



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Thomas Stanley: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

January 2026

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

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| Teacher: | Mr Thomas Stanley |
| TRA reference: | 23283 |
| Date of determination: | 27 January 2026 |
| Former employer: | Westfield School, Chorus Education Trust, Sheffield (“the School”) |

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 19 to 21 November 2025 and 27 January 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Stanley.

The panel members were Miss Faye Darlington (lay panellist), Mrs Melissa West (teacher panellist – in the chair) and Mrs Bernie Whittle (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Harry Taylor of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Lucy Kinder of Counsel.

Mr Stanley was present and was represented by Ms Diane Ellis (trade union representative) of NASUWT.

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

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of hearing dated 27 August 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Stanley was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst working as a Teacher of Technology at the School:

1. Between on or around April 2023 to 28 June 2023, he did not act appropriately and/or his behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil A, in that he:
 - a) Said “you have lovely eyes and they are your best feature” or words to that effect;
 - b) Said he feels he has “a connection” with Pupil A and/or Pupil B or words to that effect;
 - c) On one or more occasions, he placed one or more of his hands on Pupil A’s shoulders;
 - d) Said “why don’t you speak to me anymore” or words to that effect; and/or
 - e) Told Pupil A that he had a crush on Pupil A’s mother.
2. On or around June 2023, he did not act appropriately and/or his behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil B, in that he:
 - a) Asked Pupil B “who did your hair today?” or words to that effect;
 - b) Said “I’m still waiting to plait your hair” or words to that effect;
 - c) Said “your hair is lovely” or words to that effect;
 - d) On one or more occasions, stroked and/or played with Pupil B’s hair during a lesson and/or put one of more of his hands on her shoulders;
 - e) Said “I could get lost in those eyes” or words to that effect;
 - f) Said he feels he has “a connection” with Pupil A and/or Pupil B or words to that effect; and/or
 - g) Told Pupil B that he had a crush on Pupil A’s mother.
3. On or around June 2023, he did not act appropriately and/or his behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil D, in that he:

- a) Said “have you straightened your hair, it looks nice” or words to that effect; and/or
- b) Said “we are mates aren’t we” or words to that effect.

Mr Stanley admitted allegations 1(d), 1(e), 2(e), 2(g). He did not admit the other allegations.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and list of key people – pages 3 to 4

Section 2: Notice of hearing and response – pages 5 to 11

Section 3: Witness statements – pages 12 to 22

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 23 to 238

Section 5: Teacher’s documents – pages 239 to 252

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the witness statement of Witness 3 which was provided late and consisted of 3 pages, as well as a number of exhibits that were already in the main bundle which the panel had received.

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

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

Witnesses

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

Pupil A

Witness 2 – [REDACTED]

Mr Stanley also gave oral evidence and called no additional witnesses.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

On 1 September 2022 Mr Stanley commenced employment as a teacher of technology at the School. In June 2023 the School received concerns from pupils, who had said that Mr Stanley had made inappropriate comments towards them. The School subsequently investigated the allegations and, on or around 30 June 2023, notified the Local Authority Designated Officer (“LADO”).

On 24 August 2023 Mr Stanley resigned from the School. His last day of employment at the School was 31 August 2023.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

- 1. Between on or around April 2023 to 28 June 2023, you did not act appropriately and/or your behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil A, in that you:**

- e) Told Pupil A that you had a crush on Pupil A’s mother.**

Mr Stanley admitted this allegation in his response to the notice of hearing, his written witness statement, and in oral testimony. Mr Stanley explained to the panel that the chronology of events of the DT lesson on 28 June 2023 were, broadly, as follows.

Mr Stanley noticed Pupil A lying on the floor, laughing and giggling. He did not know why she was doing this. Mr Stanley explained to the panel that, in the context of the overall behaviour of students in the School, this was a very low level disruption incident. As such, he did not feel it necessary to report it formally. He gave his view that Pupil A was usually a good student; describing her as a confident and vocal individual. Mr Stanley asked Pupil A why she was on the floor and he asked her to get up. Mr Stanley was unsure of why Pupil A then left the classroom but agreed that it could have been to go to the toilet, as Pupil A confirmed in her evidence. Mr Stanley stated to the panel that when Pupil A had left the classroom, Pupil B had asked him why he did not punish Pupil A, and then repeatedly asked him “do you have a crush on Pupil A?”. Mr Stanley felt that Pupil B was effectively goading him for a reaction. Mr Stanley explained that he tried to deflect Pupil B’s questions by saying “no, [I don’t have a crush on Pupil A] I have a crush on her mum”. Mr Stanley made this comment to Pupil B in front of the other students in the

class, who Mr Stanley described as being shocked. Mr Stanley explained that he immediately recognised this was an inappropriate comment to make. In response Pupil B said to Mr Stanley “I’m going to go to [the headteacher] and get you done”. Pupil A then returned to the classroom, at which point it appears to be accepted by the parties that Mr Stanley notified Pupil A of what he had said.

The panel also heard evidence from Pupil A in relation to this allegation. Pupil A’s account largely supported the account given by Mr Stanley, albeit that Pupil A was not present in the classroom when he initially made the comment to Pupil B. Pupil A’s evidence was that she did not recall lying on the floor as Mr Stanley had alleged. In the panel’s view it is not material whether or not Pupil A was on the floor in the build up to the comment being made; the agreed fact is that the comment was made by Mr Stanley.

Pupil B did not attend to give witness evidence, nor did she provide a written witness statement. The only evidence provided by Pupil B was the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. The panel decided to admit this as hearsay evidence but carefully considered what weight to attach to it in respect of this allegation. This evidence was not sole and decisive in respect of this allegation. It sought only to add further context to the allegation which Mr Stanley admitted in his own evidence. The panel did not attach significant weight to Pupil B’s account for this reason.

In the panel’s view, the chronology of events Mr Stanley described in respect of this allegation was more likely than not to be correct. Mr Stanley’s own evidence was particularly persuasive to the panel, which found that he had recognised the inappropriateness of the comment and how that likely made [REDACTED].

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation proved.

2. On or around June 2023, you did not act appropriately and/or your behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil B, in that you:

e) Said “I could get lost in those eyes” or words to that effect;

Pupil B’s account is recorded in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. In that report, Pupil B stated “[Mr Stanley] came up to me and looked in my eyes and said I could get lost in those eyes”. Pupil B alleged that this occurred in the same [REDACTED] that Mr Stanley had made a comment about Pupil A’s mother, [REDACTED].

Pupil B did not attend to give witness evidence, nor did she provide a written witness statement. The only evidence provided by Pupil B was the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. The panel decided to admit this as hearsay evidence but carefully considered what weight to attach to it in respect of this allegation.

The panel was not provided with any other documentary evidence supporting this allegation. However, in his witness evidence, Mr Stanley agreed to having made this

comment (or words to the effect of the same), albeit not when she alleged it had occurred.

In oral evidence, Mr Stanley provided more detail to the panel. He explained that when the allegation was first put to him he had to think about when this might have happened. He denied that it happened in June 2023 but did recall a time in an ICT lesson in April 2023 when this may have happened. As Mr Stanley recalled, Pupil B was being disruptive in class. Mr Stanley explained that this was not unusual for Pupil B, [REDACTED]. Mr Stanley recalled in particular that he did not have the best rapport with Pupil B and would often need to have her removed from the classroom when [REDACTED]. On this occasion, [REDACTED]. Another student asked Mr Stanley whether he “hated Pupil B”. Mr Stanley explained to the panel that he tried to diffuse the situation with humour and responded by making an ill-judged, sarcastic comment, namely words to the effect of the alleged comment: “[REDACTED]”.

Mr Stanley volunteered this information of his own volition during the School’s investigation and based on the evidence available to the panel, Mr Stanley’s account has been consistent throughout the School’s investigation and the TRA proceedings on this allegation.

The panel is satisfied that, given the comment was made, it is not material whether it was made in April or June 2023. For the purposes of this allegation “in or around June” includes April of the same year.

On balance, the panel is satisfied that the comment was more than likely made in jest and that it was an ill-judged remark, rather than a comment which formed part of a pattern of unacceptable behaviour. However, the panel is also satisfied that this was inappropriate and outside of the professional boundaries expected of Mr Stanley as a teacher.

For the above reasons, the panel finds this allegation proved.

g) Told Pupil B that you had a crush on Pupil A’s mother.

Mr Stanley admitted this allegation in his response to the notice of hearing, his written witness statement, and in oral testimony. Mr Stanley explained to the panel that the chronology of events of the [REDACTED] were, broadly, as follows.

Mr Stanley noticed Pupil A lying on the floor, laughing and giggling. He did not know why she was doing this. Mr Stanley explained to the panel that, in the context of the overall behaviour of students in the School, this was a very low level disruption incident. As such, he did not feel it necessary to report it formally. He gave his view that Pupil A was usually a good student; describing her as a confident and vocal individual. Mr Stanley asked Pupil A why she was on the floor and he asked her to get up. Mr Stanley was unsure of why Pupil A then left the classroom but agreed that it could have been to go to

the toilet, as Pupil A confirmed in her evidence. Mr Stanley stated to the panel that when Pupil A had left the classroom, Pupil B had asked him why he did not punish Pupil A, and then repeatedly asked him “do you have a crush on Pupil A?”. Mr Stanley felt that Pupil B was effectively goading him for a reaction. Mr Stanley explained that he tried to deflect Pupil B’s questions by saying “no, [I don’t have a crush on Pupil A] I have a crush on her mum”. Mr Stanley made this comment to Pupil B in front of the other students in the class, who Mr Stanley described as being shocked. Mr Stanley explained that he immediately recognised this was an inappropriate comment to make. In response Pupil B said to Mr Stanley “I’m going to go to [the headteacher] and get you done”. Pupil A then returned to the classroom, at which point it appears to be accepted by the parties that Mr Stanley notified Pupil A of what he had said.

The panel also heard evidence from Pupil A in relation to this allegation. Pupil A’s account largely supported the account given by Mr Stanley, albeit that Pupil A was not present in the classroom when he initially made the comment to Pupil B. Pupil A’s evidence was that she did not recall lying on the floor as Mr Stanley had alleged. In the panel’s view it is not material whether or not Pupil A was on the floor in the build up to the comment being made; the agreed fact is that the comment was made by Mr Stanley.

Pupil B did not attend to give witness evidence, nor did she provide a written witness statement. The only evidence provided by Pupil B was the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. The panel decided to admit this as hearsay evidence but carefully considered what weight to attach to it in respect of this allegation. This evidence was not sole and decisive in respect of this allegation. There were notable differences in the accounts given by Mr Stanley and Pupil B. Pupil B alleged that another student had asked Mr Stanley whether he had “a crush on Pupil A”. Pupil B also does not mention that Mr Stanley had been asked that question repeatedly. In contrast, Mr Stanley told the panel that it was Pupil B that had asked him the question, and she had done so numerous times in quick succession. Without the ability to question Pupil B on this point, the panel is unable to attach significant weight to Pupil B’s account and prefers the evidence of Mr Stanley.

In the panel’s view, the chronology of events Mr Stanley described in respect of this allegation was more likely than not to be correct. Mr Stanley’s own evidence was particularly persuasive to the panel, which found that he had recognised the inappropriateness of the comment and how that likely made [REDACTED].

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation proved.

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

1. Between on or around April 2023 to 28 June 2023, you did not act appropriately and/or your behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil A, in that you:

a) Said “you have lovely eyes and they are your best feature” or words to that effect;

In oral testimony Mr Stanley denied this allegation. However, he did explain to the panel in his oral evidence that he believed he did tell Pupil A, in an [REDACTED] in which she was using a computer, that [REDACTED]. He said he recalled this because [REDACTED]. He strongly denied saying the word ‘lovely’ or describing Pupil A’s [REDACTED]. The panel also had regard to Pupil A’s witness evidence, both her written statement and oral testimony, as well as the account she gave to the School in the student incident report dated 29 June 2023. The panel was provided a copy of this in the bundle. There seemed to be no dispute that the alleged incident took place in an ICT lesson in April 2023. The dispute centred around whether Mr Stanley used the alleged phrase or words to that effect. The only key evidence the panel was provided with in relation to this allegation was that which has been set out above. The panel understands from Mr Stanley’s and Pupil A’s evidence that the alleged incident took place in a classroom, with other students present. The TRA has not provided witness accounts from the other students who were present at the time. Based on the accounts given by Mr Stanley and Pupil A, the panel finds, on balance, Mr Stanley’s evidence to be more credible on the basis of the rationale relating to the computer screen [REDACTED]. In contrast, Pupil A’s account set out in the student incident report was that Mr Stanley made the alleged comment unprovoked and out of context to the conversation about football that they were having. The panel is not satisfied that the TRA has discharged its burden of proof in respect of this allegation.

For the above reasons, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

b) Said you feel you have “a connection” with Pupil A and/or Pupil B or words to that effect;

Pupil B did not provide a written witness statement, nor did they attend the hearing to provide oral testimony. The only account from Pupil B that was provided to the panel was found in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. This was a document that the investigating teacher scribed whilst speaking with Pupil B. The panel decided to admit the document as hearsay but was careful to consider what weight to attach to the document. Pupil B’s account was that Mr Stanley “came back to me and Pupil A and said you know what Pupil A me and Pupil B have a connection”.

Pupil A's account of this alleged incident was different to Pupil B's. In Pupil A's witness evidence, and in the account she provided within the student incident report dated 29 June 2023, Pupil A describes the incident as: Mr Stanley "told me and my friend Pupil B that he had a connection with us".

Mr Stanley denied making this comment or words to the same effect to Pupil A and/or Pupil B. There are allegations that Mr Stanley has admitted to which, in the panel's view, are perhaps more concerning than this alleged comment. For example, the panel has found that the comment Mr Stanley made about Pupil A's mother, which he admitted to making, was wholly inappropriate. In the panel's view, this was a more serious comment than saying he "has a connection" with students. The panel found Mr Stanley to be a credible witness, on the basis that he had already admitted to other facts for which he explained he understood he would bear the consequences. His denial of this particular allegation therefore seemed credible. The inconsistencies between the accounts of Pupil A and Pupil B were also persuasive to the panel. As the panel was not able to question Pupil B on the inconsistencies, it decided to attach little weight to Pupil B's account. The TRA has not provided sufficient evidence for the panel to be persuaded, on the balance of probabilities, that the allegation was proved.

For the reasons above, the panel finds the allegation not proved.

c) On one or more occasions, you placed one or more of your hands on Pupil A's shoulders;

Mr Stanley denied this allegation. In oral evidence, Pupil A described this incident as lasting from "2 seconds" upwards whilst Mr Stanley discussed work with her and leant over her table. Pupil A said in her account that she had seen Mr Stanley do the same to Pupil B.

Pupil B did not provide a written witness statement, nor did they attend the hearing to provide oral testimony. The only account from Pupil B that was provided to the panel was found in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. This was a document that the investigating teacher scribed whilst speaking with Pupil B. The panel decided to admit the document as hearsay but was careful to consider what weight to attach to the document.

Pupil B's account of Mr Stanley allegedly touching shoulders did not refer to him having touched Pupil A's shoulders. Pupil B's student incident report therefore did not assist the panel further with assessing this allegation.

The evidence in respect of this allegation was therefore limited to Pupil A's student incident report dated 29 June 2023 and her written and oral witness evidence.

The panel considered Mr Stanley's consistency and clarity, particularly in light of admissions made by Mr Stanley in respect of other allegations. It also considered oral evidence Mr Stanley gave to the panel in which he said that he was initially not told by

the School which student had alleged he had put his hands on their shoulders. Mr Stanley then, of his own volition, thought about what this allegation may have related to and he could only recall one occasion when he had asked a student (not Pupil A) to move aside by gently touching their shoulder. It transpired that this was not connected to Pupil A and not the allegation being made. Mr Stanley denies this allegation and has maintained that position throughout the School's investigation and the TRA proceedings. The panel finds Mr Stanley's evidence to be credible and is not persuaded by the limited evidence it has been provided with that this allegation is founded.

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

d) Said “why don't you speak to me anymore” or words to that effect.

Pupil A explained in oral evidence that Mr Stanley approached her and asked her why she did not speak to him anymore. The rationale for Mr Stanley having made this comment was not clarified by Pupil A, although the panel draws no inference from this.

Mr Stanley admitted to asking Pupil A why she did not speak to him anymore but he explained in oral evidence that the context was important in understanding why he did so. Mr Stanley explained that Pupil A was a confident student with a good friendship group. She would often say hello to Mr Stanley when the two crossed paths in School. Mr Stanley further explained that Pupil A tended to walk into Mr Stanley's lessons, which she was not a part of, and talk to fellow students. Mr Stanley asked her to stop this practice but Pupil A had continued. During a parents' evening in or around May 2023, he brought this to Pupil A's parents' attention. It is not disputed by either party that Pupil A was in attendance at that parents' evening, alongside her parents. Pupil A did not recall Mr Stanley raising this concern at the parents' evening. Mr Stanley's version of events was that after that parents' evening, Pupil A no longer greeted him in and around School as she had done before. Mr Stanley explained that he took enjoyment when other students greeted him and felt saddened that Pupil A had stopped doing this. He accepted that, on one occasion, he asked her why she no longer spoke to him.

The panel finds Mr Stanley's account to be credible. The panel also finds that the chronology presented by Pupil A is unlikely to be correct – Pupil A alleged that this comment was made by Mr Stanley after the DT lesson on 28 June 2023, whereas Mr Stanley was, almost immediately after that date, no longer present at the School. The panel finds that, on the balance of probabilities, the more likely scenario is that the comment was made after the parents' evening in or around May 2023.

Whilst the panel finds that Mr Stanley did make this comment, it is not persuaded that it was inappropriate or a breach of professional boundaries.

For the above reasons, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

2. On or around June 2023, you did not act appropriately and/or your behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil B, in that you:

a) Asked Pupil B “who did your hair today?” or words to that effect;

The only evidence the panel had relating to this allegation is Pupil B’s account, recorded in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. Pupil B did not provide a written statement for this hearing and did not attend to give evidence. The panel decided to admit the student incident report as hearsay evidence, but gave careful consideration as to what weight to attach to that document. In respect of this allegation, this evidence was the sole evidence before the panel.

The allegation made by Pupil B is that Mr Stanley asked her *““who did your hair today?” I said “my mum”. He said “It’s not ‘luggy’ or owt”*.

In oral evidence, Mr Stanley denied this allegation. On other occasions, Mr Stanley had tried to think of possible scenarios that may have been misconstrued, to be helpful to the panel. However, there were some allegations that he was not able to recollect the alleged event or an event similar to the one described. This was the case with this allegation. Mr Stanley also explained that he would not use the phrase ‘luggy or owt’. The panel was persuaded by Mr Stanley’s witness evidence and, in the absence of any further evidence, the panel found that the TRA had not discharged its burden of proof in respect of this allegation.

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

b) Said “I’m still waiting to plait your hair” or words to that effect;

Pupil A referred to this alleged incident in her student incident report dated 29 June 2023, her written witness evidence and her oral evidence. Pupil A described that Mr Stanley had said that he wanted to plait Pupil B’s hair. Pupil A described how Mr Stanley had made the alleged comment approximately ten times, over an unspecified time period. In oral evidence Pupil A clarified that this happened when Mr Stanley was taking the class register. [REDACTED].

Pupil B did not attend as a witness, nor did she provide a witness statement. Her account was recorded in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023, which the panel decided to admit as hearsay evidence. The panel carefully considered what weight to attach to the document in respect of this allegation. The incident report does not include reference to this allegation and the only evidence in respect of this allegation is from Pupil A. The panel therefore did not feel it necessary to add weight to this document in respect of this allegation.

As Pupil B did not attend the hearing, the panel was unable to ask her questions about this allegation, which would have been preferable as they were the alleged recipient of

the comment. Mr Stanley, who was present and able to give oral evidence to the panel, denied this allegation. He explained his perspective that he had made an inappropriate comment relating to having a crush on Pupil A's mother in a lesson on 28 June 2023, in response to which Pupil B said "Sir, I'm going to go to [the headteacher] and get you done". Mr Stanley explained that he was subsequently approached by Witness 2 who asked whether Mr Stanley had made the comment, which he admitted to. What then followed, Mr Stanley said in evidence, is that a number of further allegations including this one were raised against him by a number of students, all within the same friendship group, which he had not heard before. Mr Stanley did recall discussing plaited hair with Pupil B, but he denied that he said "I'm still waiting to plait your hair".

Mr Stanley gave evidence that Pupil B was a challenging student and Mr Stanley would try to manage her behaviour as he felt appropriate, such as deflecting comments or trying to use humour to diffuse a situation. However, he categorically denied this allegation. The panel found Mr Stanley's evidence to be credible. The panel also found that, in the absence of any other evidence, the TRA had not discharged its burden of proof.

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

c) Said "your hair is lovely" or words to that effect;

Pupil B did not attend to give witness evidence, nor did she provide a written witness statement. The only evidence provided by Pupil B was the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. The panel decided to admit this as hearsay evidence but carefully considered what weight to attach to it in respect of this allegation.

The only reference to this allegation is found in Pupil B's incident report. Pupil B alleged "*then he laughed and started touching my hair and my shoulders and going your hair is lovely*". Pupil B alleged this happened on 28 June 2023, in the same lesson as Mr Stanley having made a comment about Pupil A's mother. Mr Stanley denied this allegation in his evidence and in light of other findings the panel has made, the panel considered his evidence to be credible.

The panel has not had the opportunity to question Pupil B about this allegation and it has attached little weight to the incident report for this reason.

For the above reasons, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

d) On one or more occasions, stroked and/or played with Pupil B's hair during a lesson and/or put one of more of your hands on her shoulders;

In her student incident report dated 29 June 2023 and in her witness evidence, Pupil A alleged that Mr Stanley had put his hands on Pupil B's shoulders while talking to her. Pupil A also alleged in her incident report that Mr Stanley briefly touched Pupil B's hair.

The panel has not had an opportunity to ask Pupil B questions about this allegation because Pupil B did not attend the hearing to provide evidence. It is therefore not confident in attaching much weight to Pupil B's student incident report dated 30 June 2023, which the panel decided to admit as hearsay evidence. In that report, Pupil B alleged "*then he laughed and started touching my hair and my shoulders and going your hair is lovely*" and "*he stroked my hair and put his hand on my shoulders to look over my work*". Pupil B alleged this happened on 28 June 2023, in the same lesson as Mr Stanley having made a comment about Pupil A's mother.

The panel noted that there were inconsistencies in the accounts given by Pupil A and Pupil B. Pupil A alleged that Mr Stanley had leaned over her to look at her work and placed his hand on her shoulder and held it there whilst he was talking to her. She alleged it happened two times to her. Pupil A also alleged that she had seen Mr Stanley do this to Pupil B, including briefly touching her hair. In contrast, Pupil B alleged that Mr Stanley had touched Pupil B's hair and shoulders immediately after making a comment to her and Pupil A about having a connection with Pupil B. Further, Pupil A alleged that this conduct from Mr Stanley occurred in multiple lessons, whereas Pupil B only alleged it had taken place in the DT lesson on 28 June 2023. The panel's view is that these differences in description is significant and casts doubt on the persuasiveness of the allegation and the evidence supporting it.

The panel was not provided with witness accounts of other students who may have witnessed this alleged incident. There was also no evidence to suggest that the School had interviewed students who were not on Pupil B's table in the classroom, to see whether any other student had witnessed the alleged incident.

The panel considered Mr Stanley's consistency and clarity, particularly in light of admissions made by Mr Stanley in respect of other allegations. Mr Stanley denies this allegation and has maintained that position throughout the School's investigation and the TRA proceedings. The panel finds Mr Stanley's evidence to be credible and is not persuaded by the limited evidence it has been provided with that this allegation is founded.

For the reasons above, the panel finds this allegation not proved.

f) Said you feel you have "a connection" with Pupil A and/or Pupil B or words to that effect; and/or

Pupil B did not provide a written witness statement, nor did they attend the hearing to provide oral testimony. The only account from Pupil B that was provided to the panel was found in the student incident report dated 30 June 2023. This was a document that the investigating teacher scribed whilst speaking with Pupil B. The panel decided to admit the document as hearsay but was careful to consider what weight to attach to the document.

Pupil B's account was that Mr Stanley "*came back to me and Pupil A and said you know what Pupil A me and Pupil B have a connection*".

Pupil A's account of this alleged incident is different to Pupil B's. In her witness evidence, and in the account she provided within the student incident report dated 29 June 2023, Pupil A described the incident as: Mr Stanley "*told me and my friend Pupil B that he had a connection with us*".

Mr Stanley denied making this comment or words to the same effect to Pupil A and/or Pupil B. There are allegations that Mr Stanley has admitted to which, in the panel's view, are perhaps more concerning than this alleged comment. For example, the panel has found that the comment Mr Stanley made about Pupil A's mother, which he admitted to making, was wholly inappropriate. In the panel's view, this was a more serious comment than saying he "has a connection" with students. The panel found Mr Stanley to be a credible witness, on the basis that he had already admitted to other facts for which he explained he understood he would bear the consequences. His denial of this particular allegation therefore seemed credible. The inconsistencies between the accounts of Pupil A and Pupil B were also persuasive to the panel. As the panel was not able to question Pupil B on the inconsistencies, it decided to attach little weight to Pupil B's account. The TRA has not provided sufficient evidence for the panel to be persuaded, on the balance of probabilities, that the allegation was proved.

For the reasons above, the panel finds the allegation not proved.

3. On or around June 2023, you did not act appropriately and/or your behaviour breached professional boundaries in relation to Pupil D, in that you:

a) Said "have you straightened your hair, it looks nice" or words to that effect; and/or

b) Said "we are mates aren't we" or words to that effect.

The panel decided not to admit the student incident report dated 29 June 2023 from Pupil D as hearsay evidence. It was the sole and decisive evidence in relation to these allegations as Pupil D had not submitted a written witness statement, having failed to engage with the TRA throughout the professional conduct panel process.

In his oral evidence, Mr Stanley did not recall having made the alleged comments but he said that it was possible. Notwithstanding that, Mr Stanley denied that such comments would have been inappropriate and/or a breach of his professional boundaries. There was no other account provided to the panel that related to these allegations. The panel considers that the TRA has not discharged its burden of proof in relation to these allegations.

For the reasons above, the panel finds these allegations not proved.

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 Stanley, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- 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 Stanley, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”).

The panel considered that Mr Stanley was in breach of the following provisions:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

The panel was not satisfied that the conduct of Mr Stanley, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel also considered whether Mr Stanley’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 none of these offences was relevant.

Whilst the panel considered that Mr Stanley's conduct, in relation to the allegations found proven, did fall short of the standards expected of a teacher, the panel did not find that his conduct fell significantly short of those standards.

For these reasons, the panel was not satisfied that the conduct of Mr Stanley amounted to misconduct of a serious nature which fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

Accordingly, the panel was not satisfied that Mr Stanley was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Stanley'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 Stanley'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 Stanley was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

The panel considered that Mr Stanley's conduct, namely making inappropriate comments about Pupil B's eyes and Pupil A's mother could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher. In making these comments, Mr Stanley failed to act as a role model. In particular, Mr Stanley made the comment in relation to Pupil A's mother in front of the whole class, which shocked the other students and caused Pupil A embarrassment.

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

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of 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 protection of other members of the public, 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 Stanley, which involved making inappropriate comments to pupils in school, there was a strong public interest consideration in relation to the wellbeing of pupils and other members of the public not being subject to improper remarks.

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

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

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr Stanley 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 was enthusiastic about continuing to contribute towards the profession. Additionally, whilst the panel found that Mr Stanley's conduct was such that could bring the profession into disrepute, it did not find that his conduct was a serious departure from the professional standards expected of him as a teacher.

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.

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 Stanley.

The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proved. In the list of such behaviours, the panel did not consider any of them to be relevant. Mr Stanley's conduct

was a departure from the standards expected of him, but the panel accepted that the situations arose because of errors of judgement from Mr Stanley.

The panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

Mr Stanley's actions were deliberate. This was accepted by him in witness evidence and the panel was satisfied that his actions were not inadvertent, albeit they were mistakes on his part.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Stanley was acting under duress.

In oral evidence, Mr Stanley explained that he believed he was a good teacher and had helped improve students' results, as well as being good at building rapport with students. Witness 2 confirmed in oral evidence that prior to the incidents, there were no concerns about Mr Stanley's conduct. The panel was provided with some evidence of Mr Stanley's ability as an educator and no doubt had been cast on his ability. Mr Stanley explained in evidence that there had been one occasion during a previous employment when he had made a comment towards a student that was inappropriate but that no further action had been taken. Other than this, the panel was not provided with any evidence to suggest that Mr Stanley did not previously have a good employment history.

[REDACTED]

Mr Stanley has demonstrated significant insight and remorse for his actions and he has done so since the allegations were initially raised in 2023. The panel accepts that he recognised he had made an error of judgement, and the severity of that error, as soon as he had made the comment about having a crush on Pupil A's mother in class in June 2023. He also accepted having made a comment about Pupil B's [REDACTED] in another lesson earlier in the year, and the panel found him to be credible and genuine in his remorse.

The panel was particularly struck by the gravity which Mr Stanley himself attributed to some of the allegations that had been made against him. This was not necessarily the panel's own view but it demonstrated that Mr Stanley had seriously reflected on his actions and understood that they were inappropriate in an education setting. The panel was also persuaded by Mr Stanley having taken time away from teaching to reflect whilst these proceedings were ongoing, which further demonstrated that Mr Stanley had insight and remorse.

In light of the panel's view about Mr Stanley's insight and remorse, the panel was also satisfied that the risk of him repeating this behaviour was low.

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, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the behaviour were at the less serious end of the possible spectrum and, having considered all the circumstances, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has recommended that the findings of conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.
- 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 Stanley involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

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 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 Stanley, 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 safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, “...*there was a strong public interest consideration in relation to the wellbeing of pupils and other members of the public not being subject to improper remarks.*” A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

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

“Mr Stanley has demonstrated significant insight and remorse for his actions and he has done so since the allegations were initially raised in 2023. The panel accepts that he recognised he had made an error of judgement, and the severity of that error, as soon as he had made the comment about having a crush on Pupil A’s mother in class in June 2023. He also accepted having made a comment about Pupil B’s [REDACTED] in another lesson earlier in the year, and the panel found him to be credible and genuine in his remorse.

The panel was particularly struck by the gravity which Mr Stanley himself attributed to some of the allegations that had been made against him. This was not necessarily the panel’s own view but it demonstrated that Mr Stanley had seriously reflected on his actions and understood that they were inappropriate in an education setting. The panel was also persuaded by Mr Stanley having taken time away from teaching to reflect whilst these proceedings were ongoing, which further demonstrated that Mr Stanley had insight and remorse”.

The panel has also commented that *“In light of the panel’s view about Mr Stanley’s insight and remorse, the panel was also satisfied that the risk of him repeating this behaviour was low”.*

I have 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 observe, “...*public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Stanley were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct 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 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 Stanley himself. The panel comment “*Witness 2 confirmed in oral evidence that prior to the incidents, there were no concerns about Mr Stanley’s conduct. The panel was provided with some evidence of Mr Stanley’s ability as an educator and no doubt had been cast on his ability.*”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Stanley 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 balancing the panel’s findings on the risk of repetition of the behaviour against the public interest, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.



Decision maker: Stuart Blomfield

Date: 28 January 2026

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