



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Roberto Martellini: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

March 2026

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

Teacher:	Mr Roberto Martellini
TRA reference:	24082
Date of determination:	19 March 2026
Former employer:	Coopers School, Bromley (albeit the conduct allegedly occurred whilst Mr Martellini was employed at Ark Alexandra Academy, Hastings)

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 16 March 2026 to 19 March 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Roberto Martellini.

The panel members were Mr Paul Hawkins (lay panellist – in the chair), Miss Claire Lane (teacher panellist) and Mr Ben Wilkinson (former teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Luisa Gibbons of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Ella Crine of Three Raymond Buildings, instructed by Kingsley Napley LLP solicitors.

Mr Martellini was present and was not represented.

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 proceedings dated 12 December 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Martellini was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a deputy head PE teacher at Ark Alexandra Academy:

1. On or around 31 March 2024, he was in possession of a Class A drug, namely cocaine.
2. As a result of his conduct at paragraph 1, he accepted a police caution on 31 March 2024.
3. On or around 11 February 2022, he slapped and/or hit Colleague A.

Mr Martellini admitted allegations 1 and 2 but denied allegation 3. Mr Martellini denied that he was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute with respect to the conduct he admitted as set out in allegations 1 and 2.

[REDACTED]

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 persons list – pages 5 to 7

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 7 to 15

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 16 to 34

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 35 to 196

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 197 to 212

The panel also received a recording of Mr Martellini's police interview which formed part of the panel bundle.

In addition, the panel agreed to accept a 1 page screenshot of a text message received by Mr Martellini from Colleague A on 3 June 2023 at 13:25

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. The panel also listened to the recording of Mr Martellini's police interview in advance of the hearing.

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

Witnesses

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

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Witness C – [REDACTED]

Witness D – [REDACTED]

Mr Martellini also gave oral evidence.

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 August 2016, Mr Martellini commenced employment at Ark Alexandra Academy ("the School") as a physical education teacher.

On 11 February 2022, an alleged incident occurred outside of the school environment. It was subsequently reported and the School conducted an investigation. On 24 March 2022, a disciplinary hearing took place.

On 31 March 2024, Mr Martellini was arrested. The School was informed by the LADO. Mr Martellini disclosed the matter to the School on 15 April 2024 on return from the Easter holidays. The School conducted an investigation.

On 20 May 2024, a disciplinary hearing took place. Mr Martellini ceased to be employed at the School.

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:

Whilst working as a deputy head PE teacher at Ark Alexandra Academy:

- 1. On or around 31 March 2024, you were in possession of a Class A drug, namely cocaine.**
- 2. As a result of your conduct at paragraph 1, you accepted a police caution on 31 March 2024.**

Mr Martellini admitted both allegations. The panel was provided with a police caution signed by Mr Martellini on 31 March 2024. In signing the caution, Mr Martellini declared that he admitted the offence “set out above”. The offence identified above on the caution stated “possess a controlled drug of Class A – Cocaine”. The panel noted that Mr Martellini had made a clear admission of guilt in respect of the offence for which the caution was given. This carried significant weight in the panel’s consideration, and was consistent with Mr Martellini’s continued admission of the allegations.

The panel was provided with the recording of Mr Martellini’s police interview following his arrest outside the stadium where he had intended to attend a football match. From the recording of the police interview, Mr Martellini’s interview with the School and Mr Martellini’s oral evidence the panel ascertained that Mr Martellini had travelled to Manchester for the football match with friends and they had some drinks in a pub before the game. On the way to the football ground, Mr Martellini’s [REDACTED] gave him a bag of cocaine and Mr Martellini put it in his pocket just before they turned the corner to the entrance to the stadium. At the entrance, there was a line of police officers and sniffer dogs. The sniffer dog identified Mr Martellini as being of interest and a police officer asked if Mr Martellini had anything on him. Mr Martellini answered “yes” and handed the small bag of cocaine over. Mr Martellini was arrested and taken to a police station where he was interviewed and subsequently cautioned.

The panel found allegations 1 and 2 proven.

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

- 3. On or around 11 February 2022, he slapped and/or hit Colleague A.**

Mr Martellini denied this allegation.

In considering this allegation the panel had regard to:

- the interview notes that were taken during the School’s investigation from Colleague A, Witness C, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Mr Martellini;

- witness statements provided for the present TRA proceedings from Colleague A and Witness C;
- written accounts provided by Mr Martellini; and
- the oral evidence of Witness C and Mr Martellini.

[REDACTED] and they had met up in the day or days before a “night out” on 11 February 2022.

An anonymous member of staff reported to the school that Mr Martellini had slapped Colleague A during the night out. That person was not present at the time this “slap” was alleged to have occurred. Witness B was appointed as investigating officer and interviewed Colleague A, Witness C, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Mr Martellini. All were present during the social gathering after school on 11 February 2022, immediately before the half term break, which involved visits to multiple pubs. During those interviews, Colleague A, Witness C and [REDACTED] stated that Mr Martellini had “slapped” Colleague A. [REDACTED] did not see this and Mr Martellini denied it. The panel carefully examined the various accounts given to establish if the evidence supported that it was more likely than not that Mr Martellini had “slapped and/or hit” Colleague A.

In the notes of Colleague A’s interview for the School’s investigation, she stated that a group of staff went to The Harrow and Mr Martellini had been there, which she wasn’t expecting. She stated that Mr Martellini was rude in his interactions with her. She stated that she and some of the others had moved to a different pub to “try and lose” Mr Martellini but he followed. She stated that Mr Martellini had “barged in” and accused Colleague A of [REDACTED] and slapped Colleague A across the face. Colleague A said that after they left The Harrow, they went to a bar opposite The Anchor and she hadn’t felt comfortable there with Mr Martellini present so she, Witness C, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] left and went to The Anchor but Mr Martellini followed them. She stated that Witness C had seen what happened but [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did not. Colleague A also stated that another member of staff, [REDACTED], had been at The Harrow but dropped them off in the Old Town and left, and that [REDACTED] knew what had happened because Witness C had told her. Colleague A stated that it had been a “slap”, that it was “not proper hard”, but it was degrading and in public.

In Colleague A’s witness statement for these TRA proceedings, Colleague A stated that she had gone out with some staff members from the School and Mr Martellini had been in one of the pubs they attended and that she had not expected for him to be there. She stated that they had started the evening in the Harrow Inn and then went to the Old Town in Hastings. She stated that, during the evening, Mr Martellini was making a point of trying to sit next to her and talk to her, and that she told Witness C that he was making her feel uncomfortable. She stated that she and Witness C had decided to go outside so that they could get away from Mr Martellini. Colleague A stated that when they moved onto another pub a short distance away, Mr Martellini approached her in the doorway and

accused her of [REDACTED]. She stated that Mr Martellini raised his voice. She stated that as they were heading into the pub, in the doorway, Mr Martellini “slapped me around the face. He did not hit me very hard, however, he did slap me”. She stated that she felt his actions made her look stupid and feel embarrassed. She stated that the barman had seen what Mr Martellini had done and immediately threw him out, not allowing him to enter the pub. She stated that [REDACTED] went outside the pub to speak with Mr Martellini, that they had a confrontation outside the pub and [REDACTED] explained to Mr Martellini that he was not having sexual relations with Colleague A.

Colleague A stated that she did not report Mr Martellini’s actions to the police because she had “encountered worse behaviour”. She stated that she did not have the opportunity to report the concerns to the School as when she returned to work after the half term break, another colleague had already reported it.

In the notes of Witness C’s interview as part of the School’s investigation, the panel noted that she referred to a group of staff having gone out for the evening at the end of term, and that the group consisted of Colleague A, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Mr Martellini. She stated that they went to The Harrow and then the Old Town, where they went into The Pump House and then The Anchor. She stated that as they were going into The Anchor she saw Mr Martellini slap Colleague A on the face. She stated that she was behind Colleague A so couldn’t tell how hard the slap was. Witness C subsequently provided a clarification to the notes saying that she had been stood behind/ to the side of Mr Martellini so could not see how hard the slap was. She stated that she did not know why Mr Martellini had done this. She stated that she was with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] behind Colleague A. She stated that Mr Martellini was ushered outside by the licensees. She stated that they went inside, but she went back outside to check on Mr Martellini and [REDACTED] and brought [REDACTED] back into the pub. She stated that she did not recall any heated discussions between Colleague A and Mr Martellini. She stated that she thought Colleague A and Mr Martellini [REDACTED] She stated that the incident had occurred in the doorway, possibly slightly outside.

In Witness C’s statement for these TRA proceedings, Witness C provided the same information as she had provided to the School as to the members of the group who had gone out and that this included Mr Martellini. The panel noted that this was at odds with Colleague A’s account that she had not expected Mr Martellini to be there. In oral evidence Witness C stated that she could not recall who had invited Mr Martellini. She stated that he had not been out on many social occasions between colleagues, but she had not been particularly surprised to see him.

Witness C said that she recalled seeing Colleague A and Mr Martellini talking to each other in The Harrow and The Pump House but could not recall any tension between them. She also said that she did not recall observing anything “concerning” happening between Colleague A and Mr Martellini prior to this incident and they did not seem to be

arguing that she could remember. The panel again noted that this was at odds with Colleague A having said that she had told Witness C that she felt uncomfortable and that she had left a pub with Witness C to get away from Mr Martellini. In oral evidence, Witness C stated that she could not recall Colleague A saying that Mr Martellini was making her feel uncomfortable. She stated that she remembered going outside for some fresh air at one point. She did not make any reference to having done this so that Colleague A could get away from Mr Martellini.

Witness C stated that she had been walking with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and that Mr Martellini and Colleague A had been walking together ahead of them. The panel noted that this was inconsistent with Colleague A's account of Mr Martellini approaching her in the doorway. Witness C stated that as Colleague A and Mr Martellini arrived at the door way of the pub, it had been in the doorway, just prior to entering that Mr Martellini slapped Colleague A across the face. Witness C stated that she did not recall seeing Mr Martellini raise his arm, nor did she hear a loud sound or see any red marks on Colleague A's face. She stated that Mr Martellini hit Colleague A around the face with an open hand that hit her on her cheek.

Witness C confirmed that everyone had been consuming alcohol that evening. In oral evidence she stated that she was unable to remember how much alcohol she had consumed but that she was able to recollect the events of the evening. She stated that she believed that Colleague A and Mr Martellini were also drinking.

In the notes of [REDACTED] interview as part of the School's investigation, he confirmed that Colleague A, Witness C, Mr Martellini and [REDACTED] and himself were in the group that went to the Old Town. Again, this contradicted Colleague A's account that Mr Martellini had not been part of the group. [REDACTED] stated that he had had a few drinks so found it hard to remember. He stated that he didn't see it, but had been told that when they were in one of the pubs, Mr Martellini was aggressive towards Colleague A and slapped her. He stated that he thought he had been outside when this happened, as when he walked in Colleague A told him what had happened.

In the notes of [REDACTED] interview as part of the School's investigation, he stated that in the doorway of The Anchor, Mr Martellini slapped Colleague A. He stated that Mr Martellini was then removed from the pub, although he wasn't clear who had removed him. He stated that Witness C would have seen what happened. He stated that they went into the pub in a line. He stated that [REDACTED] was behind him so he may not have seen anything. He stated that he had been behind Witness C.

In the notes of Mr Martellini's interview as part of the School's investigation he stated that [REDACTED] He stated that this had been part of the reason for his [REDACTED]. He stated that they had started speaking again about a month before. He described that "it had been pretty toxic". On the evening, he stated that everything had been fine, that it had been a nice night. He referred to having "probably had a few too many". He stated

that [REDACTED] had told him that [REDACTED] and, that night, [REDACTED] had told him that [REDACTED]. Mr Martellini stated that he decided to go and confront Colleague A. He stated that it had become quite heated at this point and they started to come out of the pub. He stated that Colleague A had ignored him and had her head down, and that he had tried to get Colleague A to look at him. He stated that when she didn't, he "put his hand up" and Colleague A remarked that he had tried to slap her. Mr Martellini stated that he remembered saying that he hadn't. He stated that he talked with Colleague A about four or five times over the half-term and she did not say that Mr Martellini had hurt her, nor did she saying anything about it, although they had decided to not speak with each other again.

Mr Martellini's evidence has remained consistent in that he had been trying to get Colleague A to look at him. He stated in written representations for this hearing that due to alcohol intake and misunderstanding his intentions, Colleague A may have thought he wanted to slap her, but that he had just wanted her to look at him. He stated that he understood he should never have put his hands on her, without her consent, but [REDACTED] with Colleague A as recently as the night before. He stated that he would not have touched her face if he had known this would have hurt, or made her feel threatened.

In oral evidence, Mr Martellini stated that Colleague A had asked him to attend that evening. He stated that the night before [REDACTED], and had probably mentioned they were going out the next evening. He stated that he went home after school and changed, and then met up with the group at the pub. He stated that [REDACTED] had taken them to the Old Town in her car. He stated that they went to The Pumphouse first for a while and then decided to move onto another pub. He stated that they went inside and Colleague A, Witness C and [REDACTED] sat at a table whilst he went back outside for a cigarette with [REDACTED]. He stated that it was then that [REDACTED] had said that [REDACTED]. He stated that he went into the pub to confront her and the barman asked him to leave. He stated that he left and [REDACTED] followed him outside. He stated that Colleague A came out and he had tried to get her to look at him, and this was when she said, "oh, you've slapped me". He stated that his recollection was that Witness C and [REDACTED] were still inside the pub. He stated that he was annoyed and walked off to go home. He stated that he hadn't thought about the incident much until he was back at school and that no one had spoken to him about it at the time. He stated that everyone had been under the influence of alcohol and by that time, assuming they had had one or two drinks in each pub they would have consumed around 5 or 6 alcoholic drinks. He stated that he remembered reaching up to Colleague A's face to lift her chin to look at him so that she could explain what was going on.

Colleague A, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were not called to give evidence and there was no opportunity to test their evidence. This affected the weight that could be placed upon their evidence. The panel was concerned that there were significant inconsistencies

between the accounts, and appreciated that the consumption of alcohol may well have impacted upon perceptions at the time and recollections. The panel also noted that the incident must have been discussed in the days that followed, otherwise a person who was not present at the time would not have been able to report the matter to the School. The panel noted the key inconsistencies were as follows:

Colleague A's assertion that Mr Martellini was making her feel uncomfortable was not supported by Witness C;

Colleague A's assertion that she was not expecting Mr Martellini to be there was not supported by the rest of the group;

Colleague A referred to Mr Martellini "barging in" which was consistent with Mr Martellini's account of going inside the pub to confront Colleague A and then having the discussion with her in the doorway. In another account, Colleague A spoke of this incident happening on the way into the pub. [REDACTED] referred to having gone out with Mr Martellini to check he was alright. This was consistent with Mr Martellini's account that they had been inside the pub when the initial confrontation between him and Colleague A occurred, and that he had been removed from the pub.

Witness C stated that she did not see Mr Martellini raise his arm or any noise of a slap. This would have been consistent with Mr Martellini's explanation that he had tried to lift her chin for her to look at him.

Due to the inconsistencies, the panel considered that Mr Martellini's account was more credible and coherent.

The panel noted that of those who indicated they had seen the slap, there was no evidence of any immediate reaction to support Colleague A's safety or to challenge Mr Martellini's behaviour. Witness C was also unable to recall any discussion between herself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] about what she stated she had seen, despite her stating that she was walking with them at the time.

The panel therefore considered that there was insufficient evidence to find it more probable than not that Mr Martellini had slapped and/or hit Colleague A as the accounts were too inconsistent, the panel was not able to test all of the accounts and it was clear that discussions had taken place in the week before the incident was reported which introduced the possibility of the evidence being tainted. The panel therefore found this allegation not proven.

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

Having found allegations 1 and 2 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 Martellini, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Martellini 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
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including... the rule of law...
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach....

The panel noted that there was evidence that the School’s Professional Conduct and Expectations policy required that “staff stay within the law at all times” and “behave in a way that promotes the Academy, never.. behaving in a way that may be interpreted as perceived as offensive towards our Academy or bringing the academy into disrepute”. The panel considered that Mr Martellini had breached these requirements.

The panel was not satisfied that the conduct of Mr Martellini, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”) or Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel also considered whether Mr Martellini’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 possession, supply or production of class A drugs was relevant.

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

However, the panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting. The panel did not consider that a single incident of possession of cocaine affected the way he fulfilled his teaching role given there was no evidence of habitual or repeated use. The panel also did not consider that it may lead to pupils being exposed to or influenced by the behaviour in a harmful way. The panel noted the horror that Mr Martellini stated that he experienced upon his arrest, given his immediate appreciation for the consequences upon his career, and in those circumstances, the panel did not consider that Mr Martellini was likely to promote the use of drugs to pupils.

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

In relation to whether Mr Martellini'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 Martellini'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 Martellini was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that the offence of possession, supply or production of class A drugs was relevant. The panel noted that 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 conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the public's perception of Mr Martellini as a teacher.

The panel considered that Mr Martellini's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Martellini'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 the maintenance of public confidence in the profession to be relevant in this case.

The panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Martellini were not treated seriously when regulating the conduct of the profession.

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 Martellini in the profession. The panel decided that there was a public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since there was considerable evidence of his abilities as an educator and he is able to make and has 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 a high 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 Martellini.

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;
- the commission of a serious criminal offence, including those that resulted in a conviction or caution, paying particular attention to offences that are 'relevant matters' for the purposes of the Police Act 1997 and criminal record disclosures; and
- actions or behaviours that ...undermine fundamental British values of ..., the rule of law...

Although 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 Martellini's actions were not deliberate. Mr Martellini knew what was in the bag when he was offered it and chose to put it in his pocket.

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

Mr Martellini did have a previously good history in that had not been the subject of any previous regulatory orders. He had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his professional conduct and that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel noted from the referees that Mr Martellini had made an exceptional contribution to extracurricular activities in the schools in which he worked. The panel considered that his lead role in developing other staff members was also a significant contribution, as well as his improved outcomes for pupils, particularly in the context of working in a disadvantaged area, and after he joined a failing department in another school. The panel accepted that the incident was out of character.

The [REDACTED], provided a reference in support of Mr Martellini. She stated that she had known Mr Martellini since September 2016 when she worked with him, and has remained in contact with him. She referred to the School having been in challenging circumstances with poor outcomes and low attendance with numerous complex issues associated with the disadvantaged community that the School served. She stated that she swiftly identified Mr Martellini as an outstanding practitioner through daily observations, work scrutiny and pupil voice feedback. She stated that he stood out for his "high expectations in terms of behaviour and routines, professional and bounded manner with the pupils, his ability to engage them in their learning and the academic rigour in his practice". She stated that Mr Martellini was able to work with some of their most disengaged and demotivated boys ensuring that they gained vital qualifications. She stated that Mr Martellini was one of the first teachers she selected to train as a coach to support the development of his colleagues. She stated that he became an excellent coach, rising to the position of lead coach. She stated that Mr Martellini demonstrated a "warm-strict" approach to the boys he worked with, held pupils to account for their behaviour and supported them to make better choices. She stated that, at the end of her first year at the school, Mr Martellini's tutor group had the most improved attendance and was in the top 3 every year after that. She stated that he made the boys he worked with realise the value of education and challenged them to be ambitious about their futures. She also referenced Mr Martellini's willingness to do whatever it took to ensure that pupils experienced great teaching, including by teaching biology when there was long term sickness in the department, and that whilst this was beyond his subject specialism, he worked hard to ensure that every lesson developed their knowledge and skills in science. She referred to the pivotal role Mr Martellini played in improving the measured outcomes for boys.

This referee re-employed Mr Martellini at another school where she became headteacher. She stated that he was transparent about the matters with which this hearing is concerned and “owned the mistake he had made”. She stated that he willingly undertook a human resources risk assessment to ensure her school could manage any risk and that he had worked with them to mitigate these. She stated that she believed Mr Martellini had made an error of judgement but that he does not pose a safeguarding risk to the children. She stated that in the short time he had been employed at her school, he was turning around a failing department supporting early career teacher (“ECT”) colleagues through his skills as a teacher and coach; established strong behaviour routines; created consistency of expectation and boosted their sporting enrichment curriculum.

The [REDACTED] also provided a written reference in which he referred to having appointed Mr Martellini and having worked with him until June 2024. He stated that Mr Martellini took on many roles of responsibility including leadership positions within the department and coaching newly qualified teachers. He stated that he had always found Mr Martellini to be trustworthy, hardworking and dedicated to the students’ progress both in and out of curriculum time. He stated that those he coached always found Mr Martellini’s support invaluable and he developed many teachers’ abilities. He referred to Mr Martellini’s reliability, his initiative and his ability to stay calm under pressure. He stated that Mr Martellini had much to offer the profession given the way he enriched students’ lives. In oral evidence, this referee referred to Mr Martellini as a “very, very accomplished practitioner” who was reliable, reflective and thoughtful regarding his own practice. He stated that colleagues saw him as a role model, and that was why he had been given a lead role as coach. He stated that students saw him as inspirational and a good role model. This referee had been aware of the incident regarding cocaine, and confirmed that he did not see any potential traits relating to the use of cocaine through the years he had known him. He confirmed that he viewed Mr Martellini’s contribution to extracurricular activities as “absolutely exceptional”.

The [REDACTED], also provided a reference. She stated that she worked directly with Mr Martellini for over four years and had almost daily contact with him. She stated that he developed from an outstanding PE teacher into a lead coach at the School embracing and implementing that model in a place that was originally very closed to the idea of coaching. She stated Mr Martellini was often called upon to coach more difficult members of staff because he was able to build strong relationships and trust. She referred to having always been able to rely upon Mr Martellini and his “deep moral compass”. She stated that she would unreservedly re-employ him because of the character and qualities that he possesses. She referred to Mr Martellini as being an asset to any educational establishment and that both students and staff would directly benefit from his work and efforts.

The [REDACTED], gave oral evidence. He stated that Mr Martellini was exemplary in his interview that he had a clear understanding of how to work with pupils, manage expectations and behaviour and demonstrated how he was able to balance that in a calm and nurturing way. He referred to Mr Martellini's excellent subject knowledge and the passion he had for his subject as well as developing other teachers. He stated that his view was that Mr Martellini had made an error of judgment in respect of his possession of cocaine, but that did not define his character and that showed in his time working with Mr Martellini. He referred to the instability in the department that Mr Martellini joined, and that he provided stability, particularly for the three ECTs within the department, giving knowledge and direction to the team. He stated that during Mr Martellini's time at this school, there had been discussions regarding promotion for Mr Martellini as it was evident that he was making significant changes and the positive impact of that was felt very quickly across the whole department.

[REDACTED] gave oral evidence of the extremely supportive role Mr Martellini played. He stated that Mr Martellini was viewed by everyone as an extremely positive person, and that he only heard positive comments about the impact Mr Martellini had. He stated that Mr Martellini took over the year 7 extracurricular activities and this grew rapidly, with over 120 students playing football at times, and the school being represented at extensive fixtures, county and national cups for the first time. He referred to this being a journey the school had never been on before, that between them both, they increased the numbers participating, and creating long-lasting memories for the pupils. He confirmed that he had never heard Mr Martellini talk about cocaine. He was not aware of the conduct found proven, but stated that he was very much surprised by it.

[REDACTED] who worked with Mr Martellini for three years who also gave oral evidence referred to Mr Martellini as "extremely professional, really friendly and a team player". She referred to their team being cohesive, and that it had been a pleasant experience to work under Mr Martellini. She referred to Mr Martellini's willingness to support her coaching the girls football team to ensure they had the appropriate expertise to do justice to their ability which was of a high standard. She explained that the School had reached the county final, which had been a huge achievement for the students involved. She confirmed that Mr Martellini's contribution to extracurricular activities was exceptional. She referred to the demographic being that of a deprived area, and referred to the pupils' generally poor behaviour, but said that the exception to this was within the PE department. She stated that Mr Martellini set high expectations and pupils did not want to "mess around" or upset him. She stated that they cared about their relationship with him, and held him in high esteem. This referee had not been aware of Mr Martellini's caution for possession of cocaine, but confirmed she had never heard him talk about cocaine and said that she was shocked as she "would not have thought for a second that was something he would be doing or had done".

Mr Martellini also produced a selection of thank you notes from students regarding their enjoyment of their lessons with him.

Witness D confirmed that Mr Martellini worked with under-performing teachers at the School as a coach and that the general feedback was very positive. She stated that Mr Martellini was a strong teacher, and she referred to Mr Martellini's enthusiasm and commitment to the extracurricular provision and his classes.

Witness B limited his comments to saying that on a good day, Mr Martellini was a great teacher. Nevertheless, the panel considered that the tenor of the references was very positive. Those who hadn't been aware of the nature of the conduct found proven expressed surprise and shock, as it was out of kilter with their experience of working with Mr Martellini. The panel was also impressed that Mr Martellini had been able to find four witnesses who wished to attest to his outstanding abilities as a teacher at very short notice and during a busy school day.

In Mr Martellini's closing submissions, and in his written representations, he referred to the few people who knew of his possession of cocaine, and disputed whether, in those circumstances, his actions had brought the profession into disrepute. The panel was concerned by this, since the panel has made findings that he was guilty of conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel was also concerned by Mr Martellini's comments during the hearing referring to having been in the "wrong place at the wrong time", which implied that it was his getting caught, rather than his actions that had led to the position he was in. However, the panel formed the view that Mr Martellini had demonstrated insight into his actions. He apologised in his closing submissions for letting down the teaching profession. He stated in his written submissions that "I know I am responsible for the actions I did take. I can only apologise, and I know my actions on this day were wrong and have let myself and my family down. I understand, as a teacher, I need to always stay within the law and lead by example. I did not do this on this occasion". He also stated "I accept this was foolish, it does not excuse anything but I made these decisions under the influence of alcohol, which if I could go back and change it I would. I recognise my actions could have brought reputational harm to myself, the profession and the school but fortunately I do not believe this harm was done." The panel considered that Mr Martellini appreciated the prospect of harm being done to the profession by his actions, but was merely pointing out that he had been fortunate that his conduct had not been more widely known.

The panel noted that Mr Martellini did not seek to deny his possession of cocaine, he produced it immediately, and accepted a caution. He also informed the School at the earliest opportunity, and co-operated fully with the School's investigation and attended the disciplinary hearing. He has, throughout, admitted the conduct.

The panel also noted that Mr Martellini had demonstrated insight by virtue of his decision to stop working at the school he was employed at after he received his caution. He

referred to not being able to stand in front of a class with the present TRA proceedings afoot, and recognised that his [REDACTED] at that point, such that he did not feel he was in a position to teach. That was a mature decision of someone who did not want to disadvantage the students by him not performing at his best. The panel also noted that Mr Martellini referred to having received [REDACTED], and he stated that he is now equipped to manage any deterioration [REDACTED]

The panel considered the risk of repetition to be very low. There was no indication that this was anything other than a momentary lapse of judgement, especially given the evidence his referees gave that this was out of character. The panel noted that Mr Martellini had referred to his horror at having jeopardised a career that he had wanted to pursue since he was a child, and this significantly lowered the risk of repetition.

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.

In this case, the panel considered that the positive impact Mr Martellini can make to the teaching profession going forwards outweighed any adverse public interest considerations in this case. This was particularly so, given his exceptional contribution to extracurricular activities, his contribution to improving the outcomes of pupils in deprived areas, and his ability to develop other teachers, supporting them to remain in the profession.

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. The panel considered that the less intrusive measure of adverse findings could be used in this case, without unacceptably compromising the achievement of the relevant objectives. Having considered Mr Martellini's exceptional contribution to teaching and the very low risk of repetition, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate 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 required, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of maintaining confidence in 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 allegation 3 not proven and found that allegations 1 and 2 do not amount to unacceptable professional conduct. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Roberto Martellini should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the finding 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 Martellini 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
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including... the rule of law...
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach....

The panel has found that the conduct of Mr Martellini fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

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 Martellini, 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. I have noted the panel's observation:

“However, the panel noted that the allegations took place outside the education setting. The panel did not consider that a single incident of possession of cocaine affected the way he fulfilled his teaching role given there was no evidence of habitual or repeated use. The panel also did not consider that it may lead to pupils being exposed to or influenced by the behaviour in a harmful way. The panel noted the horror that Mr Martellini stated that he experienced upon his arrest, given his immediate appreciation for the consequences upon his career, and in

those circumstances, the panel did not consider that Mr Martellini was likely to promote the use of drugs to pupils.”

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

“In Mr Martellini’s closing submissions, and in his written representations, he referred to the few people who knew of his possession of cocaine, and disputed whether, in those circumstances, his actions had brought the profession into disrepute. The panel was concerned by this, since the panel has made findings that he was guilty of conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. The panel was also concerned by Mr Martellini’s comments during the hearing referring to having been in the “wrong place at the wrong time”, which implied that it was his getting caught, rather than his actions that had led to the position he was in. However, the panel formed the view that Mr Martellini had demonstrated insight into his actions. He apologised in his closing submissions for letting down the teaching profession. He stated in his written submissions that “I know I am responsible for the actions I did take. I can only apologise, and I know my actions on this day were wrong and have let myself and my family down. I understand, as a teacher, I need to always stay within the law and lead by example. I did not do this on this occasion”. He also stated “I accept this was foolish, it does not excuse anything but I made these decisions under the influence of alcohol, which if I could go back and change it I would. I recognise my actions could have brought reputational harm to myself, the profession and the school but fortunately I do not believe this harm was done.” The panel considered that Mr Martellini appreciated the prospect of harm being done to the profession by his actions, but was merely pointing out that he had been fortunate that his conduct had not been more widely known.

The panel noted that Mr Martellini did not seek to deny his possession of cocaine, he produced it immediately, and accepted a caution. He also informed the School at the earliest opportunity, and co-operated fully with the School’s investigation and attended the disciplinary hearing. He has, throughout, admitted the conduct.

The panel also noted that Mr Martellini had demonstrated insight by virtue of his decision to stop working at the school he was employed at after he received his caution. He referred to not being able to stand in front of a class with the present TRA proceedings afoot, and recognised that his [REDACTED] at that point, such that he did not feel he was in a position to teach. That was a mature decision of someone who did not want to disadvantage the students by him not performing at his best. The panel also noted that Mr Martellini referred to having received [REDACTED] and he stated that he is now equipped to manage any deterioration [REDACTED]

The panel considered the risk of repetition to be very low. There was no indication that this was anything other than a momentary lapse of judgement, especially given the evidence his referees gave that this was out of character. The panel noted that Mr Martellini had referred to his horror at having jeopardised a career that he had wanted to pursue since he was a child, and this significantly lowered the risk of repetition.”

I have therefore given this element some 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 public confidence in the profession could be weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Martellini were not treated seriously when regulating the conduct of the profession.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a police caution for possession of a Class A drug 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 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 Martellini himself. The panel has commented:

“Mr Martellini did have a previously good history in that had not been the subject of any previous regulatory orders. He had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his professional conduct and that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel noted from the referees that Mr Martellini had made an exceptional contribution to extracurricular activities in the schools in which he worked. The panel considered that his lead role in developing other staff members was also a significant contribution, as well as his improved outcomes for pupils, particularly in the context of working in a disadvantaged area, and after he joined a failing department in another school. The panel accepted that the incident was out of character.”

The panel has noted that it had seen a number of written references which were very positive about Mr Martellini including a reference from a former senior colleague who had re-employed Mr Martellini at another school where she had become headteacher.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Martellini 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.

The panel has found that Mr Martellini received a police caution for possession of a Class A drug. This is a serious breach of the Teacher Standards which, as the panel has noted, would be likely to have a negative impact on the public's perception of Mr Martellini as a teacher. Furthermore the panel has said that there was no evidence that Mr Martellini's actions were not deliberate, nor to suggest that Mr Martellini was acting under extreme duress.

However, in this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel's comments concerning the mitigating factors. I have taken account of the panel's view that Mr Martellini had demonstrated insight and that the risk of repetition was very low. I have also noted that the panel considered that the misconduct did not affect the way he fulfilled his teaching role and also considered that it would not lead to pupils being exposed to or influenced by the behaviour in a harmful way.

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that Mr Martellini has demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his professional conduct and that he had contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel has concluded:

"In this case, the panel considered that the positive impact Mr Martellini can make to the teaching profession going forwards outweighed any adverse public interest considerations in this case. This was particularly so, given his exceptional contribution to extracurricular activities, his contribution to improving the outcomes of pupils in deprived areas, and his ability to develop other teachers, supporting them to remain in the profession.

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. The panel considered that the less intrusive measure of adverse findings could be used in this case, without unacceptably compromising the achievement of the relevant objectives. Having considered Mr Martellini's exceptional contribution to teaching and the very low risk of repetition, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate 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 required, and the

publication would meet the public interest requirement of maintaining confidence in the profession.”

I have agreed with the panel 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.

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

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 23 March 2026

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