



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Jonathon McCreery: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

February 2026

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

Teacher: Mr Jonathon McCreery

Teacher ref number: 1074381

Teacher date of birth: 29 May 1989

TRA reference: 20655

Date of determination: 14 April 2026

Former employer: Looe Community Academy, Sunrising, East Looe, Cornwall

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 26 January 2026 and 17 February 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Jonathon McCreery.

The panel members were Mr Adnan Qureshi (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Kim Chudley (lay panellist) and Ms Jo Palmer-Tweed (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Davina Kahlon of Eversheds Sutherland International LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Saiqa Islam of No.8 Chambers, instructed by Capsticks LLP and on 14 April 2026, Mr Scott Smith of Capsticks LLP.

Mr Jonathon McCreery was present and was not represented.

Independent counsel, Mr Martin Jones of Hugh James LLP solicitors was instructed by the TRA to question Colleague A on behalf of Mr McCreery.

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

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings dated 12 November 2025.

It was alleged that Mr McCreery was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that, while employed as a teacher at Looe Community Academy (“the School”) he:

1. Between approximately October 2021 and January 2022 failed to maintain professional boundaries with Colleague A by:
 - a. Sending inappropriate messages as set out in Schedule 1:
 - b. On one or more occasions suggesting that he and Colleague A should ‘find somewhere quiet’ for a ‘cuddle’ (or words to that effect);
 - c. On one or more occasions encouraged and or coerced Colleague A to follow him into an empty cupboard and/or room alone;
 - d. On one or more occasions encouraged and/ or coerced Colleague A to engage in inappropriate physical contact whilst at School;
 - e. Making inappropriate physical contact with Colleague A in front of pupils by poking her with his fingers and/or nudging her with his foot;
 - f. On the 18 January 2022 he made inappropriate physical contact with Colleague A in a cupboard.
2. Mr McCreery’s conduct as set out in any or all of allegation 1 was sexually motivated.
3. Mr McCreery’s conduct as may be proven at allegation 1 and/or 2 demonstrated a lack of insight into his conduct where previous concerns have been raised and advice and/or training provided.
4. Mr McCreery failed to declare in his application for a position at the School:
 - a. The full facts in relation to his previous role(s);
 - b. That he had been subject to one or more conduct investigations;
 - c. That his conduct resulted in his previous employment being ceased and/or terminated.

5. Mr McCreery's conduct as set out in allegation 4 was dishonest and/or lacked integrity.

Mr McCreery admitted allegations 1, 3, 4 and 5 but denied allegation 2. In respect of the admitted allegations, Mr McCreery accepted that his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel was provided with a Statement of Agreed Facts, signed and dated 21 February 2025, in which Mr McCreery admitted all of the allegations. The panel noted the bundle also included correspondence between Mr McCreery and Capsticks LLP, acting on behalf of the TRA, in which Mr McCreery sought amendments to the Statement of Agreed Facts. Those amendments were not agreed. The panel further noted that, when giving oral evidence, Mr McCreery stated that he no longer admitted allegation 2, and that he had signed the Statement of Agreed Facts only because he wanted the matter to be dealt with quickly and for it to proceed as a Professional Conduct Panel Meeting rather than a Professional Conduct Panel Hearing. In light of these matters, the panel treated the Statement of Agreed Facts with caution.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology; anonymised pupil list and schedule to the allegations – pages 5 to 21

Section 2: Notice of Proceedings and response – pages 22 to 55

Section 3: Statement of Agreed Facts – pages 56 to 70

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 71 to 93

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 94 to 475

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 476 to 496

In addition, the panel agreed to accept:

- Screenshot of a message between Mr McCreery and Colleague A dated 6 August 2025;
- Statement from Mr McCreery.

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

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

Witnesses

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

Colleague A; [REDACTED]

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Witness C – [REDACTED]

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr McCreery commenced employment at the School as a cover supervisor on 29 June 2021 and, from 1 September 2021, additionally undertook duties as a PE Teacher. In January 2022 he became the subject of formal disciplinary proceedings and was summarily dismissed on 14 February 2022.

Mr McCreery had previously been employed by [REDACTED]. He was subsequently employed at [REDACTED] between March and June 2021.

On 15 March 2022, the [REDACTED] referred Mr McCreery to the Teaching Regulation Agency. Both the School and [REDACTED] are part of the [REDACTED].

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

1. Between approximately October 2021 and January 2022 failed to maintain professional boundaries with Colleague A by:

a. Sending inappropriate messages as set out in Schedule 1;

The panel heard evidence from Colleague A who confirmed that Mr McCreery gave her his phone number following an incident with a pupil in which Colleague A was distressed. Colleague A confirmed that the following morning Mr McCreery told Colleague A *“I was worried all night about you”* and that she could have his phone number for support.

Colleague A reviewed the screenshots of messages within the bundle and confirmed that her messages appeared in the blue bubbles and Mr McCreery’s appeared in the grey bubbles. The panel reviewed the screenshots provided in the bundle and was satisfied that these messages corresponded to those set out in Schedule 1 to the allegations.

The panel reviewed all the messages set out in Schedule 1, and noted in particular the following messages:

- *“you are extremely good looking”*;
- *“I’m sure you’ve noticed me lookin at you [hearts/eyes emoji]”*;
- Referring to Colleague A as *“babe”*;
- *“I wish I had seen you crying I would have given you a [REDACTED] cuddle if that would be allowed?”*;
- ending messages *“xxx”*;
- *“something more. Like a secret for just between me and you! [wink emoji] haha xxx”*
- *“ok being brave... is it just a cuddle you want?? Xxx”*;
- *“we do have that little cupboard in our tutor room [emoji wink/face]”*;
- *“so what else is on your mind now we’re getting into it”*.

The panel noted paragraph 11 of Colleague A’s statement: *“When I received these messages at the time, I felt uncomfortable. I tried to convince myself that I was being stupid, but I had [REDACTED]. The truth is that I did not know how to feel or act, I did not really talk much and did not really know what the appropriate response to the Teacher’s messages were.”*

The panel noted there were also messages from Colleague A which included *“xxx”* in the responses. Colleague A explained during oral evidence that she did not initiate the messages, nor did she choose to include *“xxx”*; rather, they felt pressured to mirror Mr McCreery’s style of messaging. Colleague A nevertheless stated that it was common for her to [REDACTED] in this way, and that she regarded Mr McCreery as a friend at work at the time.

The panel also noted a message from Colleague A, exhibited to Mr McCreery’s statement, in which Colleague A stated: *“I’ve really missed seeing you around.”* Colleague A explained that this message was sent in the context of missing a friend and colleague around the School, as Mr McCreery had been absent with [REDACTED]. Colleague A further stated that she viewed Mr McCreery as a mentor whom they would approach for support.

Mr McCreery explained, when giving oral evidence, that the messages between him and Colleague A were “*somewhat reciprocal*,” and that he believed their relationship was mutual because Colleague A would often respond to him in a similar manner. He stated that his use of “xxx” was intended as a childish and immature sign-off, and that he regularly used “xxx” when messaging many of his female friends. He said that he cared about Colleague A as a friend.

Mr McCreery further explained to the panel that he had messaged Colleague A “*good looking*” and used heart-eye emojis because he thought Colleague A was attractive and wanted to help her feel good about herself.

Mr McCreery also told the panel that Colleague A had not disclosed the full chain of messages. The panel noted that Colleague A explained she no longer had access to the complete message thread because she had deleted the messages, as she no longer wanted them on her phone. Colleague A said she was only able to retrieve the messages provided because she had previously taken screenshots to share with friends when she began to feel that Mr McCreery’s behaviour was becoming unusual and sought validation. Colleague A also confirmed that the screenshots exhibited by Mr McCreery in his statement were not complete.

Mr McCreery admitted sending the messages set out in Schedule 1 to Colleague A and accepted that they were inappropriate, and this was supported by the evidence before the panel. The panel was satisfied that it had sufficient messages before it for it to be satisfied that the messages set out in Schedule 1 were inappropriate and clearly failed to maintain a professional boundary.

The panel considered the hierarchical relationship between Mr McCreery and Colleague A to be particularly important context. Colleague A was [REDACTED], whereas Mr McCreery was a member of teaching staff with a clear responsibility to ensure that his communications with a [REDACTED] colleague remained professional. This responsibility was especially significant in light of the final-warning conditions on his employment, imposed by the School following previous incidents at other schools where he had been employed. Those conditions stated: “...*only engage with any member of the school community in a professional manner. Behaviour, banter or comments that stray beyond what is generally acceptable at work must be avoided. This is an over-arching condition regardless of whether an individual might take or report taking offence.*” The panel therefore considered that Mr McCreery had failed to maintain appropriate boundaries by sending these inappropriate messages.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(a) proven.

- b. On one or more occasions suggesting that you and Colleague A should ‘find somewhere quiet’ for a ‘cuddle’ (or words to that effect);**

The panel heard evidence from Colleague A, who stated that Mr McCreery told her, *“you need to find us a quiet space”* to have a cuddle. Colleague A said they responded, *“it’s a school, there are no quiet spaces”* using a snappy tone in an attempt to discourage the suggestion. Colleague A explained that she did not feel able to refuse directly because she was concerned about how Mr McCreery might react. Colleague A stated that Mr McCreery replied that he was *“counting on”* her finding such a space.

The panel noted that this account was consistent with the statement Colleague A provided during the School’s investigation shortly after the incident, dated 21 January 2022, as well as with her more recent statement prepared for this hearing.

Colleague A described this exchange as a turning point, after which she realised that Mr McCreery’s behaviour was clearly inappropriate and that he may have intended more than a simple hug.

The panel also considered Schedule 1, in which Mr McCreery sent Colleague A the message: *“I would have given you a [REDACTED] cuddle if that would be allowed?”*

The panel considered Mr McCreery statement in which he said: *“...I’d seen her crying as I would have offered her a [REDACTED] cuddle. She responded to say she would like that and could use a cuddle. It was entirely wrong of me to do so, but I had suggested we found a quieter place away from pupils as I was trying not to be inappropriate.”*

The panel also considered email exchanges between Mr McCreery and Capsticks LLP, where he stated: *“Yes did suggest a cuddle because i wanted to comfort and support her having seen her upset numerous times. I said to her you look like you could use a cuddle. To which she said yes hence why I said you need to find somewhere quiet for us to have a cuddle”* and *“I do admit I had suggested previously that we found a quiet room or corner for a cuddle but purely as to avoid pupils and being seen as inappropriate.”*

Mr McCreery admitted allegation 1(b) and accepted that, in asking Colleague A to find a quiet place for a cuddle, he failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. This admission was consistent with and supported by the evidence of Colleague A. The panel considered that Mr McCreery failed to maintain professional boundaries by suggesting and encouraging inappropriate physical contact with a [REDACTED] in a private space.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(b) proven.

c. On one or more occasions encouraged and or coerced Colleague A to follow you into an empty cupboard and/or room alone;

The panel heard evidence from Colleague A, who explained that the teacher had referred to *“that little cupboard in our tutor room”* to have a cuddle. The panel noted this message within the bundle, alongside a further message stating: *“Like a secret just between me and you!! [wink emoji] haha xxx.”* Colleague A stated that, upon seeing this message at

the time, her earlier concerns that Mr McCreery had been making romantic suggestions towards her felt justified.

Colleague A also described a separate incident on [REDACTED] 2022, during which she was assisting Mr McCreery [REDACTED]. She stated that Mr McCreery told her it was the “*perfect opportunity*” to have a cuddle inside a [REDACTED].

The panel considered Colleague A’s statement taken near the time of the incident, in which she stated: “*At approximately [REDACTED] 2022, everyone was leaving and I was waiting outside in the corridor. Jon McCreery approached me and said something along the lines of something being “the perfect opportunity”, sounded frustrated but in like a joking sort of way and it was as though he was beckoning me to come with him. I didn’t really make sense of what he said, I was tired and unfocused but I did willingly follow. He led me to the [REDACTED].*”

The panel also considered the interview notes from the investigation meeting held between Witness B and Mr McCreery at the School on 25 January 2022:

“[Witness B]: Why would you comment about going into a cupboard? Why do that to a colleague? I don’t understand.

[REDACTED] She was upset at the time. When she had been upset we weren’t able to cuddle because of where we were. I wanted to cuddle her to support her. I couldn’t cuddle her when I wanted to. My only intention was to support a colleague.”

The panel also noted emails between Mr McCreery and Capsticks LLP, in which Mr McCreery stated “*Yes, I stated to go into a cupboard. But I did not state ‘to do something more’ what I actually said was ‘more than a quick cuddle’ this was implying that we couldn’t be seen so didn’t have to rush and could have a longer cuddle. I did not at any point mention anything other than a cuddle.*” Mr McCreery also explained that he suggested the cupboard so that he and Colleague A would be out of sight of pupils at the School, as he did not want to be seen doing anything inappropriate.

[REDACTED]. He stated that he did not beckon or instruct Colleague A to follow him into the cupboard, but that they had both “*naturally*” ended up there. However, Mr McCreery accepted that he had suggested the cupboard as a place for a cuddle.

The panel considered there was clear evidence of encouragement on the part of Mr McCreery, noting that references to a cupboard had been made on multiple occasions. The panel also took into account Colleague A’s particularly [REDACTED] at the time. Although the panel accepted that Mr McCreery was not aware of Colleague A’s [REDACTED], he had observed Colleague A to be [REDACTED] on several occasions. The panel further noted that Mr McCreery was in a position of authority over Colleague A, and that making such suggestions placed Colleague A in an uncomfortable position in

which Colleague A may have felt unable to decline. In the panel's view, Mr McCreery should have exercised appropriate professional judgement and avoided placing himself in a situation that risked taking advantage of Colleague A's [REDACTED]. The panel therefore considered that Mr McCreery had failed to maintain appropriate boundaries by encouraging and or coercing Colleague A to follow him into an empty cupboard and/or room alone.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(c) proven.

d. On one or more occasions encouraged and/ or coerced Colleague A to engage in inappropriate physical contact whilst at School;

The panel considered paragraph 89 of Colleague A's statement, in which she stated: *"One time I recall coming into his tutor room and sitting by him and he went to touch the coat I was wearing to "look at the logo" on it. This logo was by my chest and his hand was there for what felt like too many seconds. It did not feel like he was looking at the logo at all, and if he was, he did not need to touch it to see it."* Colleague A explained when giving oral evidence that Mr McCreery brushed his thumb over her upper chest area.

Mr McCreery denied touching Colleague A in this manner and stated that no such incident was recalled.

The panel assessed the weight and reliability of Colleague A's evidence. It noted the consistency between the statement made near the time of the incident on 21 January 2022, the later statement prepared for the hearing, and Colleague A's oral testimony. Having regard to this consistency, and applying the balance of probabilities, the panel concluded that it was more likely than not that the incident occurred as described by Colleague A.

The panel considered that in light of the conditions placed on Mr McCreery at the start of his employment at the School, he should have been aware that unnecessary physical contact with female colleagues should have been avoided. The panel were satisfied that this contact was a clear breach of professional boundaries.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(d) proven.

e. Making inappropriate physical contact with Colleague A in front of pupils by poking her with your fingers and/or nudging her with your foot;

The panel heard evidence from Colleague A, who explained that when present in Mr McCreery's tutor room, Mr McCreery would often set up a seat directly next to him for Colleague A to sit on. Colleague A stated that on multiple occasions Mr McCreery would outstretch his feet on top of Colleague A's feet. Colleague A said there was no attempt to

move away, as Colleague A did not want to draw the pupils' attention to it, some of whom had already begun to notice.

The panel considered a statement made by Colleague A near the time of the incident, which stated: "[REDACTED]"

The panel considered Mr McCreery's statement, in which he stated: "[REDACTED]". The panel noted this account was inconsistent with Mr McCreery's more recent statement, in which he stated: *"Yes we did childishly prod and Elbow each other and it's fair to say I more than likely instigated this."* The panel also noted further inconsistencies in Mr McCreery's evidence, in oral evidence Mr McCreery initially stated that he had not put his feet on top of Colleague A's and then later referred to playing "footsie" with Colleague A.

[REDACTED] The panel considered that the physical contact was inappropriate and a breach of professional boundaries as he engaged in physical contact with a female colleague. Additionally, the panel noted that this contact took place in front of pupils.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(e) proven.

f. On the 18 January 2022 you made inappropriate physical contact with Colleague A in a cupboard.

[REDACTED]

Colleague A told the panel that they said to Mr McCreery, *"What are you doing? Someone will see us."* Colleague A explained that Mr McCreery then proceeded to put his arms around Colleague A and that Colleague A convinced herself it was simply a hug and that it was best to let it end quickly.

The panel considered paragraph 79 of Colleague A's statement, in which she stated: *"After some time of being frozen while his arms were around me, I pulled myself away from him and physically stepped backwards. The Teacher then grabbed my shoulders and pulled me back in. This time, it was not a hug, his hands were touching me everywhere all over my back – I don't know where else because at this point I felt numb and I was desperately trying to mentally remove myself from the situation. This must have lasted a few minutes but felt like hours."*

The panel also considered paragraph 80 of Colleague A's statement, in which she stated: *"The Teacher eventually physically let me go [REDACTED] - the Teacher followed. As I was walking away from the Teacher towards the exit he asked me, "how was that then?". I then just turned around and looked at him blankly. I could not verbalise anything. The Teacher then asked the same question again, and I responded, "[REDACTED], I am dreading that lesson" Teacher then asked me the question a third time, I then responded stating "alright". The Teacher responded to this saying "What do you mean just alright?" in an irritated tone...."*

The panel considered Mr McCreery's statement in relation to this incident, in which he stated: *"We both embraced in a cuddle, with Covid masks on as we used to having them on at all times. I did not pull her back for another, nor rub my hands over her body..... It was a mutual embrace and at no point did colleague A try and pull away or state she was uncomfortable etc. But of course, with reflection that should not be relevant as me being the senior staff member should not have been engaging in the behaviour at all. It was stupid, inappropriate and highly unprofessional which I accept."*

The panel noted although there was a dispute regarding the precise nature of the physical contact between Colleague A and Mr McCreery, the issue for the panel was whether inappropriate physical contact occurred at all. Mr McCreery admitted that such contact took place, and this admission was consistent with the evidence before the panel. The panel considered that the physical contact was inappropriate and a breach of professional boundaries. As the panel were not provided with any evidence to suggest that Colleague A was distressed prior to the incident requiring any physical contact and or comfort from Mr McCreery and there was no justification for engaging in the "cuddle". In any event, the panel noted that had Colleague A been distressed there would have been multiple other ways Mr McCreery could have supported that did not necessitate physical contact.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(f) proved.

2. Your conduct as set out in any or all of allegation 1 was sexually motivated.

The panel noted that Mr McCreery confirmed in his oral evidence that he was attracted to Colleague A and thought Colleague A was "pretty".

From the evidence before the panel, it was clear that Mr McCreery commented on Colleague A's appearance on multiple occasions, referring to Colleague A as *"extremely good looking"* and saying, *"I'm sure you've noticed me lookin at you [hearts/eyes emoji]"*. In addition, Mr McCreery stated, *"I can admit and see how the nature of our exchanges comes across flirty and rather embarrassing."*

Mr McCreery told the panel that he received personal gratification from the relationship he developed with Colleague A and that it gave him an "ego boost", he explained the more that he and Colleague A got to know one another it made him feel good about himself as he [REDACTED].

The panel also noted the text messages sent by Mr McCreery clearly indicated a sexual motivation, in particular: *"something more. Like a secret just between me and you! [wink emoji] haha xxx"* and *"ok being brave... is it just a cuddle you want?? Xxx"*. The panel considered that the phrasing of these messages suggested that Mr McCreery was seeking something beyond a cuddle. The panel further observed when Mr McCreery was

questioned about what he was referring to in these messages, he was unable to provide an explanation.

Colleague A explained that the message “*something more*” was sent in the context of discussion about going into the cupboard in the tutor room and, to Colleague A, felt as though Mr McCreery was insinuating something more romantic or physical. Colleague A also confirmed that she did not consent to a “cuddle” and recalled saying only that “*hugs are fine*” noting that, in their view, the two terms had different meanings, with a hug having no romantic connotation.

The panel also considered the incident in the [REDACTED]. From the evidence before the panel, it was clear that this meeting had been planned by Mr McCreery, as it was referenced in the text messages in which Mr McCreery mentioned the “*cupboard*” and a “*quiet place*”. Mr McCreery admitted in his oral evidence that he did not want to be seen cuddling Colleague A because he knew it would be inappropriate.

The panel also considered that there were numerous ways in which comfort or support could be offered to a colleague that would not involve physical contact, particularly given the hierarchical relationship between Mr McCreery and Colleague A. Mr McCreery further accepted during his evidence that he would not cuddle a male colleague as a form of offering support.

The panel noted Colleague A’s evidence that, while in the cupboard, Mr McCreery rubbed his hand down Colleague A’s back, which made Colleague A feel uncomfortable. This went beyond the bounds of an ordinary, non-intimate hug. Although this element was disputed by Mr McCreery, the panel considered the weight and reliability of Colleague A’s evidence and concluded that, on the balance of probabilities, it was more likely than not that this occurred.

The panel also considered the recent case of *Haddon v UK Council for Psychotherapy*, which highlighted that sexual motivation may be evidenced through a series of “stepping-stone” behaviours, including small verbal or physical signals that form part of a progression towards a potential sexual relationship. The panel was satisfied that there were clear stepping-stones of behaviour in this case, beginning with the text messages and building up to the physical contact that followed.

While the panel noted that no sexual relationship occurred, it recognised that a desire for such a relationship need only be a contributing factor to the messaging and the physical contact for sexual motivation to be established. In all the circumstances, the panel considered that the purpose of Mr McCreery’s words and actions was sexual.

The panel also noted clear indications that Mr McCreery had feelings towards Colleague A. The panel was satisfied that an element of Mr McCreery’s desire for the cuddle was linked to his sexual attraction to Colleague A and a pursuit of sexual gratification. This

conclusion was reinforced by the fact that, following the cuddle, Mr McCreery sought validation by asking Colleague A, “*how was it?*”

Whilst the panel acknowledged there was some reciprocal messaging from Colleague A, the panel considered that Mr McCreery should have exercised his professional judgement. It was incumbent upon him to maintain firm professional boundaries and to reinforce those boundaries politely and appropriately when interacting with Colleague A.

The panel also heard evidence from Mr McCreery that he has now chosen to work in a male-dominated environment to avoid any further incidents with female colleagues. He also stated that he had completed an optional sexual harassment course in an effort to reduce the risk of being involved in any future incidents.

The panel considered on the balance of probabilities a reasonable person would regard the words and actions of Mr McCreery, as found proven in allegation 1, as sexually motivated.

The panel therefore found allegation 2 proven.

3. Your conduct as may be proven at allegation 1 and/or 2 demonstrated a lack of insight into your conduct where previous concerns had been raised and advice and/or training provided.

The panel considered the final-warning conditions on Mr McCreery’s employment, imposed by the School following previous incidents at other schools where he had been employed. Those conditions stated: “...*only engage with any member of the school community in a professional manner. Behaviour, banter or comments that stray beyond what is generally acceptable at work must be avoided. This is an over-arching condition regardless of whether an individual might take or report taking offence.*”

Witness B explained in his oral evidence that these conditions were imposed after the School became aware of incidents at two previous schools where Mr McCreery had been employed. Witness B further stated that a significant amount of time was spent discussing with Witness B the distinction between professional and personal relationships, and it was made clear to him that a strict condition of the risk assessment was that he was to have no personal contact with female members of staff at the School.

The panel noted the reference provided by Person A, who was the [REDACTED] during Mr McCreery’s employment. In that reference, she stated that she would not recommend Mr McCreery for the post he had applied for. She described him as having weak personal integrity and referred to previous disciplinary proceedings. This section of the reference had been redacted, and the panel was therefore unable to review the details of those proceedings. Person A did not attend the hearing to give evidence.

Given the redactions, the panel asked Witness B for details of the previous incidents and what he had been told when he contacted [REDACTED]. In his evidence, Witness B confirmed that the proceedings related to allegations of harassment towards three female colleagues, which had led to Mr McCreery's employment at [REDACTED] being terminated. He explained that in each of the three reports, Mr McCreery was alleged to have made advances in an attempt to start a relationship with the colleagues concerned. All three colleagues stated that his behaviour was initially "jokey" but became persistent, even after they made it clear that they were uncomfortable. They reported the conduct to the headteacher at [REDACTED] because they wanted it to stop. Witness B also explained that the three colleagues had reported the incidents independently.

The panel noted that the available evidence about the previous incidents and concerns was limited. However, given Witness B's confirmation and Mr McCreery's acceptance that his employment had been terminated because of these matters, the panel was satisfied that on the balance of probabilities it was more likely than not that the incidents occurred.

The panel also considered paragraph 17 of Witness B's statement, in which he stated: *"As part of the risk assessment, the Teacher was being held to a higher standard, and the assessment set out the precise expectations he was expected to meet. If the Teacher broke the conditions of his risk assessment he would have been dismissed. This was important because of the risk he could bother female members of staff. The Teacher gave reassurances that he was a changed man, and we got it in writing that we could hold him to account."*

Witness B also exhibited to his statement signed confirmation by Mr McCreery that he read and understood the School's policies and emails regarding training, processes and expectations when a new teacher joined the School.

Witness B explained that, following the reporting of the incident with Mr McCreery and Colleague A, he held an investigation meeting with Mr McCreery. The panel noted the following extract from the meeting minutes:

"[Witness B]: You have shown good examples of professional support but there is an issue with your tendency to take it too far. We are only looking at one aspect of professionalism but it's an important factor."

JM: I was naïve.

Witness B: No, you were not naïve of these issues. You were fully aware. You had been made fully aware and you made the decision to cross the line. There was an incident where you watched a film and you sat at the back of the class next to Pupils noticed you nudged her.

JM: Colleague A nudged me first. I sat next to her on the radiator. I thought we were just friends.

The panel was satisfied there was a clear pattern of repeated behaviour and considered that, in light of the earlier incidents at other schools which had resulted in the termination of his employment, Mr McCreery should have exercised even greater caution. Despite being given the opportunity to work at the School under clearly defined expectations, the panel found that Mr McCreery demonstrated a lack of insight into his previous conduct and failed to take the necessary steps to prevent a recurrence of such behaviour.

The panel therefore found allegation 3 proven.

4. You failed to declare in your application for a position at the School:

- a. The full facts in relation to your previous role(s);**
- b. That you had been subject to one or more conduct investigations;**
- c. That your conduct resulted in your previous employment being ceased and/or terminated.**

The panel heard evidence from Witness B, who explained that Mr McCreery's offer of employment at the School had been made by the headteacher and was subject to satisfactory references. When Mr McCreery submitted his application form, the HR team noted that the references did not contain substantive previous employment information or references, and the matter was then escalated to Witness B.

The panel considered Mr McCreery's application form to the School dated 21 June 2021. Under the heading "*Previous employment and experience*", the form instructed applicants to "*start with the most recent first and work backwards*". The panel noted that the first entry provided by Mr McCreery covered the period January 2019 to January 2020 and that he did not disclose any employment held between January 2020 and June 2021 or provide any references for that period.

The panel considered paragraph 20 of Witness B's statement, in which he stated: "*These references were insufficient because it is expected practice that teachers applying for a role would include the headteacher of a school they had recently worked at. The Teacher had not done this....When the Teacher applied for the role at Looe, it was picked up that the Teacher did not have a reference from a former employer. Due to this, the Headteacher contacted Saltash, and Person A, the Headteacher of Saltash gave details on the Teacher's inappropriate conduct whilst he was at Saltash.*"

The panel noted the reference provided by Person A, which stated that she would not recommend the applicant for the post applied for. She described Mr McCreery as having weak personal integrity and referred to there being previous disciplinary proceedings. This section of the reference had been redacted, and the panel was therefore unable to

review the details of those disciplinary proceedings. The panel therefore considered Witness B's oral evidence in which he explained that Mr McCreery had been subject to disciplinary proceedings in which it was alleged that he made advances to three female colleagues which resulted in his termination at Saltash Community School.

The panel also reviewed the section headed "*Disclosure of interest*" in the application form Mr McCreery submitted to the School, which asked: "*Have you ever been subject of a formal disciplinary procedure or have you ever been dismissed from any previous employment?*" Mr McCreery answered "No".

The panel heard evidence from Mr McCreery, in which he stated: "*I regret not admitting what had occurred previously during my interview at Looe academy. Selfishly I was so desperate to land the role I didn't want to jeopardise my chances. Completely wrong of me.*"

Mr McCreery admitted to not making full disclosures in his application to the School, and this admission was consistent with the evidence before the panel.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 4 proven.

5. Your conduct as set out in any or all of allegation 4 was dishonest and/or lacked integrity

The panel considered whether Mr McCreery's conduct, in relation to allegation 4 amounted to dishonesty. In reaching their decision, the panel had regard to the legal test for dishonesty as set out in *Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd*.

The panel first considered Mr McCreery's actual knowledge and belief as to the relevant facts. The panel was satisfied that he deliberately omitted any reference to his previous employment and the associated misconduct proceedings. This was supported by his own admission that he was "*desperate to land a role*".

The panel then went on to consider whether Mr McCreery's belief, assessed against the standards of ordinary decent people amounted to dishonest conduct. The panel noted that applicants are expected to provide full and accurate employment histories, as this is a key safeguarding requirement in schools. Omitting previous employment, especially where misconduct proceedings had occurred, undermines that safeguarding process and would be regarded as dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

The panel therefore concluded that Mr McCreery's conduct in respect of allegation 4 was dishonest.

The panel then went on to consider if Mr McCreery's conduct in respect of allegation 4 lacked integrity.

[REDACTED]

The panel considered whether Mr McCreery's omission of his previous employment and the associated misconduct proceedings demonstrated a failure to meet the ethical standards expected of a teacher. The panel noted that integrity requires a professional to act with candour and to provide full and accurate information during recruitment, as this supports safeguarding processes in schools. Although the School later identified the omission through its own enquiries, the panel found that Mr McCreery did not act with the openness expected. His omission was deliberate as he wished to focus on securing a job.

The panel was mindful that professionals are not expected to be "paragons of virtue". However, the panel was satisfied that Mr McCreery failed to meet the standards of integrity expected of a teacher, as he did not properly exercise his professional duty to make full and frank disclosures in his application form.

The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr McCreery's conduct in respect of allegation 4 lacked integrity.

The panel therefore found allegation 5 proven.

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

Having found all of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers, which is referred to as "the Advice".

The panel first considered whether the conduct of Mr McCreery, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr McCreery 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
 - 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...

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

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

The panel also considered whether Mr McCreery’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual’s conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

The panel found that the offence of controlling or coercive behaviour and serious dishonesty was relevant.

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

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr McCreery was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr McCreery’s actions amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, the panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. It considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel also took account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils’ lives and the fact that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way that they behave.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr McCreery’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice.

As set out above in the panel’s findings as to whether Mr McCreery was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that the offence of controlling and coercive behaviour and serious dishonesty was relevant.

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

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr McCreery’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 unacceptable professional conduct/conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, it was necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

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

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

In light of the panel's findings against the teacher, which involved serious dishonesty in failing to disclose previous disciplinary proceedings to the School, there was a strong public interest concern. The undisclosed matters included inappropriate advances towards three female colleagues, which resulted in the termination of his employment at a previous school. The panel considered there was strong public interest consideration caused by Mr McCreery deliberately failed to make disclosures during his application process meant that the School may have been prevented from carrying out a proper assessment of his suitability for employment. This had the potential to undermine safeguarding arrangements and damage public trust in the profession.

The panel also found that Mr McCreery's conduct found proven at allegation 1 was sexually motivated. It noted that some of this conduct took place within the direct eyeline of pupils, and that certain pupils commented on his inappropriate behaviour towards Colleague A. The panel considered that there was a strong public interest consideration relating to pupils, as this conduct breached the standards of behaviour expected of teachers and had the potential to undermine public confidence in the profession. Furthermore, such behaviour was capable of negatively influencing pupils' behaviour.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against the teacher 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 the teacher was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr McCreery in the profession. The only evidence before the panel relating to his teaching ability was a character testimonial from 2023, which described him as a good collaborator and stated that he was well liked by pupils. The panel was not satisfied that this evidence was sufficient to properly assess Mr McCreery's teaching capability. Taking into account the limited evidence available in relation to Mr McCreery's teaching ability the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations outlined above outweighed any interest in retaining him in the profession since his behaviour amounted to a fundamental breach of the standards of conduct expected of a teacher.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the behaviour, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times. The panel noted that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position of trust in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest. In this case Mr McCreery exploited his position of trust over a junior female colleague.

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 the teacher.

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

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- abuse of position or trust;
- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour;
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions or purposeful destruction of evidence, especially where these behaviours have been repeated or had serious consequences, or involved the coercion of another person to act in a way contrary to their own interests;
- collusion or concealment including:
 - lying to prevent the identification of wrongdoing.

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

There was evidence that Mr McCreery's actions were deliberate.

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

Mr McCreery did not demonstrate or provide evidence of exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character, as the conduct found proven in respect of Colleague A was sustained over a period of time.

The panel saw evidence that showed Mr McCreery was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.

The panel considered the character reference included in the hearing bundle and noted that only one reference had been provided, dated 2023. The panel observed that the reference was brief and written by a colleague, whom he had known for two years. The reference stated that Mr McCreery offered help and support to colleagues, was able to work well under pressure, and was well liked by pupils.

The panel took into account that Mr McCreery had made some admissions at the outset of the hearing. The panel noted that following the announcement of its decision, Mr McCreery expressed remorse for his actions in his closing submissions, stating: "*I am deeply sorry for my behaviour and my conduct and I will never forgive myself.*" He also explained that he [REDACTED] with various agencies and support groups in order "*to understand my failings and to ensure it never happens again,*" and that he had completed a sexual harassment training course, achieving a 100% score. The panel also acknowledged the profound impact the proceedings had on Mr McCreery's [REDACTED].

The panel did not find sufficient evidence of insight. Despite Mr McCreery offering apologies for his behaviour, the panel was not satisfied that he fully understood the impact of his actions on Colleague A, nor the wider implications of his conduct on the reputation of the teaching profession.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition

order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for the teacher of prohibition.

The panel was of the view that prohibition was both proportionate and appropriate. The panel decided that the public interest considerations outweighed the interests of Mr McCreery, given the seriousness of the conduct in this case. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

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

The Advice indicates that there are certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period.

- serious sexual misconduct e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons, particularly where the individual has used their professional position to influence or exploit a person or persons.

The panel noted that, although the sexual misconduct was assessed as being at the lower end of the scale of seriousness, Mr McCreery's conduct found proven under allegation 1 was sexually motivated and involved an abuse of his position of trust in relation to a [REDACTED] over a sustained period. The panel further observed that many of Mr McCreery's actions were premeditated and demonstrated a clear pattern of escalating or "stepping-stone" behaviour, progressing from inappropriate text messages to physical contact.

In addition, the panel noted that Mr McCreery had previously received a formal warning in respect of inappropriate conduct towards a female colleague at a previous school. Despite having been warned, he went on to engage in conduct contrary to the warning he had been given over a period of time. The panel determined that this was not an isolated lapse in judgment.

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

One of these include:

- serious dishonesty

The panel found that Mr McCreery was seriously dishonest in failing to disclose his previous disciplinary proceedings. During the course of the hearing, Mr McCreery admitted that he was desperate to secure the role and knew that making such disclosures would adversely affect his prospects of employment. The panel considered this to be a clear breach of the professional standards of conduct expected of a teacher and determined that his dishonesty undermined the safer recruitment procedures relied upon during the recruitment and onboarding of teachers.

There was insufficient evidence before the panel of insight that would indicate Mr McCreery had been sufficiently rehabilitated such that he would not pose a risk of repeating the conduct.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period of 5 years.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Jonathon McCreery should be the subject of a prohibition order, with a review period of 5 years.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr McCreery 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
 - 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...

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include findings of failing to maintain professional boundaries with a junior colleague and that this conduct was sexually motivated. The findings also include a finding of conduct that was dishonest and lacked integrity.

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

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

“The panel also found that Mr McCreery’s conduct found proven at allegation 1 was sexually motivated. It noted that some of this conduct took place within the direct eyeline of pupils, and that certain pupils commented on his inappropriate behaviour towards Colleague A. The panel considered that there was a strong public interest consideration relating to pupils, as this conduct breached the standards of behaviour expected of teachers and had the potential to undermine public confidence in the profession. Furthermore, such behaviour was capable of negatively influencing pupils’ behaviour.”

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 has set out as follows:

“The panel took into account that Mr McCreery had made some admissions at the outset of the hearing. The panel noted that following the announcement of its decision, Mr McCreery expressed remorse for his actions in his closing submissions, stating: *“I am deeply sorry for my behaviour and my conduct and I will never forgive myself.”* He also explained that he [REDACTED] with various agencies and support groups in order *“to understand my failings and to ensure it never happens again,”* and that he had completed a sexual harassment training

course, achieving a 100% score. The panel also acknowledged the profound impact the proceedings had on Mr McCreery's [REDACTED].

The panel did not find sufficient evidence of insight. Despite Mr McCreery offering apologies for his behaviour, the panel was not satisfied that he fully understood the impact of his actions on Colleague A, nor the wider implications of his conduct on the reputation of the teaching profession.”

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

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

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

I am particularly mindful of the findings of sexually motivated conduct towards a junior colleague and dishonesty in this case and the impact that such findings have on the reputation of the profession.

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

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

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

“Mr McCreery did not demonstrate or provide evidence of exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector. The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character, as the conduct found proven in respect of Colleague A was sustained over a period of time.

The panel saw evidence that showed Mr McCreery was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings/warnings.

The panel considered the character reference included in the hearing bundle and noted that only one reference had been provided, dated 2023. The panel observed that the reference was brief and written by a colleague, whom he had known for two years. The reference stated that Mr McCreery offered help and support to colleagues, was able to work well under pressure, and was well liked by pupils.”

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

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the seriousness of the misconduct in relation to both exploiting his position of trust over a junior colleague and dishonestly failing to disclose information in a job application. The panel has said:

“In light of the panel’s findings against the teacher, which involved serious dishonesty in failing to disclose previous disciplinary proceedings to the School, there was a strong public interest concern. The undisclosed matters included inappropriate advances towards three female colleagues, which resulted in the termination of his employment at a previous school. The panel considered there was strong public interest consideration caused by Mr McCreery deliberately failed to make disclosures during his application process meant that the School may have been prevented from carrying out a proper assessment of his suitability for employment. This had the potential to undermine safeguarding arrangements and damage public trust in the profession.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that Mr McCreery had not demonstrated full insight into his behaviour and that there was therefore a risk that he would repeat the misconduct.

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

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

I have gone on to consider the matter of a review period. In this case, the panel has recommended a 5-year review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"The panel noted that, although the sexual misconduct was assessed as being at the lower end of the scale of seriousness, Mr McCreery's conduct found proven under allegation 1 was sexually motivated and involved an abuse of his position of trust in relation to a [REDACTED] over a sustained period. The panel further observed that many of Mr McCreery's actions were premeditated and demonstrated a clear pattern of escalating or "stepping-stone" behaviour, progressing from inappropriate text messages to physical contact."

"The panel found that Mr McCreery was seriously dishonest in failing to disclose his previous disciplinary proceedings. During the course of the hearing, Mr McCreery admitted that he was desperate to secure the role and knew that making such disclosures would adversely affect his prospects of employment. The panel considered this to be a clear breach of the professional standards of conduct expected of a teacher and determined that his dishonesty undermined the safer recruitment procedures relied upon during the recruitment and onboarding of teachers."

I have considered whether a 5-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 shorter review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct, the dishonesty found, the lack of full insight, and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that a 5-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Mr Jonathon McCreery is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England. He may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside, but not until 17 April 2031, 5 years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr McCreery remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Oatley', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 17 April 2026

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