allison should have recognised the need to keep accurate records and paperwork for these pupils.

The panel noted that Mr Allison did previously have a strong 22-year career which involved him working in schools as a senior leader. The panel noted that Mr Allison was promoted to Principal at the School during a very difficult climate, and that it was Witness I from the Trust that put him forward for this role. The panel heard from Mr Allison as to how he was “forced” into this role, however, the panel did not accept this (although they accepted that Mr Allison could have been provided with further support to enable him to uphold his standards as a leader). Mr Allison also explained to the panel that he was very unhappy whilst working as a headteacher and that he was “so far detached from what [he] actually loved about the profession”.

Mr Allison explained to the panel that he wanted to return to teaching, but only as a class teacher in a primary school. In particular, Mr Allison stated that he wanted to “make sure that the country’s poorest and most deprived children have the best education they can possibly have”. The panel found it commendable that Mr Allison was committed to supporting vulnerable children from deprived families.

The panel noted that Mr Allison had not been previously subject to disciplinary proceedings.

The panel considered evidence of Mr Allison’s good character. The panel noted that no character statements or references had been adduced in the hearing bundle. However, the panel had heard evidence from Witness I who advised that during the first two years of his tenure as Principal at the School, Mr Allison was “fabulous”. The panel also had sight of Witness I’s witness statement to the TRA dated 23 May 2024 in which she stated

that she considered Mr Allison to be a “very good teacher who would always take any constructive feedback on board.”

The panel had also heard from Mr Allison as to how he felt very secure from his successful Ofsted reports and feedback from parents that “he was well received and respected by the community”.

The panel considered that Mr Allison was very remorseful. In particular, Mr Allison stated to the panel that he apologised to pupils, staff and former colleagues as the School was not “a good environment to be in prior to [him] leaving”.

The panel went on to consider Mr Allison’s level of insight. The panel heard from Mr Allison as to how he had an understanding of how serious the issue is. However, Mr Allison also stated that he had still honestly believed that “the period of the registers, new attendance system and codes etc. wasn’t a deliberate conscious decision” and that it was a “very haphazard, rushed, probably unprofessional way of trying to meet demands of so many different things as an overstretched team.” Overall, the panel considered Mr Allison’s insight in the evidence he provided to be very limited. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Allison did not appear to have an understanding of the impact of his specific conduct on others, such as the School, other members of staff or the potential impact on pupils. Further, Mr Allison did not appear to have taken responsibility for his actions even though as Principal, he was directly responsible. The panel found that Mr Allison did not appear to have reflected on his behaviour and understood it. The panel noted that whilst Mr Allison appeared to be sincere, his insight was incomplete.

The panel noted from Mr Allison’s submissions that he had purposely isolated himself away from the education profession since his referral to the TRA. In particular, Mr Allison explained that he had purposely not applied to work in the teaching profession to avoid any school being “brought into the spotlight whilst this whole issue is resolved”. The panel noted that Mr Allison appeared to understand that his conduct may taint the profession and/or taint other schools. However, the panel found that he had not developed the necessary insight into his prior behaviour.

Mr Allison stated to the panel that he did want to return to teaching, but “only as a class teacher” in a primary school and not in any senior role. In particular, Mr Allison stated that he “needs those levels above [him] in order to think about going back into school.” The panel did not doubt his sincerity around teaching but felt concerned that Mr Allison appeared to require those “levels” above him in order to know what was right and wrong. The panel considered that Mr Allison needed to have that understanding within him before he returned to teaching.

Overall, the panel found that there was insufficient evidence of insight.

The panel noted that Mr Allison had positively engaged with the School's investigation, and with these proceedings.

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 Allison 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 Allison. The lack of insight in light of the serious findings against him of dishonesty and a failure to safeguard pupils was a significant factor in forming that opinion. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

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

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

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

One of these includes serious dishonesty.

The panel noted that it made a finding against Mr Allison of dishonesty in these proceedings. Whilst the panel noted that such behaviours weigh in favour of a longer review period, it noted that it should consider each case on its individual merits taking into account all the circumstances involved. In this instance, the panel found that the circumstances were so unique that they warranted a departure from the Advice. In particular:

Mr Allison's dishonesty occurred over a period of one month during an established 22-year career, with no previous issues. Mr Allison was Principal at the School during an

unprecedented time following the Covid-19 pandemic which placed considerable pressure on both him individually, and the School as a whole. Mr Allison was placed under pressure from the Trust in respect of pupil attendance. This was exacerbated by the fact that the School was attended by vulnerable pupils from one of the most deprived areas in the country. Mr Allison was also under considerable stress and pressure due to issues in his personal and private life.

Mr Allison was dismissed from the School in December 2021 for events that took place in April to May 2021. The panel noted that over 4.5 years had passed between these events and the conclusion of this case. The panel took into account the principle from the case of *Dr Bright Selvadurai Selverajan v GMC [2008] EWHC 182* and noted that in light of this delay, any longer review period above two years could be seen as overly punitive.

The panel had no evidence that would cause it to doubt Mr Allison's ability as an educator and felt it would be a shame to deprive the community of a teacher of his ability for any longer than absolutely necessary.

The panel noted whilst the findings involved a failure to safeguard pupils, there was no evidence that Mr Allison had caused any actual harm to pupils or that he was a direct risk to children. The panel also noted that Mr Allison wanted to continue to serve vulnerable children, which they found to his credit.

Overall, the panel noted that Mr Allison's deliberate disregard for policies, procedures and statutory guidance during this episode was a problematic feature of his conduct. The panel also noted that the main barrier to Mr Allison continuing to teach at present was his lack of insight since the events first occurred. For this reason, the panel could not be certain that there was no short-term risk of repetition. However, the panel considered that, for the reasons set out above, 2 years was a sufficient time for Mr Allison to reflect on the decision that has been made and develop the level of insight required to return to teaching. The panel considered that Mr Allison had the ability to make a significant contribution to the education sector in the future, and that he should be given an opportunity to demonstrate this to a panel in the near future, should he wish to do so.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period. The panel recommended a review period of 2 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 conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found allegation 2b not proven and I have therefore put that matter entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Shaun Conrad Allison should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 2 years.

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

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

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

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include findings of failing to adequately safeguard pupils and conduct that was dishonest.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct or conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Allison, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

“In the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Allison, which involved serious findings of a failure to safeguard pupils, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.”

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

I have also taken into account the panel’s comments on insight and remorse. The panel has found that Mr Allison was “very remorseful” but that there was “insufficient evidence of insight”. The panel has commented:

“Overall, the panel considered Mr Allison’s insight in the evidence he provided to be very limited. In particular, the panel noted that Mr Allison did not appear to have an understanding of the impact of his specific conduct on others, such as the School, other members of staff or the potential impact on pupils. Further, Mr Allison did not appear to have taken responsibility for his actions even though as Principal, he was directly responsible. The panel found that Mr Allison did not appear to have reflected on his behaviour and understood it. The panel noted that whilst Mr Allison appeared to be sincere, his insight was incomplete.”

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

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

“The panel considered that Mr Allison’s conduct could potentially damage the public’s perception of a teacher. In particular, the panel considered that the public would be concerned that Mr Allison was dishonest and had failed to adequately safeguard pupils by allowing absent pupils to be marked as present, and that he had also caused multiple teachers at the School to breach their safeguarding duties by incorrectly marking absent pupils as present.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of dishonesty in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

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

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

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of unacceptable professional conduct or 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 Allison himself. The panel has commented:

“The panel did not have sight of any independent evidence to show that Mr Allison demonstrated exceptionally high standards in both his personal and professional conduct, or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. However, the panel accepted that Mr Allison’s practice in School improvement had been acknowledged locally, and that he did have a previously good history and an unblemished previous record.”

“The panel considered evidence of Mr Allison’s good character. The panel noted that no character statements or references had been adduced in the hearing bundle. However, the panel had heard evidence from Witness I who advised that during the first two years of his tenure as Principal at the School, Mr Allison was “fabulous”. The panel also had sight of Witness I’s witness statement to the TRA dated 23 May 2024 in which she stated that she considered Mr Allison to be a “very good teacher who would always take any constructive feedback on board.””

The panel has also noted Mr Allison’s desire to return to the profession:

“Mr Allison explained to the panel that he wanted to return to teaching, but only as a class teacher in a primary school. In particular, Mr Allison stated that he wanted to “make sure that the country’s poorest and most deprived children have the best education they can possibly have”. The panel found it commendable that Mr Allison was committed to supporting vulnerable children from deprived families.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Allison 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 findings that the serious misconduct found proven included a failure to safeguard pupils and that Mr Allison’s insight was incomplete. The panel has said:

“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 Allison. The lack of insight in light of the serious findings against

him of dishonesty and a failure to safeguard pupils was a significant factor in forming that opinion.”

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

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

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended a 2 year review period.

I have noted the panel’s comment that, although the Advice indicates that in cases involving serious dishonesty the public interest will weigh in favour of a longer review period, in this case “circumstances were so unique that they warranted a departure from the Advice.”

I have also considered the panel’s comment:

“Overall, the panel noted that Mr Allison’s deliberate disregard for policies, procedures and statutory guidance during this episode was a problematic feature of his conduct. The panel also noted that the main barrier to Mr Allison continuing to teach at present was his lack of insight since the events first occurred. For this reason, the panel could not be certain that there was no short-term risk of repetition. However, the panel considered that, for the reasons set out above, two years was a sufficient time for Mr Allison to reflect on the decision that has been made and develop the level of insight required to return to teaching. The panel considered that Mr Allison had the ability to make a significant contribution to the education sector in the future, and that he should be given an opportunity to demonstrate this to a panel in the near future, should he wish to do so.”

I have considered whether a 2 year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that I agree with the panel that allowing a 2 year review period is sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are serious nature of the misconduct found as well as the lack of evidence of full insight and the risk this creates of repetition.

I consider therefore that a 2 year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

**This means that Mr Shaun Conrad Allison 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 16 December 2027, 2 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 Allison remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Allison 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 "David Oatley".

**Decision maker: David Oatley**

**Date: 10 December 2025**

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