



Teaching  
Regulation  
Agency

# **Ms Sarah Clancy: Professional conduct panel outcome**

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

**April 2026**

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

**Teacher:** Ms Sarah Clancy  
**Teacher ref number:** 239189  
**Teacher date of birth:** 23 September 1972  
**TRA reference:** 20542  
**Date of determination:** 1 April 2026  
**Former employer:** Eskdale School, Whitby

### **Introduction**

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 26 to 29 January 2026, 12 March 2026 and 1 April 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Ms Sarah Clancy.

The panel members were Mr Richard Young (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Amanda Godfrey (teacher panellist) and Mr Scott Evans (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Ms Kimberley Clayton of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The Presenting Officer for the TRA on 26 to 29 January 2026 was Ms Sherelle Appleby of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors. The Presenting Officer for the TRA on 12 March 2026 was Ms Oyin Makinde of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Ms Clancy was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

## Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 11 November 2025.

It was alleged that Ms Clancy was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst employed at Eskdale School (the "School") between November 2018 and May 2021:

1. She failed to take appropriate action and/or ensure appropriate action was taken with respect to safeguarding disclosures concerning one or more pupils in that she failed to report to the headteacher that:
  - a. There had been an incident whereby two children had sexually touched a girl;
  - b. That a child had brought a bladed instrument to school;
  - c. That a child with suicidal tendencies attended school in need of attention;
  - d. That a child's father had died.
2. Her conduct at 1(a) above was despite being asked by the headteacher whether there were any safeguarding concerns to raise.
3. She engaged in inappropriate discussions with office staff at the School in which she discussed:
  - a. A pupil being sexually active;
  - b. A child's sexual preferences;
  - c. The fact that a child had seen his mother naked and that this could constitute grooming.
4. She engaged in inappropriate discussions with parents of children at the School in which she:
  - a. Stated that Individual A, [REDACTED] had failed in his safeguarding duty;
  - b. Encouraged a complaint to be made.
5. She engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards one or more staff members within the Whitby Schools Partnership, including by making comments to other staff members to the effect of:
  - a. Calling Individual A a misogynist;

- b. Stating that Individual A drinks and takes drugs on a weekend;
- c. Stating that Individual A had been employed to drag the School down;
- d. Stating that Individual B lacks competency and professionalism;
- e. Stating that Individual C was “bordering unfit to be in post”;
- f. Stating that Individual D “has form for getting pissed”;
- g. Commenting on Individual E’s ability to do their job.

Ms Clancy denied allegations 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 1(d), 2, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 4(a), 4(b), 5(a), 5(b), 5(c), 5(d), 5(e), 5(f) and 5(g) as set out in her response to the Notice of Proceedings (undated).

## Summary of evidence

### Documents

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

Section 1: Notice of proceedings and response/anonymised person list – pages 21 to 32

Section 2: TRA witness statements – pages 34 to 189

Section 3: TRA documents – pages 191 to 2020

Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 2022 to 2034

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

- Ms Clancy’s written response to the hearsay application dated 24 January 2026 – to be numbered pages 2035 to 2037;
- Character references from [REDACTED], dated 31 December 2025 – to be numbered pages 2038 to 2039;
- Character reference from [REDACTED], dated 23 January 2026 – to be numbered pages 2040 to 2044; and
- Character reference from [REDACTED] (undated) – to be numbered pages 2045 to 2047.

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

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the 2020 Procedures.

## Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called by the Presenting Officer:

Witness A – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], despite the direction at an earlier Case Management Hearing on 17 June 2025 that he may use a witness supporter, chose to give evidence without the proposed supporter.

## 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 October 2017, Ms Clancy commenced employment at Eskdale School.

On 22 November 2018, Ms Clancy allegedly sent text messages to Witness A which said that Individual D *“has form for getting pissed”*.

On the first day of term in September 2019, there was an announcement that a pupil's father had passed away and that Ms Clancy was aware of the father's passing. It is alleged that Ms Clancy failed to inform Witness A, [REDACTED], of the pupil's [REDACTED].

On 2 October 2019, there was an incident involving three pupils, Individual A and two other colleagues. It is alleged that Ms Clancy invited one of the pupil's parents to make a complaint against Individual A in relation to the interaction.

In October 2019, there was an incident where a pupil was verbally threatened by an external IT contractor. A few days later it is alleged that Ms Clancy had encouraged that pupil's parent to make a complaint about how Individual A had handled the incident.

On 27 November 2019, Witness A spoke to an external trainer and it is alleged that Ms Clancy told the external trainer that a child with [REDACTED] was in need of attention and that she had failed to inform Witness A of this.

It is alleged that Ms Clancy failed to inform Witness A that two pupils had sexually touched a female pupil on 3 December 2019.

It is alleged that Ms Clancy failed to inform Witness A that a child had brought a bladed instrument to the School on 10 December 2019.

On an unknown date, an unnamed individual submitted a written statement which alleged that during a meeting, Ms Clancy had said that Individual A had been employed to drag the School down and took drugs and drank on the weekends.

On a date which is unclear, Ms Clancy allegedly sent a text message to Witness A which said that Individual B “*lacked competency and professionalism*” and that Individual C was “*bordering unfit to be in post*”.

On 28 October 2019, [REDACTED] disclosed to Witness A that Ms Clancy had allegedly inappropriately discussed with staff members a pupil’s sexual activity; another pupil’s sexual orientation; and had submitted that a pupil had seen his mother naked and had allegedly stated that this “*could constitute grooming*”.

On 5 November 2019, Witness A disclosed to [REDACTED], concerns relating to Ms Clancy’s conduct.

On 6 January 2020, Ms Clancy was suspended from the School.

On 14 May 2021, Ms Clancy’s employment with the School ended.

On 21 January 2022, the matter was referred to the TRA.

## **Findings of fact**

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

### **Whilst employed at Eskdale School between November 2018 and May 2021:**

- 1. You failed to take appropriate action and/or ensure appropriate action was taken with respect to safeguarding disclosures concerning one or more pupils in that you failed to report to the headteacher that:**
  - a. There had been an incident whereby two children had sexually touched a girl;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 1(a).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A. He stated that Ms Clancy was the Designated Safeguarding Lead (“DSL”) at the School and when he created the job description for the role of DSL, he emphasised that safeguarding at the School should be approached as a team responsibility and that he had communicated

the key expectations to Ms Clancy. He also explained to her that the School was “*not an island*” and that information needed to be shared appropriately.

In his oral evidence, Witness A reiterated the importance of working collaboratively and said he believed that Ms Clancy understood the need to report matters accurately. He stated that, in October 2019, Ms Clancy had requested that the role of DSL be incorporated permanently into her job description, and it was agreed that this would be done with a review after one year.

Witness A said that their working relationship was initially positive, however this changed after Ms Clancy offered a role to an individual who had been employed on a temporary basis, which was not something she could do within the remit of her role. He explained that he spoke to Ms Clancy directly and instructed her not to have any further discussions with that individual about a permanent position, as there was no budget in place. Witness A stated that he sensed a change in Ms Clancy’s attitude following that conversation, and he felt she questioned his authority in giving that instruction. He said that from that point onwards, Ms Clancy began to take actions without discussing them with him beforehand.

In his witness statement, Witness A explained that on 3 December 2019, he came into School and asked Ms Clancy “*whether there were any updates, any concerns or anything going on*”. Witness A stated that Ms Clancy said “*no*”.

The panel considered Witness A’s witness statement, in which he explained that at around 10:00am on 3 December 2019 he saw [REDACTED] told him that he was dealing with an issue but did not provide further detail as he was on his way to a lesson, other than to indicate that it concerned a girl.

In Witness A’s chronology provided for the School’s investigation, he stated that around 12:55pm on 3 December 2019, Witness A saw [REDACTED], who is the School’s Police Community Support Officer (“PCSO”), and asked her how her day had been.

Witness A stated, in his evidence, that [REDACTED] replied “*Good. By the way I’ll be in tomorrow to speak to those lads*”. Witness A stated that he said to [REDACTED] that he did not know what she was talking about and [REDACTED] responded, “*the lads who inappropriately touched the girl*”. Witness A stated that he said to [REDACTED] that he had not been informed and that he would speak to Ms Clancy.

The panel considered Witness A’s witness statement, in which he explained that he then went to see Ms Clancy in her office and said to her that he had been informed about an issue with a female pupil. Witness A stated that Ms Clancy said that there was nothing to worry about.

The panel also considered the interview transcript of Witness A dated 10 February 2020 which was consistent with Witness A’s oral evidence that Ms Clancy stated that there

was “*nothing to worry about*” after Witness A had asked for an update. The transcript further recorded Witness A as having said that Ms Clancy had said “*how much do you need to know because I haven’t got time to tell you everything*”.

Witness A’s witness statement records that later that same afternoon, he and [REDACTED], met with Ms Clancy to address the fact that she had not disclosed the matter to them. During that meeting, Ms Clancy is recorded as stating that she did not have to tell them everything and said she had only become aware of the issue at lunchtime. Witness A stated that he did not consider this to be correct, as [REDACTED] had told him earlier that morning that he was already investigating the matter for Ms Clancy.

In his oral evidence, Witness A stated that he would have expected to have been informed of this incident as promptly as possible. He explained that, in practice, a parent’s first point of contact is usually [REDACTED], and he could not advise or put support in place unless he was aware of the relevant facts at the time. Witness A said this information had not been recorded on CPOMS.

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy. The panel noted that Ms Clancy did not attend to give oral evidence and was mindful throughout these proceedings that her evidence, particularly her statement in response to the TRA’s case, had not been tested. In her written evidence, Ms Clancy stated that the incident in question concerned a male and female pupil who were boyfriend and girlfriend and the male pupil’s male friend. Ms Clancy stated that on one occasion, it was alleged that the male pupil’s friend took the male pupil’s hand and moved it towards the abdomen/waist area of the female pupil.

In her written evidence, Ms Clancy stated that she and [REDACTED] conducted an initial fact-finding process, however, Ms Clancy did not specify when the allegation was raised or when she was informed of it. Ms Clancy stated that a meeting was scheduled on 3 December 2019 to speak to the parents of the female pupil to discuss how they wanted to proceed. Ms Clancy stated that on 3 December 2019 at 10:04am, Witness A emailed Ms Clancy to say that Ms Clancy could discuss and update him on safeguarding matters that afternoon. Ms Clancy had stated that before her meetings with Witness A and the female pupil’s parents, the PCSO had “*mentioned in passing*” the situation to Witness A and Ms Clancy stated that at this time, she was waiting for the meeting with the pupil’s parents to confirm how they wanted to proceed.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence, together with the submissions made during the hearing. The panel noted that Ms Clancy had started to investigate the incident and established that it involved two pupils in a boyfriend-and-girlfriend relationship. However, the panel found that they had insufficient evidence of what factual enquiries Ms Clancy had carried out, what discussions she had had with the pupils or

their parents, or how she had reached her conclusions. The panel noted the absence of any contemporaneous records of the event and the fact that Ms Clancy spoke with the PCSO before informing the headteacher.

Taking all of the evidence into account, the panel was satisfied that, by not reporting to the headteacher prior to the afternoon of 3 December 2019 that there had been an incident in which two children had sexually touched a girl, Ms Clancy failed to take appropriate action, or ensure that appropriate action was taken, in relation to the safeguarding disclosure concerning these pupils.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 1(a) proven.

**b. That a child had brought a bladed instrument to school;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 1(b).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on 10 December 2019, Witness A was asked about an issue regarding a blade in School by the [REDACTED] who said that [REDACTED] had informed Ms Clancy of this. Witness A's evidence was that he had not been informed of this incident. Witness A stated that he checked CPOMS and found the file of the incident. Witness A stated that there was no mention of a blade.

The panel had sight of Witness A's email dated 10 December 2019 to Ms Clancy where Witness A was recorded as saying that CPOMS was "*working well*" and asked Ms Clancy to utilise the function which alerts staff members of incidents. The panel noted that the email chain dated 10 December 2019 to 18 December 2019 between Ms Clancy and Witness A recorded Ms Clancy raising issues with using CPOMS and not receiving its alerts and Witness A offering to help Ms Clancy use CPOMS.

In his oral evidence, Witness A explained that, when he joined the School, safeguarding concerns were recorded in paper form, usually handwritten and sometimes typed, and stored in each child's folder. He stated that some safeguarding records were later found in Ms Clancy's diary when she was suspended and that, as a result, some historical information appeared to be missing from the central records.

Witness A said that Ms Clancy had been making contact with a number of families and would therefore have held their contact details in her diary, and that he had experienced some resistance from her regarding the need to centralise this information. He stated that he had some issues with the paper-based system which was in place at the School when he joined, however he had spoken with Ms Clancy about CPOMS and she had assured him that she understood the requirements.

In his oral evidence, Witness A said CPOMS was introduced at the School in September 2019 but was not initially fully implemented. Witness A explained that all safeguarding

information should have been shared with him and [REDACTED] and uploaded to the CPOMS system, so that they could support Ms Clancy, ensure appropriate continuity planning in the event of her absence, and strengthen the overall safeguarding framework by involving more than one person. It was the panel's understanding that on a concern being uploaded onto CPOMS, Witness A would automatically receive a notification. He stated that he and [REDACTED] had directed Ms Clancy on "numerous" occasions to share this information with them. In practice, however, Witness A said that Ms Clancy kept much of the safeguarding information "*close to her chest*".

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that on one occasion a pupil had with her a small paper/cardboard knife/cutter. Ms Clancy contacted the pupil's mother who said that the pupil used the blade for her crafting hobby and apologised to the school for the inconvenience caused. Ms Clancy stated that the matter was "*immediately recorded*" on CPOMS and further stated that Witness A would have received notifications about the incident. Ms Clancy stated that later that day, Witness A asked Ms Clancy why the pupil's father was at the School. Ms Clancy stated that she explained to Witness A the incident with the blade and invited Witness A to join the meeting which Witness A declined.

The panel considered the evidence relating to the matter of whether Ms Clancy failed to record on CPOMS that the pupil had brought a bladed instrument into the School. The panel noted the conflicting accounts given by Ms Clancy and Witness A and that no CPOMS record was available for the panel to review. The panel was therefore unable to determine precisely what had been recorded and what had, or had not, been forwarded on to Witness A.

The panel accepted that something had been entered onto CPOMS but had insufficient evidence before it to conclude whether reference to a bladed instrument had been made by Ms Clancy.

Given this, the panel found they did not find it proven on the balance of probabilities that Ms Clancy had failed to report to the headteacher that a child had brought a bladed instrument to the School.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 1(b) not proven.

**c. That a child with suicidal tendencies attended school in need of attention;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 1(c).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on 25 to 27 November 2019, the School took part in a restorative practice training course. Witness A stated that on the final day of the training, he spoke to [REDACTED] (who was the

trainer) to ask him how the training had gone. Witness A stated that [REDACTED] told him that Ms Clancy did not turn up on the final day because she was dealing with a safeguarding issue relating to a young person and suicide. Witness A stated that he did not know anything about the matter.

The panel noted Witness A's interview transcript dated 10 February 2020 which appeared consistent with his evidence and further recorded Witness A stating that [REDACTED] had said to Witness A that if Ms Clancy was dealing with a matter related to suicide, it should not have been disclosed to an external trainer and that this information was highly confidential. Witness A had stated that he found out that the matter was not a new issue and had related to a pupil with historical anxiety. Witness A stated that he went to see Ms Clancy and informed her of what he had been told by [REDACTED]. Witness A stated that Ms Clancy said, "*it wasn't like that*" and that it was "*not serious*". Witness A's evidence was that Ms Clancy had spoken to the child's parent and had put an emergency referral through to Early Help.

In his oral evidence, Witness A stated that both he and [REDACTED] should have been made aware of this safeguarding matter, emphasising that it was of significant importance and directly related to the need for effective succession planning. He explained that safeguarding information must be shared so that appropriate support can be put in place and so that the School can draw on all available resources. Witness A said that Ms Clancy should have brought the matter to either himself or [REDACTED], as they could have ensured that support was provided if the child was at any risk of harm. Witness A stated in his oral evidence that he did not recall the child's suicidal tendencies being recorded on CPOMS.

The panel had sight of an email dated 25 November 2019 at 08:06am from Ms Clancy to Witness A with the subject heading "*LM Meeting*" which records Ms Clancy arranging a meeting with Witness A at "*P1*" on 5 December 2019.

The panel also had sight of an email from Ms Clancy to Witness A dated 28 November 2019 which recorded Witness A saying: "*it appears I do not have the rights to view incidents assigned to me on CPoms*". The panel noted that the email chain from 28 to 29 November 2019 recorded correspondence between Witness A and Ms Clancy in which Ms Clancy raised issues about using CPOMS and Witness A offering to help Ms Clancy use CPOMS.

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that a pupil came to the School in "*some distress*" and was [REDACTED]. Ms Clancy stated that she stayed with the pupil until her Early Help Worker arrived and explained that she was the most appropriate person as the DSL. Ms Clancy stated that the Early Help Worker provided a statement which recorded them stating that the pupil "*would have nothing to do with Witness A*".

Ms Clancy, in her evidence, stated that “*all records were updated*”. Ms Clancy stated that the pupil, [REDACTED] and herself were waiting in the office near reception for the Early Support Worker to arrive. Ms Clancy stated that she briefly left the pupil with [REDACTED] to deal with other issues and spoke to Witness A when Witness A asked Ms Clancy what was going on.

The panel considered the evidence regarding Ms Clancy’s response to a pupil who arrived at the School in a distressed state. The panel noted some uncertainty in the evidence as to whether the pupil had suicidal tendencies on that day, however it was satisfied that the pupil required support, given the referral to Early Help, and that Ms Clancy had been dealing with the matter.

The panel also noted the absence of any record on CPOMS in the written evidence and the evidence that Ms Clancy did not report the incident to the headteacher. In Ms Clancy’s written evidence, she says she stayed with the pupil until the Early Help Worker arrived who then took the child to an emergency appointment with CAMHS. The panel noted that the child being taken to an emergency appointment indicated the child needed urgent attention and there was evidence in Witness A’s chronology provided for the School’s investigation that the child had previous suicidal tendencies. The panel concluded that, on the balance of probabilities, Ms Clancy failed to report a safeguarding disclosure involving a child who had suicidal tendencies, and who had attended school and was in need of attention, to the headteacher and therefore failed to take appropriate action.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 1(c) proven.

**d. That a child's father had died.**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 1(d).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A, who explained that a pupil’s father had passed away over the summer holidays. Witness A stated that he was not aware of the father’s death until the first day back at School, when the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) announced it to all staff. Witness A stated that it was also announced that Ms Clancy had been dealing with the matter over the summer. The panel noted that in his evidence, Witness A said that staff were made aware that Witness A could be contacted over the school holidays, and that he had been in School early on the first day of term to prepare for the new academic year.

In his oral evidence, Witness A emphasised the importance of the School providing support to a child who had lost a parent. He said that he would have contacted the child’s family and ensured that basic support arrangements were put in place so that the family knew the School was available to help. Witness A stated that the way the matter had been handled created a significant issue of trust between the School and the child’s

family, and that such concerns were justified. Witness A stated that this information had not been recorded on CPOMS, and that no action had been taken in respect of the SENCo for failing to inform him or [REDACTED].

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that on the first day of term in September 2019, Ms Clancy received a call from the School's nurse who said that the parent of a pupil had died. Ms Clancy stated that the [REDACTED] then asked Ms Clancy if she was aware of the passing of the pupil's father. Ms Clancy stated that it seemed evident that many staff were already aware of the pupil's father's passing. Ms Clancy explained that the first day of term was a training day and stated that at the start of the training session, Ms Clancy announced to all the staff the passing of the pupil's father and to treat the pupil appropriately given the circumstances. Ms Clancy stated that Witness A arrived at the School, after the training had started and that he was stood at the back of the room when Ms Clancy made the announcement. Ms Clancy stated that there had been no opportunity to update Witness A prior to the announcement to staff.

The panel considered the evidence regarding when Ms Clancy became aware that a pupil's parent had passed away and whether she failed to report this to the headteacher. The panel noted inconsistencies in the evidence as to the precise timing of events, including differing accounts of when Ms Clancy and Witness A each learned of the bereavement, and whether it was the SENCo or Ms Clancy who made the announcement to staff. The panel noted that Ms Clancy stated she had been informed by the School's nurse on the first day of term in September 2019, whereas Witness A said that the information had been announced to all staff on that day by the SENCo, who also stated that Ms Clancy had been dealing with the matter over the summer. The panel further noted the absence of any third-party corroboration, despite the information having been announced to staff.

However, taking the evidence in the round, and irrespective of whether it was the SENCo or Ms Clancy who made the announcement to staff, and whether Ms Clancy first learned of the father's death over the summer of 2019 or from the School nurse on the first day of term in September 2019, the panel was satisfied that even if Ms Clancy only became aware of the information on the day of the announcement, she could have made time to inform Witness A before the announcement was made to the rest of the staff. The panel concluded that Witness A was not informed that the child's father had died prior to the announcement being made to staff. The panel therefore concluded that Ms Clancy failed to take appropriate action, or ensure that appropriate action was taken, in relation to the safeguarding disclosure, in that she failed to report to the headteacher that a child's father had died.

Accordingly, on the balance of probabilities, the panel found allegation 1(d) proven.

**2. Your conduct at 1(a) above was despite being asked by the headteacher whether there were any safeguarding concerns to raise.**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 2.

The panel reminded itself of the facts that it found proven at allegation 1(a). The panel again considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on 3 December 2019, he came into School and asked Ms Clancy "*whether there were any updates, any concerns or anything going on*".

The panel again considered the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that she and Witness A had a meeting scheduled that afternoon to discuss a list of issues, including the safeguarding incident. Ms Clancy had stated that before her meetings with Witness A and the female pupil's parents, the PCSO had "*mentioned in passing*" the situation to Witness A and Ms Clancy stated that at this time, she was waiting for the meeting with the pupil's parents to confirm how they wanted to proceed. Ms Clancy submitted that she would have otherwise discussed the safeguarding issue with Witness A in the meeting later that day.

The panel noted that there is no definitive end-point to safeguarding concerns and no fixed moment at which a report must be made; safeguarding is an ongoing process. The panel did not consider it reasonable for Ms Clancy to have withheld an update on the basis that the matter had not concluded. While Ms Clancy had taken some steps by speaking with the parents, the panel considered that Witness A, as a [REDACTED], should have been informed. The panel noted that safeguarding is a collective responsibility and that important information should not be kept from colleagues, as doing so may compromise the ability to provide safeguarding.

The panel considered the evidence relating to whether Ms Clancy failed to provide an update to the headteacher when asked. The panel noted inconsistencies in the accounts of when Ms Clancy first became aware of the safeguarding concern and when Witness A learned of it. It also noted discrepancies in the contemporaneous documents regarding the timing of these events.

However, taking the evidence in the round, the panel accepted that Witness A had made clear throughout the autumn term that he wished to be kept updated on safeguarding matters, and that he had asked Ms Clancy for any updates on the morning in question. The panel was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that Ms Clancy was aware of the matter by that stage but did not provide the update to the headteacher when he asked her on 3 December 2019 "*whether there were any updates, any concerns or anything going on*" which the panel interpreted as Witness A asking Ms Clancy "*whether there were any safeguarding concerns to raise*".

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 2 proven.

### 3. You engaged in inappropriate discussions with office staff at the School in which you discussed:

In relation to allegation 3 generally, the panel had sight of the email correspondence dated 26 November 2019 concerning a proposed office move. In her email to Witness A titled “*Room Move*”, Ms Clancy explained that she had moved into the pastoral office she shared with the administration team in order to support the “*complex and demanding*” nature of her role and to reduce the time and stress involved in having to “*continuously walk up the corridor to use the phone confidentially.*” She stated that the location of the office facilitated her safeguarding and pastoral responsibilities.

In his reply, also dated 26 November 2019, Witness A stated that staff had raised concerns that confidential conversations could be overheard in that office and that the room offered “*little privacy.*” He further recorded that Ms Clancy had previously agreed to relocate when the move had first been discussed and that he was “*shocked*” by her response the previous day when she objected strongly to the move despite her earlier agreement.

The panel noted that in Ms Clancy’s interview transcript dated 26 February 2020 which recorded her submitting that she should be able to speak to admin staff “*freely*” and rely on them to keep all information discussed confidential.

The panel also noted Ms Clancy’s submissions that [REDACTED] had raised concerns about Ms Clancy shortly after Ms Clancy had raised her own concerns regarding [REDACTED].

In his oral evidence, Witness A explained that he was aware Ms Clancy had a strained relationship with [REDACTED], although he did not know the full extent of the issues and felt he had been kept in the dark. Witness A stated that [REDACTED] was a good member of staff and that he understood that there had been instances of targeted behaviour, such as Ms Clancy providing wine or making tea for others but not for [REDACTED].

#### a. A pupil being sexually active;

Ms Clancy denied allegation 3(a).

The panel considered the written evidence of [REDACTED] who was the first aider at the School and stated that on one occasion, Ms Clancy came into the office and said that she “*just had a conversation with a pupils mum regarding an underage pupil who was having a sexual relationship.*” [REDACTED] stated that Ms Clancy said this in a “*gossiping*” manner. [REDACTED] stated that there were no safeguarding staff, or any staff that needed to be aware of the matter, present and that only office staff were present.

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that she “*never openly or inappropriately*” discussed safeguarding issues and further stated that she did not discuss safeguarding matters “*within earshot of staff members*”.

**b. A child's sexual preferences;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 3(b).

The panel considered the written evidence of [REDACTED] who stated that on one occasion, Ms Clancy came into the office and said that “*a pupil had confided in her that he was bisexual.*” [REDACTED] stated that Ms Clancy said this in a “*gossiping*” manner. [REDACTED] stated that there were no safeguarding staff, or any staff that needed to be aware of the matter, present and that only office staff were present.

The panel again considered the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that she never openly or inappropriately discussed safeguarding matters and did not discuss these issues “*within earshot of staff members*”.

**c. The fact that a child had seen his mother naked and that this could constitute grooming.**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 3(c).

The panel considered the written evidence of [REDACTED] who explained that there was a male pupil who was seeing, or was due to see, a counsellor following an incident in which he had walked past his mother’s bedroom and saw her naked after taking a shower. [REDACTED] stated that on one occasion, she walked past Ms Clancy’s office when the door was open, and Ms Clancy was on the phone. [REDACTED] stated that she heard Ms Clancy say, “*her having been naked could have been a sign of the mother grooming her child.*”

The panel again considered the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that she did not discuss safeguarding matters “*within earshot of staff members*”.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegations 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c). The panel noted that the accounts relied predominantly on the hearsay evidence of [REDACTED], who did not give oral evidence and whose written statement was provided against a background of apparent animosity between her and Ms Clancy. The panel further noted that the statement did not clearly identify who any of the alleged conversations were with, nor did it provide any third-party corroboration.

The panel accepted that some conversations may have been overheard in the shared office environment, however it considered that overhearing a telephone call was not the same as engaging in inappropriate discussions with office staff, as alleged. The panel

also noted the absence of any other evidence put forward supporting the allegation that Ms Clancy discussed confidential or sensitive matters inappropriately with colleagues.

In those circumstances, and given the limited weight that it placed on the untested hearsay evidence, the panel concluded that there was insufficient evidence to establish that Ms Clancy engaged in the alleged inappropriate discussions.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel therefore found allegations 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c) not proven.

**4. You engaged in inappropriate discussions with parents of children at the School in which you:**

- a. Stated that Individual A, [REDACTED] had failed in his safeguarding duty;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 4(a).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who explained that in October 2019 there was an incident where a pupil was verbally threatened by an external IT contractor. Witness A stated that he investigated the matter and told the contracting company to immediately remove the IT contractor. Witness A stated that he asked [REDACTED] to contact the pupil's parents immediately to inform them of the incident. Witness A said that [REDACTED] did not contact the pupil's parents until three hours after he had asked him to do so.

Witness A said that the child's parent found out about the incident from the child, which immediately gave rise to the impression that [REDACTED] had not been aware of the situation. Witness A stated that he then got a call a few days later from the pupil's parent who said to Witness A that they spoke "*to the lady in charge of safeguarding*" and was told that they should make a complaint if they were unhappy about the matter and that Individual A "*had not done a good enough job at safeguarding*".

In his oral evidence, Witness A said he interpreted from this that Ms Clancy had encouraged the parent to make a complaint about Individual A. He explained that the child's mother had been extremely upset with Individual A, believing, on the basis of what Ms Clancy had said, that Individual A had failed to carry out their responsibilities, and that the parent was clear she had been directed by Ms Clancy to raise a complaint. Witness A explained that [REDACTED] should have recognised his error and taken responsibility, but because he did not inform [REDACTED] at the time, the situation became significantly more serious. Witness A said that the parent later came into School and, understandably, was angry that she had not been informed about the matter concerning her child.

The panel considered the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that in the disciplinary hearing that the pupil's parent had said that she "*never had any dealing*" with Ms Clancy "*written or verbal*".

The panel considered the evidence regarding whether Ms Clancy told a parent that Individual A had failed in their safeguarding duties. The panel noted significant inconsistencies between the contemporaneous notes and Witness A's written and oral evidence, including whether he first became aware of the alleged comment from Ms Clancy or from the parent, and Ms Clancy stating that the parent had not had any dealings with her. The panel took into account that the parent did not give evidence, and therefore the panel was unable to test the account.

In light of the conflicting and uncorroborated evidence, and applying the balance of probabilities, the panel was not satisfied that it had been proved to the standard of the balance of probabilities that Ms Clancy behaved as alleged in allegation 4 (a) and engaged in inappropriate discussions with parents.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 4(a) not proven.

#### **b. Encouraged a complaint to be made**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 4(b).

The panel had sight of three pupils' statements, all dated 8 October 2019 which recorded their statements regarding the events that occurred on 2 October 2019 at approximately 15:45pm.

Pupil A, in their written statement, was recorded stating that they asked Individual A where the bus was. The panel noted that there was an illegible part of the statement and the statement further recorded that Individual A was "*taking the mickey out of [Pupil A]*" and that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] laughed.

Pupil B, in their written statement, was recorded stating that Pupil A asked Individual A where the bus was and Individual A had repeated what Pupil A had said and "*mocked*" how Pupil A spoke. Pupil B was recorded stating that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both laughed at Individual A "*making fun of pupil A*". Pupil B said that they, [REDACTED] and another were "*shocked*" at Individual A's reaction. Pupil B was recorded stating that [REDACTED] said she "*could not believe [Individual A] had done that*" and that Pupil B and another pupil agreed. The panel noted that Pupil C's statement appeared to be consistent with Pupil B's statement.

Witness A's evidence was that a pupil had walked past Individual A, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with their friends. Witness A said that the pupil did an "*Ali G impersonation voice*" and Individual A, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] laughed. Witness A stated that during the week that followed, Ms Clancy said to Witness A that she received a call from

the pupil's mother who was unhappy with Individual A's behaviour. Witness A submitted that there had been a misunderstanding of the situation. Witness A further stated that Ms Clancy was "*quite adamant*" that Individual A should not call the parent back and that "*it had been sorted*".

Witness A stated that Individual A called the parent who said that she was going to make a complaint because Ms Clancy had called, had apologised for Individual A's behaviour and told the parent, "*feel free*" to make a complaint. Witness A stated that he invited the parent to the School for a meeting and that the parent did not make a complaint.

In his oral evidence, Witness A further stated that Ms Clancy had contacted a number of pupils' families and encouraged them to raise issues after she had been suspended. He said that staff at the School were required to direct parents to the School's complaints policy rather than advise them to make a complaint, and that they were expected to act professionally and appropriately when doing so.

Witness A also stated, in his evidence, that around March 2019, Witness A spoke to a pupil's mother and the police about an incident in relation to a pupil. Witness A stated that the pupil's father called Witness A to discuss an issue some weeks later after he had met with Ms Clancy to discuss the incident. Witness A stated that the pupil's father said that he had been told to make a complaint by Ms Clancy. Witness A stated that he spoke to [REDACTED] who told him that Ms Clancy had told the pupil's father to complain and that Ms Clancy had said she would inform Witness A of the complaint.

The panel went on to consider the written submissions of Ms Clancy who referred the panel to the statements of two of the parents regarding two alleged incidents. Ms Clancy stated that the parent of the pupil regarding a third incident was contacted but never replied.

The panel considered the evidence relating to whether Ms Clancy encouraged a parent to make a complaint about Individual A. The panel noted the conflicting accounts provided by the parties and the absence of live evidence from any of the parents concerned. The panel also considered the contemporaneous emails from parents, which did not support the suggestion that Ms Clancy had encouraged them to make a complaint.

The panel recognised that Ms Clancy had been copied into an email to the governors; however, it considered that this was consistent with her role as DSL and did not, in itself, support the allegation. The panel further noted that, given the apparent animosity between Ms Clancy and Witness A, and the broader difficulties within the School at the time, it was important to seek to find independent corroboration where possible.

The panel recognised that the three pupils' statements dated 8 October 2019 were contemporaneous records of the incident that occurred on 2 October 2019 however it

also noted that the evidence from those pupils was hearsay which could not be tested. The panel concluded that it could not be satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that Ms Clancy had encouraged a complaint to be made about Individual A. The panel further concluded that there was insufficient evidence Ms Clancy encouraged any parent to raise such a complaint.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 4(b) not proven.

- 5. You engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards one or more staff members within the Whitby Schools Partnership, including by making comments to other staff members to the effect of:**
- a. Calling Individual A a misogynist;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(a).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that on one occasion in April 2019, Ms Clancy called Individual A a “*misogynist*”.

In his oral evidence, Witness A explained that the incident arose following a governors’ meeting the previous evening, at which a request for funding for a project had been discussed. Witness A said Individual A had declined to approve further expenditure until there was evidence of educational impact, as no lessons in relation to that project had yet taken place. Individual A had told Ms Clancy after the meeting that some staff were unhappy with this decision, and he said she appeared dissatisfied that the matter had been raised.

Witness A stated that when he arrived at the School early the next morning, he asked after Ms Clancy’s whereabouts and was told she had gone to speak with a colleague. On her return, Ms Clancy said to Individual A, “*I’ve heard you’ve been slagging my project.*” Witness A said Ms Clancy walked towards the corridor and shouted to Individual A, “*don’t come near me*” and called Individual A a “*misogynist*”.

Witness A stated that he told [REDACTED] what had happened and that [REDACTED] went to speak with Ms Clancy. Witness A stated that he entered the room where [REDACTED] and Ms Clancy were and further stated that Ms Clancy again called Individual A a “*misogynist*”. Witness A’s evidence was that Ms Clancy called Individual A a “*misogynist*” in a conversation with or in front of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that [REDACTED] was present in the meeting with Witness A and Ms Clancy. Ms Clancy submitted that [REDACTED] made no mention of her calling Individual A a misogynist in his interview on 24 March 2020 or in his notes which he made in December 2019.

The panel considered the notes of the interview of [REDACTED] dated 1 October 2020 where he was recorded as stating that on one occasion, Witness A had asked

[REDACTED] to bring Ms Clancy to him and that they all had a conversation. [REDACTED] had stated that during the conversation, Ms Clancy said that she “*felt threatened and intimidated by [Individual A]*” and called them “*a misogynist*”. [REDACTED] stated that Ms Clancy seemed “*distressed*”. [REDACTED] stated that Witness A said that he “*would take on board her comments*”.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5(a). The panel noted that the evidence of [REDACTED] indicated that Ms Clancy had made comments to staff suggesting that Individual A was a “misogynist”. Having considered the evidence as a whole, the panel was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that Ms Clancy made the alleged comment. The panel concluded that describing Individual A as a misogynist within the School was inappropriate.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 5(a) proven.

**b. Stating that Individual A drinks and takes drugs on a weekend;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(b).

The panel considered the undated written statement of an unnamed individual who stated that during their weekly meetings with Ms Clancy in September 2019, the individual was recorded stating that Ms Clancy had said that Individual A was “*drinking and taking drugs on the weekend, hence the state of him in school*”.

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A, who stated that Ms Clancy had told [REDACTED] that Individual A was “*a cocaine user*”. Witness A also explained that Ms Clancy had seen that [REDACTED] was selling clothing on Facebook Marketplace and had said that [REDACTED] was doing so because of Individual A’s “*cocaine habit*”.

In his oral evidence, Witness A stated that rumours had been circulating within the School, and that Ms Clancy had been alleging that Individual A was an alcoholic and a cocaine user. He explained that he had become aware of a number of such comments over time, and that, in his view, accusing someone of having an alcohol or substance misuse problem was an allegation likely to damage a person’s professional reputation.

Witness A also described an incident when he arrived at the School to find police vans present. He said he initially believed there had been a crisis, but the police informed him that they were there because an allegation had been made that Individual A had arrived at work under the influence of alcohol. Witness A stated that Individual A was breathalysed in a police van on the school site, in view of pupils and parents. He further explained that, during the disciplinary investigation, Ms Clancy had said that she had not made the call to the police but knew who had.

The panel considered the written evidence of Ms Clancy, who stated that Individual A had sent her several photographs of their drinking and text messages in which they said they were “*smashing them back.*” The panel also noted Ms Clancy’s further evidence that she had raised a concern with the Chair of Governors that Individual A had presented for work appearing to be under the influence.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5 (b). The panel noted that references to Ms Clancy allegedly stating that Individual A was using cocaine were limited and derived primarily from an uncorroborated comment recorded in the investigation report and from Witness A’s account which itself was vague and unparticularised so far as any detailed facts concerning Ms Clancy’s allegations were concerned. The panel was unable to give any weight to the anonymous hearsay reference in the investigation report, and there was therefore no independent or first-hand evidence to support the allegation.

The panel accepted that Ms Clancy had raised concerns about Individual A’s alcohol consumption, however it noted that she had reported those concerns through the appropriate channels by bringing them to the attention of the Chair of Governors. The panel found no evidence that such concerns had been raised in an inappropriate manner, nor that she had made any allegation about drug use.

Applying the balance of probabilities, the panel was not satisfied that it was proven that Ms Clancy engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards one or more staff members within the Whitby Schools Partnership by making comments to other staff members to the effect of stating that Individual A drinks and takes drugs on a weekend.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 5(b) not proven.

**c. Stating that Individual A had been employed to drag the School down;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(c).

The panel considered the undated written statement of an unnamed individual who stated that during their weekly meetings with Ms Clancy in September 2019, Ms Clancy had said that Individual A had been employed to “*drag*” the School down and not improve it and that their “*sole purpose*” of employment was to get the School closed.

The panel noted that in the written evidence of Ms Clancy, she submitted that the number of pupils who chose to join the School as Individual A started was “*c115*” and this had decreased to “*c60*” prior to Individual A leaving the School.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5(c). The panel noted that the allegation was seemingly solely based on a comment attributed to an unnamed individual

in the investigation report. As the source of this comment could not be identified and no oral evidence was provided to support it, the panel was unable to place any weight on it.

The panel further noted that Ms Clancy denied making the alleged remark in her written representations and that Witness A's evidence did not refer to the expression attributed to her.

In the absence of any corroborative evidence, and applying the balance of probabilities, the panel was not satisfied that Ms Clancy made the alleged comment.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 5(c) not proven.

**d. Stating that Individual B lacks competency and professionalism;**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(d).

The panel had sight of, and considered, the text messages sent by Ms Clancy to Witness A which recorded her saying: *"[He] needs speaking to in no polite way... he is not safeguarding... if things don't change someone will get hurt and it will be solely down to his lack of safeguarding, competency, professionalism and mismanagement of [her]!"*

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that Ms Clancy sent Witness A a text message which said that she questioned Individual B's professionalism and their competency.

In his oral evidence, Witness A explained that when he started at the School he became aware of a number of issues that needed to be addressed and that he had been appointed to help turn the School around. He said that, with hindsight, had he been fully aware of the extent of the challenges, he might not have taken the role, as he did not consider himself the appropriate person for it at that time and had felt *"out of his depth"*. Nonetheless, he was determined to move the School forward, with a key focus on ensuring it was a safe and productive environment.

Witness A further stated that the way Ms Clancy spoke about other professionals was inappropriate and that, on reflection, he should have done more to address this. However, he described feeling like a *"deer in the headlights"* in the early stages of his role and said he had been trying *"to steer the ship as much as he could"*.

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who stated that she sent a text about Individual B to Witness A because no steps were taken to safeguard children or staff after she raised concerns about [REDACTED] and Individual C. Ms Clancy, in her evidence, said that her tone in the messages was *"direct and forthright"*.

The panel considered the context in which the messages were sent. It noted that Ms Clancy stated that the concerns she raised related to safeguarding, and that there was no evidence she used inappropriate language beyond the phrase cited.

The panel noted that the messages were sent outside normal working hours. The School's Code of Conduct Policy states that "*staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.*"

The panel considered this provision to be directly relevant to the conduct in allegation 5(d). By sending a message to Witness A after 9pm on a Friday stating that Individual B lacked competency and professionalism, Ms Clancy communicated concerns about a colleague in a manner that fell short of the standards of professionalism expected by the Code of Conduct. The panel noted that the content of the message had the potential to undermine the professional reputation of a member of staff within the Whitby Schools Partnership.

Having considered the message in its context and the expectations set out in the Code of Conduct, the panel concluded that Ms Clancy sending the message to Witness A stating that Individual B lacks competency and professionalism was inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 5(d) proven.

**e. Stating that Individual C was 'bordering unfit to be in post';**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(e).

The panel had sight of, and considered, the text messages sent by Ms Clancy to Witness A which recorded her saying: "*[She] is bordering unfit to be in post and if things don't change someone will get hurt*".

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that Ms Clancy said, in the same text message that she spoke of Individual B, that Individual C was "*bordering unfit to be in post*". Witness A explained that Individual C [REDACTED] and his evidence was that Ms Clancy "*did not like how this was being done*".

The panel then considered Ms Clancy's written evidence which was that she "*[raised] concerns about [Individual C]*".

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5(e). The panel noted the text message in which Ms Clancy stated that an individual was "*bordering unfit to be in post*".

The panel considered the context in which the comment was made, including Ms Clancy's assertion that she held safeguarding concerns. However, the panel noted that

the message was sent to her line manager late on a Friday evening, outside normal professional channels, and that the phrasing used was inappropriate for raising concerns about a colleague's suitability for their role. The panel also considered the excerpt from the Code of Conduct Policy detailed above, which requires staff to not engage in conduct outside work that could damage the reputation of the School or members of its community. The panel concluded that sending such a message in this manner and with this wording was inconsistent with the expectations set out in the Code of Conduct.

Taking the evidence as a whole, the panel concluded that, although the concerns may have related to safeguarding, the manner and language used by Ms Clancy were inappropriate and unprofessional. The panel noted that the messages appeared to be an incomplete record of the conversations however, on balance, the facts were proven on the evidence it had and Ms Clancy had engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards a staff member within the Whitby Schools Partnership by making the comment to another staff member.

Having considered the evidence before it, the panel found allegation 5(e) proven, and that Ms Clancy's conduct in this respect was both inappropriate and unprofessional.

**f. Stating that Individual D 'has form for getting pissed';**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(f).

The panel had sight of text messages dated 22 November 2018 at 22:52 sent to Witness A from Ms Clancy which stated "*Looks like [she] is on the sauce again*". Witness A had then asked Ms Clancy what she meant. Ms Clancy had then told Witness A to look at Individual D's email and "*told [REDACTED] not to dignify it with a response*". Witness A had said that he believed Individual D sent it by accident, to which Ms Clancy replied "*she had form for getting pissed and doing this*".

The panel considered the evidence of Witness A who stated that in November 2018, Ms Clancy said that Individual D, a staff member at the School, was "*on the sauce again*" and "*had form for getting pissed*".

The panel then considered Ms Clancy's written evidence, which was that on one occasion in 2018, Individual D had sent a "*somewhat inflammatory*" email to all the staff. Ms Clancy stated that Witness A had asked her what the situation was regarding an email that Individual D had sent to all the staff. Ms Clancy stated that she looked at the email and said that it was "*somewhat inflammatory*". Ms Clancy stated that she "*colloquially*" sent the text message to Witness A which said that Individual D had previously sent a message after drinking alcohol. Ms Clancy stated that she suspected that the email Individual D sent had been sent because they had been drinking. Ms Clancy further stated that she was not aware that the texts were seen as an issue until Autumn 2019.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5(f). The panel accepted that Ms Clancy sent the messages in question.

The panel noted that the messages were part of an informal exchange between Ms Clancy and Witness A and that she may have been responding in a colloquial manner. It also recognised that the concerns she raised related to staff performance and that, in themselves, such concerns could be legitimate.

However, the panel concluded that the language used in the message was inappropriate and that any concerns about a colleague's suitability for their role should have been raised through proper professional channels, rather than by way of an informal private text message. The panel noted that there was no evidence before it that Ms Clancy had attempted to raise the matter through the School's established safeguarding or management routes, and in particular that she did not escalate her concerns via the procedures available to her, even though Witness A had said he could be contacted outside of working hours.

The panel also considered the School's Code of Conduct, which requires staff to avoid conduct outside work that could damage the reputation of the School or of members of its community. The panel found that sending a message of this nature, in this manner and outside normal professional channels, was inconsistent with the expectations set out in that policy.

Taking the evidence in the round, the panel determined that Ms Clancy had engaged in inappropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards a staff member within the Whitby Schools Partnership by sending the messages to another staff member.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 5(f) proven, and that Ms Clancy's conduct in this respect was both inappropriate and unprofessional.

**g. Commenting on Individual E's ability to do their job.**

Ms Clancy denied allegation 5(g).

The panel considered the written and oral evidence of Witness A who stated that Ms Clancy "*made comments*" about Individual E and that Ms Clancy "*was getting complaints drawn*" toward Individual E. Witness A explained that Individual E offers tutoring outside of School and stated Ms Clancy spoke to pupils who had tutoring with Individual E when Individual E was off sick.

The panel considered the written evidence of [REDACTED] who stated that Ms Clancy was "*often very critical of staff members*" and that Ms Clancy had said that that a staff member was "*no good at their job*" and would "*belittle them*".

The panel went on to consider the written evidence of Ms Clancy who explained that Individual E had been providing private tuition to pupils. Ms Clancy stated that it was suggested by other members of staff that Individual E continued to provide tuition whilst signed off sick. The panel noted that Ms Clancy's contemporaneous interview transcript from 28 February 2020 which they reviewed appeared consistent with her evidence and further recorded her stating that a parent complained to her twice about Individual E, and that on 24 May, Individual E had said to Ms Clancy that she had told Witness A that Ms Clancy had made derogatory comments towards her. Ms Clancy had further stated that Individual E "*broke down and asked if I had been awful*". Ms Clancy had stated that she and Individual E had a conversation about the situation and then explained to Witness A individually what they had discussed.

The panel considered the notes of the interview of [REDACTED] dated 1 October 2020 who stated that Ms Clancy was "*critical*" of Individual E. [REDACTED] had stated that a parent had complained about Individual E's tutoring and Ms Clancy investigated the matter.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 5(g). The panel noted that Witness A's comments in the investigation material related to broader concerns about working relationships and did not directly support the specific allegation.

The panel further observed that the evidence in the bundle did not provide any reliable or independent support for the proposition that Ms Clancy had behaved inappropriately and/or unprofessionally as alleged.

In the absence of any substantive evidence and applying the balance of probabilities, the panel concluded that allegation 5(g) was not proven.

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

Having found a number of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

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 Ms Clancy, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Ms Clancy, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education ("KCSIE").

The panel considered that Ms Clancy was in breach of the following provisions of the October 2019 guidance (which was applicable at the time of the conduct):

- Paragraph 2: *"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play."*
- Paragraph 3: *"...everyone who comes into contact with [a child] has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action."*
- Paragraph 27: *"All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse)."*
- Paragraph 28: *"All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse."*
- Paragraph 40: *"Staff should ...share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision."*
- Paragraph 48: *"All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing."*
- Paragraph 76: *"Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies...School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the"*

*safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care."*

- Annex B under "work with others": *"The designated safeguarding lead is expected to ...liaise with the headteacher to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations."*
- Annex B under "Deputy designated safeguarding leads": *"... The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection ...remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated."*

The panel also considered whether Ms Clancy's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found that none of these offence types were relevant.

The panel took into account the toxic environment that the evidence suggested existed at the School at the time of the allegations. Having considered all of the evidence, the panel found that there was a [REDACTED], characterised by a strained relationship between Witness A and Ms Clancy and the resulting breakdown in communication and trust between them.

The panel considered whether the facts found proved under allegation 1 (a), (c) and (d) amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel accepted that Ms Clancy's actions as found proved demonstrated poor safeguarding practice and fell below the standards expected of a Designated Safeguarding Lead, particularly in relation to record-keeping and the timely sharing of information with the headteacher. However, the panel concluded that the failings did not reach the level of seriousness required and did not meet the threshold for unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel had found that Ms Clancy failed to take appropriate action and/or ensure appropriate action was taken with respect to safeguarding disclosures concerning one or more pupils by failing to report to the headteacher.

The panel considered allegation 1(a). The evidence indicated that the PCSO had been informed around lunchtime and that Witness A encountered the PCSO at a similar time. Although Ms Clancy was taking steps to address the immediate situation and the parent of the pupil was already aware, the panel found that this did not remove her responsibility to ensure that appropriate senior staff were alerted without delay.

The panel accepted that Ms Clancy was focused on the child's welfare. However, it considered that there remained sufficient opportunity for her to notify the headteacher at an earlier stage. Her failure to do so represented a departure from expected safeguarding practice, as delays in reporting concerns to the designated senior leader can create avoidable risks and undermine the effectiveness of safeguarding oversight. The panel also considered that this fell below the expectations set out in the Teachers' Standards, as detailed above.

The panel also considered allegations 1(c) and 1(d). The evidence showed that Ms Clancy sought to prioritise the child's health, safety and wellbeing in allegation 1(c). Nevertheless, the panel concluded that this did not obviate the need for timely escalation and that the omission to inform the headteacher could reasonably be regarded as a safeguarding concern.

The panel considered whether the facts found proved at allegation 2 amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel also took into account the broader context in which the events occurred as detailed above and having considered all of the circumstances surrounding the conduct, the panel concluded that although Ms Clancy's actions reflected poor professional judgment, and a failure to follow safeguarding practices, they did not meet the threshold of seriousness required to constitute unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel further noted that allegation 2, and Ms Clancy's failure to bring allegation 1 (a) to the headteacher's attention despite being asked by him whether there were any safeguarding concerns to raise, related to a single incident and not a wider failing in relation to safeguarding practice.

The panel considered whether allegation 5(a) amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel accepted that the comments were inappropriate and represented poor professional judgment. The panel considered that such remarks, if known more widely, could undermine confidence in [REDACTED] and in the School's leadership.

The panel considered that Ms Clancy's behaviour towards a colleague amounted to misconduct, as inappropriate behaviour towards another member of staff is not conduct expected of a teacher. The panel noted the facts found proven, namely that Ms Clancy had referred to a colleague as a "misogynist", which constituted inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour towards one or more staff members.

Although the panel regarded this as serious misconduct, it also took into account the wider context, including the [REDACTED] and the possibility that Ms Clancy believed she had a justified reason for expressing those views. In light of these factors, the panel concluded that, while serious in nature, the conduct did not fall significantly short of the standards expected of the profession to meet the threshold for unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel concluded that, although the remarks were inappropriate, they did not fall significantly short of the standards expected of a teacher and therefore did not meet the threshold for unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel considered whether Ms Clancy's conduct in allegation 5(d) amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel accepted that Ms Clancy sent the messages and that they demonstrated poor professional judgment. However, it noted that the messages were exchanged in the context of an established working relationship in which direct and informal communication appeared to be commonplace. The panel also took into account that the headteacher did not raise any concern about the messages at the time, and that the matters raised in them related to her concerns about what would, if genuine, be legitimate issues of staff competence and safeguarding. The panel concluded that, although the comments were unprofessional in tone, and fell short of the standards expected of a teacher, they did not reach the threshold of falling significantly short of the standards expected of a teacher.

The panel considered whether Ms Clancy's conduct in relation to allegations 5(e) and 5(f) amounted to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel accepted that the messages sent by Ms Clancy were unprofessional in tone and reflected poor professional judgment, particularly given their content and the fact that they concerned colleagues.

The panel also noted that the messages were exchanged on personal devices, outside school hours, and formed part of an informal communication between staff. The panel considered that, although the comments were inappropriate, they did not take place in a public or professional forum, and there was no evidence that they caused harm to pupils or undermined Ms Clancy's professional duties within the School.

The panel considered the definition of unacceptable professional conduct being "*misconduct of a serious nature, falling significantly short of the standard of behaviour expected of a teacher*" as set out in the Advice. The panel considered taking all the circumstances into account, that the conduct demonstrated by the proven elements of allegations 5(a), 5(d), 5(e) and 5(f) fell short of the standards expected of a teacher, particularly in respect of the failure to follow safeguarding practices, however did not fall sufficiently far below the standards expected of a teacher to meet the threshold for unprofessional conduct.

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

Accordingly, the panel was not satisfied that Ms Clancy was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Ms Clancy'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.

The panel considered it would be likely that public trust in the teaching profession would be weakened if members of the public were aware of the proven facts.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Ms Clancy's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice. The panel found that none of these offence types were relevant.

The panel considered whether Ms Clancy's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

The panel considered whether the conduct found proven under allegations 1(a), 1(c), 1(d) and 2 had the potential to bring the teaching profession into disrepute. The panel noted that failing to keep the headteacher informed of safeguarding matters could compromise the School's ability to safeguard pupils effectively and to lead the School in a manner that maintains public confidence.

The panel further noted that this failure resulted in parental complaints, which diverted the senior leadership team from their core responsibilities and had the potential to undermine confidence in the School's leadership. The panel accepted that parents did in fact raise concerns arising from these events and considered that such complaints could adversely affect the public's perception of the School and, by extension, the wider teaching profession.

The panel considered that parents have a reasonable expectation that headteachers will be kept informed about matters affecting pupils' welfare and conduct within the School. A failure to do so, particularly where it leads to parental dissatisfaction and complaints, has the potential to damage trust in the School's leadership and the profession as a whole.

The panel considered the definition of disrepute being "*conduct that could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher, therefore bringing the teaching profession into disrepute*" as set out in the Advice.

The panel considered the conduct found proven did involve conduct of a kind which could prejudice the reputation of the profession as they had found serious misconduct and a failure to follow the School's safeguarding procedures, and breaches of the Teacher's Standards and KCSIE.

The panel noted that it should take into account how the teaching profession is viewed by others, and the responsibilities and duties of teachers in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils as set out in the Advice. The panel found that Ms Clancy's failure to keep the headteacher informed of a serious safeguarding disclosure meant that the School was unable to respond promptly or effectively, and that such a failure risked undermining the public's trust in the School's ability to safeguard its pupils.

The panel considered the importance of maintaining public confidence in the profession and applied the standard of the ordinary, intelligent and well-informed citizen. In doing so, the panel recognised the seriousness of the safeguarding issues involved and concluded that a failure to safeguard pupils is capable of adversely affecting public confidence in the teaching profession.

Accordingly, the panel concluded that the conduct found proven under allegations 1(a), (c) and (d) and allegation 2 may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel noted that the facts found proven of engaging in appropriate and/or unprofessional behaviour towards one or more staff members in allegations 5(a), 5(d), 5(e) and 5(f). The panel considered that such remarks, if known more widely, could undermine confidence in [REDACTED] and in the School's leadership and therefore had the potential to damage the public's perception of the teaching profession. The panel considered that this behaviour towards a colleague was serious misconduct in that inappropriate behaviour to another member of staff in School is behaviour not expected of a teacher.

The panel considered the case of ***Mohammad Sarwar Lone v Secretary of State for Education [2019] EWHC 531 (Admin)*** which stated that *"a vital element of teaching as a profession is the concept of working with colleagues as a team within the school or college. Public confidence in teachers requires that all members of the profession have respect for their fellow teachers."*

The panel found that conduct such as describing Individual A as a misogynist was entirely inappropriate and represented a serious lapse in professional conduct. The comment demonstrated a lack of respect towards a senior member of staff and fell below the standards of professionalism expected of a teacher. Teachers are expected to maintain respectful working relationships and to avoid behaviour that could reasonably be perceived as disrespectful, undermining or disparaging.

The panel noted that describing a colleague as lacking competency and professionalism and *"bordering unfit to be in post"*, even in private messages, related to a colleague's suitability to work with children. The panel considered that, if known publicly, such comments could raise concerns about the School's culture and leadership and thereby affect public confidence in the profession.

The panel also considered that Ms Clancy describing a colleague as having “*form for getting pissed*” and implying that this occurred while the colleague was at work was inappropriate. The panel considered that Ms Clancy’s unprompted comments to the headteacher were disrespectful towards other colleagues and Ms Clancy could have formally raised her concerns using appropriate channels and using language that is appropriate for a professional communication. The panel concluded that, if such comments were known more widely and understood in the context of the case, it could reasonably be regarded as damaging to the public’s perception of a teacher.

The panel concluded that allegations 5 (a), 5(d), 5(e) and 5(f) had the potential to bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel again took into account the School’s Code of Conduct Policy which provides that “*staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee’s own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community*”.

The panel considered that the text messages sent on a Friday night, though outside of normal working hours, were still within an education setting because they related to School matters. The panel considered that sending messages in this manner, using language that questioned a colleague’s professionalism, was inconsistent with the standards of conduct required by the Code of Conduct and carried a foreseeable risk of damaging the reputation of the School and its staff, and the public’s perception of the individual as a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Ms Clancy’s actions constituted conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

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

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

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

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

standards of conduct within the teaching profession, and that prohibition strikes the right balance between the rights of the teacher and the public interest if they are in conflict.

In the light of the panel's findings against Ms Clancy, which involved the failure to take appropriate action in respect to safeguarding disclosures and making inappropriate comments about members of staff, there was a strong public interest consideration in the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Ms Clancy 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 Ms Clancy 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 Ms Clancy in the profession.

Whilst there is evidence that Ms Clancy had a positive ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweighed any interest in retaining Ms Clancy in the profession, since her behaviour had the potential to bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times.

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

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.

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.

The panel considered the following character references that had been provided within the bundle:

[REDACTED] dated 20 March 2021: *“Sarah Clancy was always helpful and supportive and would try and sort issues or pass them to [REDACTED].”*

[REDACTED] dated 23 March 2021: *“Sarah has always been a well respected professional with vast knowledge of children and families in the Whitby area. She has always remained conscientious, non judgemental and supportive to all whilst prioritising the safeguarding of all children and enabling their voices to be heard... I have never had any concerns regarding Sarah’s attitude or professionalism.”*

[REDACTED] dated 23 March 2021: *“I always found Sarah to be incredibly efficient, supportive, fair and dedicated to her role and ultimately to the well-being of the students in her care and the colleagues around her. I always knew that any query or concern that I went to Sarah with would be listened to and appropriately acted upon swiftly. I never witnessed Sarah be anything but professional and incredibly knowledgeable.”*

[REDACTED] dated 23 March 2021: *“I found both Sarah [REDACTED] to be completely professional. They listened to my situation with competence and really made me feel comfortable to be able to speak freely.”*

[REDACTED] dated 12 April 2021: *“I always found Sarah professional and determined to carry out her duties to the best of her ability... At all times I found her overriding concern was the welfare of the students and she was willing to ask difficult questions and take the necessary actions in order to safeguard our vulnerable young people.”*

[REDACTED] dated 31 August 2021: *“I had a good working relationship with Sarah Clancy... She was very supportive of my role and always offered assistance and advice when asked.”*

The panel noted that Ms Clancy had provided further evidence of good character and considered the three additional character references from [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] that were submitted on day one of the proceedings:

[REDACTED] dated 31 December 2025: *“Sarah ranks among the best with regard to her integrity, professionalism, and dedication to keeping children safe.”*

[REDACTED] dated 23 January 2026: *“Sarah was highly capable and confident in her role. She was well organised, very knowledgeable, experienced and committed to maintaining high standards in her work.”*

[REDACTED] (undated): *“...Sarah Clancy demonstrated an exceptional ability to manage a large number of students with various complex challenges, meeting their own individual needs” and “I had no concerns when Ms Clancy dealt with safeguarding matters.”*

There was no evidence that Ms Clancy’s actions were not deliberate, and no evidence to suggest that she was acting under extreme duress. The panel did not have evidence that

Ms Clancy had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in her personal or professional conduct, nor that she had contributed significantly to the education sector. Whilst acknowledging the character references provided, the panel noted that Ms Clancy had varied working relationships with colleagues, and that while some were very positive, others were less constructive, and there was evidence that some working relationships changed over time.

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

The panel considered that the working environment at the School had been [REDACTED] and that Ms Clancy had been working under strain. The panel recognised that there were positive character references describing aspects of her work, including her knowledge of safeguarding practice.

The panel did not have any evidence of insight, remorse or reflection on Ms Clancy's part and the panel did not consider that publication alone would address the public interest concerns, particularly those relating to the maintenance of public confidence and the requirement to uphold proper standards across the profession.

The panel was therefore 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 Ms Clancy of prohibition.

The panel noted that a number of the findings involved failures to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures, including not keeping the headteacher informed of safeguarding disclosures. The panel recognised that these failures compromised the School's ability to safeguard pupils effectively and risked undermining confidence in the systems designed to protect children.

The panel also considered the findings relating to the inappropriate comments about colleagues and concluded that these demonstrated a lack of the professionalism expected of a teacher and a member of the leadership team. The panel further took into account the absence of evidence of insight or remorse. The panel considered this significant because insight is an important factor in assessing the risk of repetition. The panel was concerned that there was no indication that the behaviour would not be repeated in a future role.

While the panel carefully considered the positive character references and accepted that she was regarded by some colleagues as an effective practitioner, it concluded that these matters did not mitigate the seriousness of her conduct. Ms Clancy had not

demonstrated insight into the impact of her behaviour, nor any recognition that aspects of it fell below the standards expected of a teacher, particularly one in a leadership role. She showed no remorse or appreciation of the potential consequences of her actions for colleagues, the staff team, or the functioning of the school. The panel considered this lack of insight fundamentally incompatible with the responsibilities of a senior leader, who is required to uphold professional standards, work collaboratively, and contribute to the cohesion and effectiveness of the leadership team regardless of personal differences.

Having balanced the public interest considerations against the interests of Ms Clancy, the panel concluded that the seriousness of the failures in this case, particularly the safeguarding disclosure failures, the impact on the School's functioning, and the absence of insight, meant that the public interest in imposing a prohibition order outweighed the interests of the teacher.

Having reached its findings and considered the relevant public interest factors, the panel concluded that a recommendation for prohibition was both appropriate and proportionate. The panel determined that a prohibition order was required to maintain public confidence in the profession and uphold proper standards of conduct.

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 two 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.

In considering the appropriate review period, the panel took into account that while the conduct was serious, it fell at the lower end of the spectrum and that the [REDACTED] environment at the School formed part of a wider context. The panel also considered the appropriate review period and concluded that a period of two years would strike a fair and proportionate balance. This would allow Ms Clancy sufficient time to reflect on the

panel's findings and demonstrate insight in the future, while ensuring that the public interest considerations are met.

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 two-year review period.

## **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 conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, but do not amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel has found some of the allegations not proven, and I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Ms Sarah Clancy should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of two years.

In particular, the panel has found that Ms Clancy is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a finding of failures to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures which compromised the School's ability to safeguard pupils effectively.

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 Ms Clancy, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, *"The panel found that Ms Clancy's failure to keep the headteacher informed of a serious safeguarding disclosure meant that the School was unable to respond promptly or effectively..."* A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

I have also taken into account the panel's comments on insight and remorse, which the panel sets out as follows, *"The panel did not have any evidence of insight, remorse or reflection on Ms Clancy's part."*

The panel also comment, *"The panel was concerned that there was no indication that the behaviour would not be repeated in a future role."*

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

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, *"The panel considered the conduct found proven did involve conduct of a kind which could prejudice the reputation of the profession as they had found serious misconduct and a failure to follow the School's safeguarding procedures, and breaches of the Teacher's Standards and KCSIE."*

I am particularly mindful of the finding of failing to take appropriate action in respect to safeguarding disclosures 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 Ms Clancy herself. The panel comment *“The panel did not have evidence that Ms Clancy had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in her personal or professional conduct, nor that she had contributed significantly to the education sector. Whilst acknowledging the character references provided, the panel noted that Ms Clancy had varied working relationships with colleagues, and that while some were very positive, others were less constructive, and there was evidence that some working relationships changed over time.”*

I am mindful of the number of positive character references provided to the panel.

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

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the lack of evidence of insight or remorse. The panel has said, *“The panel did not have any evidence of insight, remorse or reflection on Ms Clancy’s part and the panel did not consider that publication alone would address the public interest concerns, particularly those relating to the maintenance of public confidence and the requirement to uphold proper standards across the profession.”*

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Ms Clancy has made to the profession. In my view, it is necessary to impose a prohibition order in order to maintain public confidence in the profession. A published decision, in light of the circumstances in this case, that is not backed up by evidence of insight and remorse, 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 two-year review period.

I have considered the panel's comments "*In considering the appropriate review period, the panel took into account that while the conduct was serious, it fell at the lower end of the spectrum and that the [REDACTED] environment at the School formed part of a wider context. The panel also considered the appropriate review period and concluded that a period of two years would strike a fair and proportionate balance.*"

The panel has also said that a two-year review period "...would allow Ms Clancy sufficient time to reflect on the panel's findings and demonstrate insight in the future, while ensuring that the public interest considerations are met."

I have considered whether a two-year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a two-year review period is sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the failures in disclosing safeguarding matters which impacted on the School's functioning, the subsequent impact this has on the reputation on the profession, the lack of evidence of any insight or remorse and the risk of repetition.

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

**This means that Ms Sarah Clancy is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England.** She may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 8 April 2028, two years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If she does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Ms Clancy remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Ms Clancy has a right of appeal to the High Court within 28 days from the date she is given notice of this order.



**Decision maker: Stuart Blomfield**

**Date: 8 April 2026**

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