



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr William Ellis: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

January 2026

Contents

Introduction	3
Allegations	3
Summary of evidence	4
Documents	4
Statement of agreed facts	4
Decision and reasons	5
Findings of fact	5
Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State	10
Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State	14

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

Teacher:	Mr William Ellis
Teacher ref number:	9135902
Teacher date of birth:	18 September 1968
TRA reference:	24739
Date of determination:	29 January 2026
Former employer:	Lewes Old Grammar School, Lewes, East Sussex

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 29 January 2026 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Ellis.

The panel members were Mrs Jane Gotschel (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Peter Whitelock (lay panellist) and Ms Amy Barrow (lay panellist).

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

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

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of meeting dated 10 April 2025.

It was alleged that Williams Ellis is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a Geography Teacher at Lewes Old Grammar School (“the School”):

1. Between approximately 1 September 1995 and [REDACTED], he engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Person A, [REDACTED], in that:

- a. On one or more occasions he kissed Person A;
- b. On one or more occasions he met with Person A after school hours;
- c. He told Person A that she was the kind of girl he liked, or words to that effect.

2. On or after [REDACTED], he engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Person A, a [REDACTED] pupil.

3. His actions at paragraph 1a and/or 1b and/or 1c and/or 2 were sexually motivated.

Mr Ellis admitted the allegations and that this conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology, key person list and anonymised individual List – pages 4 to 6

Section 2: Notice of referral, response and notice of meeting– pages 7 to 17

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 18 to 21

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 22 to 106

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

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

Statement of agreed facts

The panel considered a statement of agreed facts which was signed by Mr Ellis on 25 June 2025.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

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

The teacher had been employed at Lewes Old Grammar School, Lewes, East Sussex (“the School”) since 1 September 1995 as a teacher of geography. In September 2024 historic allegations came to light that Mr Ellis had been involved in an inappropriate relationship with a pupil. Mr Ellis ceased employment with the school on 10 October 2024. The headteacher submitted a referral to the TRA to consider the matter.

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:

It was alleged that you are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a Geography Teacher at Lewes Old Grammar School (“the School”):

1. Between approximately 1 September 1995 and [REDACTED], you engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Person A, [REDACTED], in that:

a. On one or more occasions you kissed Person A;

In response to the notice of meeting Mr Ellis admitted the allegation on 15 April 2025 and provided a statement of agreed facts signed by him on 25 June 2025.

The panel noted three different pieces of evidence in the documentation that it was provided with:

- i) Notes from an investigation meeting within the School with Mr Ellis on 9 September 2024
- ii) Notes of disciplinary hearing meeting on 30 September 2024

- iii) Notes made by Person B in 2001 understood to be a member of teaching staff at the time.

The first of these documents indicated there was admittance from Mr Ellis that he had kissed Person A:

“Is it possible that you kissed her at the [REDACTED]

Yes, it is possible. I don't remember the situation, I remember a lot of people dancing and it is possible but I don't recall”

In the second document Mr Ellis again accepted there were two kisses although the timeline was less clear.

Document 3 stated: “ I have been told that William drank too much at the [REDACTED] and kissed Person A...” The panel took into account that document 3 was hearsay and applied less weight to this evidence.

Mr Ellis stated in his disciplinary hearing “...ashamed about my actions, my younger self...It's not how professional teachers act”

The panel found that this allegation was proven on the balance of probabilities. The panel considered that this was an inappropriate relationship given the requirements to maintain professional boundaries between a pupil and a teacher which were in place at that time.

b. On one or more occasions you met with Person A after school hours;

In response to the notice of meeting Mr Ellis admitted the allegation on 15 April 2025 and provided a statement of agreed facts signed by him on 25 June 2025.

The panel was provided with notes from an investigation meeting within the School with Mr Ellis on 9 September 2024.

The panel considered that Mr Ellis did admit during the School's investigation to meeting with Person A after school. In particular, the notes record:

“Did you see her outside the school?

No, other than for when the kiss occurred in public

So we are now aware of a kiss at [REDACTED], a kiss at [REDACTED]...

I don't know what happened at [REDACTED].

When did you meet her there?

After [REDACTED]. I was stupid I should not have met her there

At what time was this?

5-7 evening”

Given the various admissions made at various stages of the school process and the TRA proceedings, the panel found that this allegation was proven on the balance of probabilities. The panel considered that this was an inappropriate relationship given the requirements to maintain professional boundaries between a pupil and a teacher which were in place at that time.

2. On or after [REDACTED], you engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Person A, a [REDACTED] Pupil.

In response to the Notice of Hearing, Mr Ellis admitted the allegation on 15 April 2025 and provided a statement of agreed facts signed by him on 25 June 2025.

The panel noted that there was evidence presented that demonstrated that Mr Ellis had admitted to continuing to meet with Person A after they left the School. There was reference to him meeting her at [REDACTED] "half a dozen" times and that they made him tea.

The panel were satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that there was a relationship between Mr Ellis and Person A and then turned their mind to whether that relationship was inappropriate.

The panel considered that the relationship between Mr Ellis and Person A had started with Mr Ellis when he was in a position of trust and he had continued to seek that relationship after Person A finished School. The panel found that this was an abuse of that trust.

The panel found this allegation proven on the balance of probabilities.

3. Your actions at paragraph 1a and/or 1b and/or 1c and/or 2 were sexually motivated.

In response to the notice of meeting Mr Ellis admitted the allegation on 15 April 2025 and provided a statement of agreed facts signed by him on 25 June 2025.

In relation to 1a, the panel considered that a kiss was inherently sexual. In addition, even if there was ultimately no sexual activity between Mr Ellis and Person A, the panel considered that a kiss was a stepping stone on the path to a sexual relationship.

In relation to 1b, the panel was provided with conflicting evidence to suggest when he had kissed Person A and therefore the panel could not conclude that Mr Ellis intended or had indeed kissed Person A when he had met with her after School.

In relation to 2, the panel considered on the balance of probabilities that the relationship was sexually motivated. There was no evidence that Mr Ellis and Person A were meeting

up over a common interest or otherwise. Their meetings took place over a number of months having shared a number of kisses. On this basis the panel found that Mr Ellis' conduct in relation to allegation 2 was sexually motivated.

Therefore the panel found this allegation proven in relation to 1a and 2 only.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you not proved, for these reasons:

c. You told Person A that she was the kind of girl you liked, or words to that effect.

In response to the notice of meeting Mr Ellis admitted the allegation on 15 April 2025 and provided a statement of agreed facts signed by him on 25 June 2025.

The panel only saw one piece of evidence in the documentation in relation to this which was notes made by Person B in 2001 (understood to be a member of teaching staff). This stated " *I have been told that William drank too much at [REDACTED] and kissed Person A one of the students telling her that she was just the kind of girl that he liked*".

The panel took into account that this evidence was hearsay and applied less weight to this evidence, since given its age, it could not be tested. In addition, the panel considered that the passage of time may have affected Mr Ellis' recollection.

Given the lack of evidence and despite Mr Ellis' admission, the panel did not find this allegation proven on the balance of probabilities.

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

Having found some 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 teacher's conduct took place prior to the coming into force of the Teachers' Standards. Accordingly, the panel had regard to its knowledge and experience of teaching standards at the time of the conduct. Having done so, it considered that maintaining the boundaries between pupils and teachers was an established standard at the time. Indeed, the panel considered that "in loco parentis" has been a fundamental principle for many years meaning that a teacher assumes some of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of a parent regarding a child's care, supervision, and safety. It requires

acting as a "reasonable and prudent parent" to protect the child's welfare while they are under supervision. The panel considered that this would have been common knowledge to Mr Ellis at the time of the conduct. The panel took account of the evidence which seemed to suggest that the school had indeed sought to take some remedial action at the time which led the panel to conclude that the standards of the time would prevent a pupil and teacher relationship.

The panel also considered whether Mr Ellis' 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.

The panel determined the conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct given in particular the fact that Mr Ellis stated in the disciplinary hearing "I took great care not to be seen with her because I've been given a warning". And when asked by whom he replied "Members of staff..." This was further corroborated by the hearsay evidence of the colleague who wrote the note in 2001. The note referenced that Mr Ellis had been warned to stay away from Person A given she appeared to have an infatuation with him and that he was moved from her class yet Mr Ellis still continued to pursue a relationship and did not heed the advice. The panel found that this was a breach of professional boundaries and that, even whilst knowing engaging with a pupil and then engaging in relationship with a former pupil was inappropriate, he continued to do so. It appeared that not only did he not heed the advice and guidelines of the time but also continued in his conduct.

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

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

The panel noted that the advice is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that panels consider to be "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute".

The panel considered that Mr Ellis' conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher as they consider he failed to observe proper and professional boundaries with a pupil and former pupil and, as previously detailed, consciously ignored warnings not to engage. The panel found that Mr Ellis' conduct was sexually motivated and the panel considered the public's perception of a teacher would be damaged due to this, therefore bringing the teaching profession into disrepute.

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

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of unacceptable professional conduct/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 Ellis, which involved the pursuit of a sexually motivated relationship with a pupil and then subsequent former pupil, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of kissing a pupil and an inappropriate relationship with a former pupil.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Ellis 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 Ellis 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 Ellis 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 and clearly had made a valuable contribution to the profession.

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

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

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

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving pupils);
- an abuse of any trust, knowledge, or influence gained through their professional position in order to advance a romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil or former pupil;
- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors.

Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

There was no evidence that Mr Ellis' actions were not deliberate.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Ellis was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation

Mr Ellis did have a previously good history, and had contributed to the education sector. Further the panel found that the evidence suggested that Mr Ellis had a subsequently unblemished career.

The panel noted the five character references provided. The panel observed that it was clear that Mr Ellis had shown teaching proficiency:

“He gives generously of his time and has a knack for bringing out the best in young people.”

“Will is an excellent teacher, his subject knowledge is immense and students respected him for that. He is also able to adapt his teaching to suit every student in the classroom. He is willing to invest time in supporting students in school outside of lesson time.

In all the time I was Will's colleague he has never stepped out of line with students, was well-liked and respected by his colleagues and having been a pupil at the School himself, was an advocate for all that the School stood for”.

“Ten years later, I still remember one such incident that occurred when I was in Year 9 crystal clearly. Anyone who had the dubious pleasure of encountering me as a teenager would tell you that I was prone to bursts of intense schoolboy arrogance. One morning, during form time with Will, I decided to stand up and tell my form that the school council (which I was a part of), was ‘useless’, ‘badly run’ and that I believed I could ‘do a better job myself’. Will's response was firm yet insightful, humbling me in a way that still plays through my mind whenever I fear myself getting a little bit big for my boots even today. His approach demonstrated a key principle of teaching, which I try and model in my own practise; that discipline can only be only effective and have a lasting impact when you've taken the time to build a positive relationship with the student beforehand. Will taught me that, and much more, during my time as a student at LOGS”.

The panel also saw a reference to Mr Ellis achieving good GCSE and A-Level results with his students.

The panel turned its mind to insight and remorse shown. The panel noted that there was a character reference [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The panel found that much of the evidence that stemmed directly from Mr Ellis, such as the information he provided in relation to his appeal dated 1 November 2024, appeared to be reflecting only on the impact to himself and did not demonstrate insight as to the impact of his actions on Person A.

The panel considered that throughout the investigation processes, Mr Ellis appeared to be evasive and seeking to diminish his actions and downplay the conduct, for example within Mr Ellis' information for appeal document on 1 November 2024 he states:

“The case was closed and the decision was taken for me to continue working for the school with no further action. It is unclear as to why additional sanctions have been imposed now. This information has been available on my record for over 20 years, for senior leadership and safeguarding leads to access. I therefore believe this goes against the principles of a fair hearing”.

and

“I suggest that the subsequent years of loyal service that I have given to LOGS is representative of my character, integrity and professionalism. I trust that my character and career as a teacher may be defined by these years”.

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 Ellis 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 Ellis. The lack of insight 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.

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

The panel considered the testimonials helpful and was mindful of these when considering whether to set a review period. It also noted that there had been no indication of any repeat of such behaviour to date.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period after 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 1(c) not proven and found that allegation 3 was not proven in relation to allegation 1(b). I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

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

The panel has noted that the conduct in this case took place before the Teachers' Standards came into force, and has commented:

“Accordingly, the panel had regard to its knowledge and experience of teaching standards at the time of the conduct. Having done so, it considered that

maintaining the boundaries between pupils and teachers was an established standard at the time. Indeed, the panel considered that “in loco parentis” has been a fundamental principle for many years meaning that a teacher assumes some of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of a parent regarding a child’s care, supervision, and safety. It requires acting as a “reasonable and prudent parent” to protect the child’s welfare while they are under supervision. The panel considered that this would have been common knowledge to Mr Ellis at the time of the conduct. The panel took account of the evidence which seemed to suggest that the school had indeed sought to take some remedial action at the time which led the panel to conclude that the standards of the time would prevent a pupil and teacher relationship.”

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of engaging in an inappropriate relationship with a pupil and sexually motivated conduct.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Ellis, 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 Ellis, which involved the pursuit of a sexually motivated relationship with a pupil and then subsequent former pupil, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of kissing a pupil and an inappropriate relationship with a former pupil.”

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 noted a character reference from [REDACTED]

However, the panel has commented:

“The panel found that much of the evidence that stemmed directly from Mr Ellis, such as the information he provided in relation to his appeal dated 1 November 2024, appeared to be reflecting only on the impact to himself and did not demonstrate insight as to the impact of his actions on Person A.”

The panel has also commented that it “considered that throughout the investigation processes, Mr Ellis appeared to be evasive and seeking to diminish his actions and downplay the conduct”.

In my judgement the limited insight shown by Mr Ellis means that there could be some risk of the repetition of this behaviour. 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 Ellis’ conduct could potentially damage the public’s perception of a teacher as they consider he failed to observe proper and professional boundaries with a pupil and former pupil and, as previously detailed, consciously ignored warnings not to engage. The panel found that Mr Ellis’ conduct was sexually motivated and the panel considered the public’s perception of a teacher would be damaged due to this, therefore bringing the teaching profession into disrepute.”

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

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

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

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Ellis himself. The panel has commented:

“Mr Ellis did have a previously good history, and had contributed to the education sector. Further the panel found that the evidence suggested that Mr Ellis had a subsequently unblemished career.”

The panel has also noted 5 character references which attested to Mr Ellis' ability as a teacher and his conduct. These included the comment "Will is an excellent teacher, his subject knowledge is immense and students respected him for that. He is also able to adapt his teaching to suit every student in the classroom. He is willing to invest time in supporting students in school outside of lesson time."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Ellis from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel's comments concerning the seriousness of the misconduct it has found proven, including:

"The panel found that this was a breach of professional boundaries and that, even whilst knowing engaging with a pupil and then engaging in relationship with a former pupil was inappropriate, he continued to do so. It appeared that not only did he not heed the advice and guidelines of the time but also continued in his conduct."

The panel has observed that the following behaviour was relevant in this case:

"sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position".

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel's comment that the lack of insight was a significant factor in forming its opinion that a prohibition was proportionate and appropriate.

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

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

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

The panel has taken the view that this case does not involve characteristics that the Advice indicates would weigh in favour of not offering a review period or a longer review period.

I have also considered the panel's comment:

“The panel considered the testimonials helpful and was mindful of these when considering whether to set a review period. It also noted that there had been no indication of any repeat of such behaviour to date.”

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. I have come to a different conclusion to the panel on the application of the Advice to this case. The panel has rightly noted that this case involves “sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual’s professional position” which the Advice states is behaviour incompatible with being a teacher. The Advice also states that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period where a case involves “serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons”. This is a case that involves a teacher exploiting their professional position to engage in an inappropriate relationship with a person who was a pupil and recent pupil, which included sexually motivated conduct.

Whilst I have noted the panel’s references to positive character references and there being no indication of a repeat of the behaviour to date, in my view these factors do not outweigh the seriousness of the finding of sexually motivated conduct. I am also particularly mindful of the panel’s finding concerning Mr Ellis’ lack of insight into the impact of his behaviour on the pupil which in my opinion means that there could be some risk of repetition.

In my judgement, a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found proven including sexually motivated conduct, the lack of full insight and the consequent potential risk of repetition, and the potential damage to the public’s perception of the teaching profession.

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

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', written in a cursive style.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 2 February 2026

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