



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Stephen Lord: 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: Mr Stephen Lord

Teacher ref number: 0349759

Teacher date of birth: 14 August 1970

TRA reference: 23581

Date of determination: 17 April 2026

Former employer: Engage Education, London

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened by way of a virtual hearing between 13 April 2026 and 17 April 2026, to consider the case of Mr Stephen Lord.

The panel members were Mr Richard Young (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Shabana Robertson (lay panellist) and Ms Kelly Dooley (teacher panellist).

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

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Lee Bridges of Kingsley Napley LLP solicitors.

Mr Lord was not present and was not represented.

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

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings dated 13 January 2026

It was alleged that Mr Lord was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that whilst working as a Humanities Teacher at the Icení Academy:

1. Between in or around September 2023 and March 2024, he did not maintain professional boundaries with pupils in that he:
 - a. Stated to pupils that he wanted to “push Individual A down the stairs” or words to that effect; and/or
 - b. Stated to pupils that “the only reason Individual A was not dead was because ‘Satan didn’t want her’” or words to that effect; and/or
 - c. Stated to pupils that he was glad that he thought Individual A had a cold as he “wanted her to suffer” or words to that effect; and/or
 - d. On one or more occasions, he did not use language which was appropriate whilst teaching in that he used words to refer to Individual B such as:
 - i. bitch; and/or
 - ii. cow; and/or
 - e. stated to pupils that he “want to break her neck” or words to that effect when talking about Individual B; and/or
 - f. stated to pupils that he “love all his students, especially the naughty girls” or words to that effect and/or
 - g. stated to pupils that “Hitler would have hated Pupil G” or words to that effect.
2. The language at paragraph 1 above was offensive and/or derogatory.
3. On or around March 2023, he did not disclose during the registration process with Engage Education that he:
 - a. had previously been under investigation; and/or
 - b. had previously faced disciplinary action; and/or
 - c. had been previously dismissed whilst working as a teacher.

4. His conduct at paragraphs 3a to 3c above was dishonest and/or lacked integrity.

The allegations were amended during the course of hearing as set out in the preliminary applications section below.

In the absence of Mr Lord, the allegations were not admitted, nor did he admit conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute and/or conviction of a relevant offence.

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 list of key people– pages 6 to 9

Section 2: Notice of Proceedings and response – pages 10 to 17

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 18 to 49

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 50 to 634

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 635 to 641

In addition, the panel agreed to accept the following:

1. A service bundle consisting of 69 pages;
2. Exhibit 53;
3. Mr Lord's statement provided on 9 April 2026; and
4. 8 pages of correspondence between the TRA and Mr Lord.

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 document Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2020, (the "Procedures").

Witnesses

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

Witness D – REDACTED;

Witness E – REDACTED;

Pupil A

Pupil B

Pupil C

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 2023, Mr Lord commenced a placement as a humanities teacher at Icen Academy (“the School”), having been placed there by Engage Education (“Engage”), a supply agency. On 1 September 2023, Mr Lord commenced a long-term supply teacher role at the School. On 29 September 2023, concerns were raised regarding alleged inappropriate comments, and the incident was recorded as a low-level concern.

On 10 November 2023, Mr Lord was offered the position of head of year 8 until August 2024, as an agency member of staff.

On 29 February 2024, an allegation was made that Mr Lord had made further inappropriate comments to pupils. On or around 4 March 2024, Mr Lord’s placement at the School was brought to an end.

On 20 March 2024, Mr Lord was suspended by Engage.

On 22 April 2024, Mr Lord was referred to the TRA by Engage.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

Whilst working as a Humanities Teacher at the Icen Academy:

- 1. Between in or around September 2023 and March 2024, you did not maintain professional boundaries with pupils in that you:**
 - a. Stated to pupils that you wanted to “push individual A down the stairs” or words to that effect; and/or**

Pupil A explained in his witness statement for these proceedings that these comments had come to light because, on 29 February 2024, he and REDACTED had reported comments having been made by Mr Lord to the REDACTED at a parents' evening. He stated that, on 5 March 2024, he provided a statement (his "Original Statement") outlining his concerns to the REDACTED. The panel noted that Pupil A had carefully considered the contents of his Original Statement as he provided a supplemental TRA statement clarifying aspects of it. In Pupil A's Original Statement, he stated that he had shared with the REDACTED that "Mr Lord has been very unprofessional in class say [sic] that 'he wants to push Individual A down the stairs and brake [sic] her neck..". Pupil A confirmed that Mr Lord had used these words in his witness statement for these TRA proceedings. He stated that neither he, nor other pupils would ask about Mr Lord's personal life, that Mr Lord "just tended to overshare". He stated that he recalled this comment was made by Mr Lord in his first month of teaching.

The panel noted that Pupil A had stated that he did not have a good relationship with Mr Lord because he felt that Mr Lord was not teaching the class, as he gave them worksheets, whilst he just sat at his desk. REDACTED. The panel was, therefore, careful in its assessment of Pupil A's evidence.

Pupil B provided a witness statement for these TRA proceedings. He stated that Mr Lord had said "I want to push Individual A down the stairs" between three and five times in his lessons. He stated that this occurred over the course of multiple lessons, and that pupils had not asked about his relationship with Individual B. He stated that it had been Mr Lord "oversharing" by bringing it up. He stated that he could not remember the exact dates of the comments made by Mr Lord due to it happening more than once, and it being a while ago. He stated that the comments were spread out, sporadically, and building up to a School parents' evening in February 2024. He explained that these particular comments had been made a longer time before the parents' evening than another comment Mr Lord had made.

Pupil B stated that the comments made by Mr Lord had come up in a conversation with REDACTED, and REDACTED had spoken with other parents about the concerns. He stated that, on 29 February 2024, during the parents' evening, REDACTED spoke with Individual Cand informed her of the comments. He stated that Individual C took notes and said that she would look into it further. He stated that this had been the end of his involvement until these TRA proceedings.

In oral evidence, Pupil B stated that he remembered at break time discussing Mr Lord's comments with pupils as they thought the comments were strange and a "bit random". The panel considered that it would have been natural for pupils to discuss this, given that the comments were out of the ordinary.

The panel noted that Pupil B did not make any reference to anything that he had any personal motivation for fabricating concerns about the comments.

Pupil C stated in her witness statement for these TRA proceedings that Mr Lord would bring up Individual B during lessons at least once a week in some capacity. She stated that she was aware that he was in the REDACTED because he had shared this. She stated that she remembered Mr Lord having made a specific comment that he was “going to push Individual B down the stairs”. Pupil C stated that her concerns regarding comments made by Mr Lord had come to light when she had been talking about them with another pupil in a food technology lesson, taught by her REDACTED, Individual D. She stated that she had told Individual D of the comments made by Mr Lord although in oral evidence, stated that she could not remember if she had brought these up with Individual D or whether Individual D had overheard the conversation she had had with another pupil. She stated that Individual D had told her that Individual D might have to do something with the information.

The panel was provided with a statement that Pupil C had made on 29 September 2023 (“Pupil C’s Original Statement”). In oral evidence, Pupil C explained that she had been asked to provide the statement by Individual D and that she had written it, alone, in an individual booth in the School’s isolation room which was also used for pupils to provide statements. In Pupil C’s Original Statement, she made no reference to any comments Mr Lord had made about Individual B. In oral evidence, Pupil C stated that Mr Lord had definitely made comments regarding Individual B before she wrote the Original Statement because she remembered having brought up, with Individual D, some of the phrases that Mr Lord had used. She stated, however, that she had not necessarily realised that it was “as big of an issue” as the matters she had set out in her Original Statement and that was why she had not referred to the comments about his Individual B in her Original Statement. She stated that she had been stressed when writing the Original Statement, as she had not had to write a statement about a teacher’s conduct before. She also stated that she had not necessarily realised the seriousness of preparing the Original Statement. Pupil C stated that the class had originally thought his comments were amusing and they did not think much of it, but that as the comments progressed “everyone started to get a little bit concerned”.

The panel was provided with an email from Individual C to Witness E dated 1 March 2024 which stated that at the parents’ evening, Pupil A had said that he and Pupil C had told Individual D about their concerns just before half term. The panel noted that Individual C had commented that she was not sure what level of disclosure they had made about the comments that had been reported to Individual C.

The panel placed less weight upon Pupil C’s evidence regarding Mr Lord’s comments about Individual B. The panel found the explanation offered that she had found writing the Original Statement stressful did not align with her evidence that she did not necessarily understand the seriousness of it. The panel did not consider that it was probable that she had omitted reference to Mr Lord’s comments about Individual B, if those were some of the matters she had discussed with Individual D.

In Mr Lord's statement, he questioned why statements had not been taken as soon as possible and that in the absence of such statements there was a strong possibility that collusion amongst students would have taken place. The panel noted that a statement had been taken from Pupil A within a few days of the parents' evening in which the concerns were raised.

The panel was not provided with a contemporaneous statement from Pupil B. Nevertheless, it is apparent that Pupil B raised concerns at the time. The panel was provided with an email from Individual C to Witness E dated 1 March 2024 which stated that, at the parents' evening, Pupil B's parent and Pupil B were the first to report matters to her. The email stated that Pupil B's REDACTED and Pupil B reported "Just before half term, he reportedly told the class REDACTED that he wants to push Individual A down the stairs.." The email went on to state that Mr Lord had "reportedly repeatedly spoken openly about the REDACTED and has been, in her words 'extremely derogatory' about Individual A".

Individual C email also referred to the matters reported by Pupil A and REDACTED. This included "Stephen allegedly overshared about his personal life and in particular Individual A. Pupil A reported that Stephen had said (just before half term) that he wanted to push her down the stairs to make sure she breaks her neck."

In Mr Lord's statement, he also referred to pupils REDACTED and he was frequently threatened with physical violence and sworn at daily by students. He stated that, despite the change of leadership when Witness E was appointed in June 2024, similar issues were still arising on a daily basis. He stated that, taking this account, he would never have felt comfortable discussing his personal life with any pupils. He stated that on one occasion he had been asked a direct question by a pupil and "stupidly made an off-colour joke" about his former REDACTED.

The panel asked Witness E about Mr Lord's description of the School. He stated that when he arrived at the School, the behaviour was not good and students were outside of lessons not following instructions. He stated that he had been employed to "re-set the culture" of the School. He stated that since he started at the School, he had found the students to have been the easiest he had worked with in terms of improving behaviour. He stated that Mr Lord's reference to being frequently threatened was a "massive exaggeration" and that whilst language was not good, the students were not threatening. Witness E later clarified that there had been one occasion when a student had made a threatening comment to Mr Lord, and had been suspended for doing so. The panel found Witness E's answer to have been credible, given that he was careful to revisit his evidence to inform the panel of the one occasion when Mr Lord had been threatened.

The panel found that the evidence of Pupil A and Pupil B was consistent. Both had raised similar issues at the parents' evening and there was a contemporaneous record made by Individual C of the matters reported. Pupil A and Pupil B remained consistent in their

accounts. There did not appear to have been any motive for Pupil B to have raised the issues. The panel did not consider that it was credible that Mr Lord did not share personal information when both Pupil A and Pupil B gave such similar accounts. The panel also considered that Mr Lord's explanation for why he would not have done so, was not borne out by the considered evidence Witness E gave as to the behaviour within the School. The panel, therefore, found that Mr Lord had made the comment alleged.

The panel found that this comment was a failure to maintain professional boundaries. Mr Lord was discussing personal matters relating to violent, hostile adult relationships; he exposed pupils to language and themes that were highly inappropriate for the classroom in a history lesson; and he risked making pupils in his class feel uncomfortable.

The panel found allegation 1a proven.

b. Stated to pupils that “the only reason Individual A was not dead was because ‘Satan didn’t want her’” or words to that effect; and/or

The panel noted that in Individual C email of the matters reported to her, Pupil B and REDACTED had reported that Mr Lord had told the class that the “only reason she is not dead is because Satan doesn’t want her”. The email also recorded that Pupil A and REDACTED had reported that Mr Lord had said “that the only reason that she’s not dead is because the devil didn’t want her”. Pupil A also stated that this was the case in his Original Statement.

In Pupil A's statement for these TRA proceedings he stated that this comment was amongst those he recalled Mr Lord having made about Individual B in the first month of teaching in September 2023. He stated that this comment was made by Mr Lord in the same lesson as the comment about pushing Individual A down the stairs.

In Pupil B's statement for these TRA proceedings, he stated that he recalled this comment being made by Mr Lord on one occasion during a history class. He stated that this comment had been made closer in proximity to the parents' evening than the pushing down the stairs comment, and that it had been made within a few weeks of the parents' evening.

For the reasons set out in allegation 1 above, the panel found Pupil A and Pupil B's accounts to be credible.

The panel found that this comment was a failure to maintain professional boundaries. He was discussing personal matters relating to hostile adult relationships; he exposed pupils to language and themes that were highly inappropriate for the classroom in a history lesson and he risked making pupils in his class feel uncomfortable.

The panel therefore found allegation 1b proven.

c. Stated to pupils that you were glad that you thought Individual A had a cold as you “wanted her to suffer” or words to that effect; and/or

The panel noted that in Individual C email of the matters reported to her, Pupil A and REDACTED had reported that Mr Lord had told the class that he had a REDACTED. It was noted that Pupil A and REDACTED had reported that Mr Lord had said that REDACTED, and that he was glad about this because he wanted her to suffer”. This was not included in Pupil A’s Original Statement but in Pupil A’s statement for these TRA proceedings he stated that Mr Lord had made a comment that “REDACTED now is having a go at me.” The panel considered that the email would be most reliable record as to what had been reported, given that it was the most contemporaneous to the matters alleged. It did not detract from Pupil A’s credibility that he could no longer remember the precise details of Mr Lord’s comment as it was natural that his memory would be affected by the passage of time.

Although the evidence of what Pupil A and REDACTED reported to Individual C was not corroborated by any other witness, the panel considered that it was credible given that it was consistent with the other comments found proven above. Each of the comments referred to Individual B in terms that he wanted Individual A to suffer or die.

The panel found that this comment was a failure to maintain professional boundaries. He was discussing personal matters relating to hostile adult relationships; he exposed pupils to language and themes that were highly inappropriate for the classroom in a history lesson and he risked making pupils in his class feel uncomfortable.

The panel therefore found allegation 1c proven.

e. stated to pupils that you “want to break her neck” or words to that effect when talking about individual B; and/or

The panel noted that in Individual C email of the matters reported to her, Pupil A and REDACTED had reported that Mr Lord had said that he wanted to push Individual A down the stairs to “make sure she breaks her neck”. In Pupil A’s Original Statement, he stated that he had shared with the REDACTED that “Mr Lord has been very unprofessional in class say [sic] that ‘he wants to push Individual A down the stairs and brake [sic] her neck..”. In Pupil A’s statement for these TRA proceedings, he stated that Mr Lord had commented “I want to push her down the stairs, I want to break her neck”. The panel noted that Pupil A had remained consistent in his evidence regarding Mr Lord’s comments.

Although the evidence of what Pupil A and REDACTED reported to Individual C was not corroborated by any other witness, the panel considered that it was credible given that it was consistent with the other comments found proven above. Each of the comments referred to Individual B in terms that he wanted Individual A to suffer or die.

The panel found that this comment was a failure to maintain professional boundaries. He was discussing personal matters relating to violent, hostile adult relationships; he exposed pupils to language and themes that were highly inappropriate for the classroom in a history lesson and he risked making pupils in his class feel uncomfortable.

The panel therefore found allegation 1e proven.

2. The language at paragraph 1 above was offensive and/or derogatory.

The panel noted that allegation 2 did not require the conduct in paragraph 1 to have been proven in order to be found offensive or derogatory. The panel therefore considered this allegation in respect of each occasion that it had been found proven that the words, or those to the effect of those words had been stated by Mr Lord irrespective of whether the panel had found those words to be a failure to maintain appropriate boundaries. The panel did not, however, consider allegation 2 in respect of those sub-allegations for which it had not found the words to have been said.

The panel used the ordinary meaning of offensive, namely as being something that upsets or embarrasses people because it is rude or insulting.

The panel used the ordinary meaning of derogatory language, namely that being language in which a low opinion of someone is expressed.

Applying these definitions, the panel found that the language in allegation 1a was both offensive and derogatory. It would be upsetting for pupils to hear Mr Lord speak of Individual A in this insulting way such that he wanted to cause her harm. The panel noted that in Individual C email reporting the concerns she had heard on parents' evening, Pupil B's REDACTED had shared a concern that REDACTED Mr Lord was also evidently expressing a low opinion of Individual A.

The panel found the language in allegation 1b was both offensive and derogatory. It would be upsetting for pupils to hear Mr Lord speak of Individual A in this insulting way. Mr Lord was evidently expressing a low opinion of her.

The panel found the language in allegation 1c was derogatory but not offensive. The panel did not consider that pupils would be upset by hearing that REDACTED. However, Mr Lord was evidently expressing a low opinion of her by "wanting her to suffer".

The panel did not consider the language in allegation 1d because the panel had not found it proven that Mr Lord had used those words.

The panel found that the language in allegation 1e was both offensive and derogatory. It would be upsetting for pupils to hear Mr Lord speak of Individual A in this insulting way such that he wanted to cause her harm. Mr Lord was evidently expressing a low opinion of her.

The panel did not find the language in allegation 1f was either offensive or derogatory. The panel did not consider that it was upsetting to pupils to hear that he “loved his students, especially the naughty girls”. This was not directed at any individual pupil such that they could infer it could be inferred that they were amongst the “naughty girls” and therefore ought not to have been upset or embarrassed by the comment. Similarly, the panel did not consider that it could be considered derogatory since it could not be identified as to whom Mr Lord was expressing a low opinion.

The panel did not consider the language in allegation 1g because the panel had not found it proven that Mr Lord had used those words.

The panel found allegation 2 proven in respect of allegations 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1e.

3. In or around February and/or March 2023, you did not disclose during the registration process with Engage Education that you:

- a. had previously been under investigation; and/or**
- b. had previously faced disciplinary action; and/or**
- c. had been previously dismissed whilst working as a teacher.**

Witness D gave evidence that Mr Lord was employed by Engage Education and was placed at the School. He explained that the process for registration starts when Engage find or receive a CV, and he produced a copy of Mr Lord’s CV. The panel noted that Mr Lord’s CV identified a school he had worked at between February 2020 and February 2021. However, with respect to his employment history between 2004 and 2015, Mr Lord had summarised his experience as “Secondary School Teacher/ Sixth Form Tutor” and provided a summary of the roles he had undertaken without identifying any of the schools at which he had worked over this period.

Witness D also produced a document which recorded information provided by Mr Lord during a telephone interview (“the Record”) as well as the registration pack that Mr Lord subsequently completed. Witness D confirmed that he was certain from the documents Engage had retained that the Record pertained to Mr Lord’s interview. Witness D confirmed that whilst he did not interview Mr Lord, he confirmed that, during the telephone interview, Mr Lord would have been asked the same questions as were asked in the registration pack. Witness D explained in oral evidence that the telephone interview was to assess initial suitability and the registration pack was sent on the same day to Mr Lord for his completion. Witness D explained that the registration pack is sent to candidates to verify if the candidate provides any answers different to those provided in the initial interview.

Witness D explained what each column of the Record related to, which columns were automatically populated and confirmed which column corresponded to answers given by

Mr Lord in his interview. Witness D confirmed that the Record was created on 15 February 2023 and that it had not been changed since that date.

One of the columns in the Record is titled "Subject to disciplinary action" and "no" is recorded as having been the response provided by Mr Lord. Witness D stated that exactly the same question would have been asked in the telephone interview as is set out in the registration pack, i.e. "Have you ever been, or are you at present, subject to any disciplinary action?"

Another column is titled "Complaint Investigation on Conduct" and "no" is recorded as having been the response provided by Mr Lord. Witness D stated that exactly the same question would have been asked in the telephone interview as is set out in the registration pack, i.e. "Have you ever had a complaint made against you, or have you been the subject of an investigation that is relevant to your professional conduct?"

Another column is titled "Rehabilitation Act" and the answer provided by Mr Lord is recorded as "yes". Witness D explained that this was confirming that Mr Lord had declared that there was something that would show on his DBS check.

Witness D explained that the Registration Pack was sent to Mr Lord via Docusign. He confirmed that the only information on the form that would have been populated other than by Mr Lord was the candidate name and the date that the form was completed. All other information contained on the form was completed by Mr Lord and the form could not be completed by any Engage staff member because it was "connected and locked" to Mr Lord's email address. Witness D stated that the form contained drop down options for Mr Lord to select.

The panel noted that the registration form confirmed that Mr Lord had answered "no" to the question "Have you ever been, or are you at present, subject to any disciplinary action?" The form asked "If you have answered 'Yes' please provide comprehensive details below, failure to do so may affect your registration with Engage Education" and "N/A" was recorded by Mr Lord.

The form went on to ask "Have you ever had a complaint made against you, or have you been the subject of an investigation that is relevant to your professional conduct?" The answer "No" is stated. The form goes on to ask "If you have answered 'Yes', please provide comprehensive details below, failure to do so may affect your registration with Engage" and "N/A" is recorded was recorded by Mr Lord.

The registration pack then contained a "Disclosure and Barring Service Declaration". This asked "Do you have any unspent criminal cautions / convictions?" and "Yes" was recorded by Mr Lord. Mr Lord was then asked "If you answered 'Yes' please list your criminal cautions / convictions and their dates below". Mr Lord has provided the answer REDACTED

The engagement pack ended with a declaration, which included a statement that “I understand my responsibility to safeguard children and am aware that I must notify Engage Partners of anything that may affect my suitability”. Mr Lord signed the declaration on 15 February 2023.

The only answer that differed in the registration form from that in the Record was that the Record notes that Mr Lord had said “Yes” to the question “Do you have a valid DBS”, whereas he answered “No” to this question in the completed registration pack. Witness D confirmed that this anomaly was not of any concern as not everyone was aware of the update service allowing an online check of whether a DBS was still valid.

Witness D stated that, on 5 March 2024, the School raised concerns about Mr Lord and informed Engage that Mr Lord had been asked not to return to the School. He stated that on 5 March 2024, the School provided an incident form which stated that the School would report the matter to the LADO. Witness D stated that, on 15 March 2024, a former employee of Engage contacted the LADO for further information regarding the referral and on 19 March 2024 a meeting was held with the School, the former employee of Engage and the LADO. Witness D confirmed that he was not at the meeting. Witness D stated that, on 19 March 2024, he was informed by the former Engage employee that concerns had been referred to during the meeting relating to Mr Lord’s behaviour at REDACTED and that there had been an investigation.

Witness D stated that he met with the LADO on 28 March 2024 to receive further information regarding the concerns. He stated that he also received written confirmation from the LADO regarding the concerns on 28 March 2024. Witness D stated that during this meeting he was also informed of concerns at Neatherd School.

REDACTED

Witness D stated that, on 2 April 2024, Mr Lord was informed that a further concern had been raised in relation to REDACTED, in addition to the School concerns. Mr Lord was invited to an investigation meeting initially set to take place on 9 April 2024 to discuss the concerns and Mr Lord failed to attend. Witness D stated that this was rescheduled for 11 April 2024 and went ahead on that date with Mr Lord in attendance. Witness D stated that during this investigation meeting, Mr Lord disclosed that his employment was terminated by REDACTED but would not discuss it further and ended the call prematurely, saying that he was unhappy with that line of questioning.

The panel was provided with a meeting note of that investigation meeting. These record that Mr Lord had said that he was aware of the concerns at REDACTED and that the LADO had found no further need for action. Mr Lord was asked why this had not been disclosed during the registration process with Engage and Mr Lord stated that he had not been asked. It was confirmed to Mr Lord that this had been part of the onboarding process. Mr Lord stated that he had received a formal letter from the LADO after his

termination from REDACTED confirming no further action. Mr Lord was provided with the notes of the meeting on 11 April 2024 and responded on 12 April 2024. He stated in relation to this allegation “As to you [sic] allegation about my misrepresenting myself, and the specific allegation of an open investigation by LADO over something ten years ago, I can produce a letter from them contradicting this which I am happy to produce”. The panel noted that Mr Lord did not seek to correct the note recording that he had told Witness D that his employment had been terminated by REDACTED. The panel had no evidence that Mr Lord had provided the letter to which he had referred.

In Mr Lord’s statement, he explained that he had been pressured to take the role with the School as it was in serious difficulties at the time. He stated that when Engage realised he was reluctant they took the unusual step of paying for his DBS certificate and offered to pay him 25% about the normal day rate. He stated that he had been under enormous pressure to accept, and when he raised issues he was asked “are you disbarred from working with children?” He stated that he had correctly replied that he was not. He then stated that “Under pressure to sign I may not of [sic] read all the small print correctly and may have inadvertently ticked the wrong box.”

Witness D stated in oral evidence that he had no record that Mr Lord was reluctant to accept the role. He stated that it was not unusual for Engage to pay for the DBS check where someone had secured an interview for a long-term role. He confirmed that he had no reason to believe Mr Lord was paid an excessive amount. He also explained that he was in charge of training and development of Engage staff and nowhere in the training manuals was the word “disbarred” used. He stated that the language and question Mr Lord stated he had been asked was not part of Engage’s training and he found it hard to believe such a question would have been used by one of Engage’s employees.

Mr Lord also stated that eight weeks after his placement with the School ended, he was called by Witness D and referred to Witness D’s behaviour as “unprofessional, including shouting and ranting” at him and “calling me a liar”. He referred to Witness D having falsely accused him of unprofessional conduct at a school he had never worked at, and that Mr Lord had approached that school to obtain confirmation he had never worked there. Witness D responded in oral evidence that he had to be reasonably firm during the investigation meeting and ensured that he sent notes of the meeting as soon as possible thereafter, so that Mr Lord had the opportunity to raise any objections.

The panel noted that Mr Lord had provided an exchange with REDACTED which confirmed that he had not been employed there in 2014. Nevertheless, the panel considered that it had been appropriate for Witness D to have raised this with Mr Lord in the investigation meeting given the information Witness D had been provided by the LADO.

The panel was also provided with a letter from REDACTED dated 17 November 2014 addressed to Mr Lord which stated that he had been suspended pending a full

investigation into allegations of gross misconduct. The panel was also provided with a letter from REDACTED to Mr Lord dated 11 February 2014 in which he was invited to a disciplinary hearing on 25 February 2015. The panel was therefore satisfied that Mr Lord had previously been under investigation at REDACTED and had faced disciplinary action there.

The panel was also provided with a draft agreement between Mr Lord and REDACTED in which it was recorded for Mr Lord's agreement that he had engaged in inappropriate conduct. It was not clear how this matter had been resolved, and whether Mr Lord had signed the draft agreement which would have provided him with a "first and final written warning". However, the panel considered that it was clear that Mr Lord had previously been under investigation at REDACTED.

With respect to allegation 3a, the panel considered in light of:

- the evidence of the Record of Mr Lord's initial interview with Engage;
- his negative response to relevant questions asked of him on the registration form; and
- the evidence of investigations having occurred at both REDACTED and REDACTED

that it had been proven that Mr Lord had not disclosed during the registration process with Engage that he had previously been under investigation. The panel noted that in Mr Lord's statement, he did not deny this, but claimed that his actions had been inadvertent.

With respect to allegation 3b, the panel considered in light of:

- the evidence of the Record of Mr Lord's initial interview with Engage;
- his negative response to relevant questions asked of him on the registration form; and
- the evidence of disciplinary action having occurred at REDACTED

that it had been proven that Mr Lord had not disclosed during the registration process with Engage that he had previously faced disciplinary action. The panel noted that in Mr Lord's statement, he did not deny this, but claimed that his actions had been inadvertent.

With respect to allegation 3c, the panel considered in light of:

- the evidence of the Record of Mr Lord's initial interview with Engage;
- his negative response to relevant questions asked of him on the registration form;
- the evidence of Mr Lord having volunteered during his investigation interview with Engage that his employment with REDACTED had been terminated; and
- the evidence of Mr Lord having not sought to correct this when he was sent the note of his investigation interview

that it had been proven that Mr Lord had not disclosed during the registration process with Engage that he had previously been dismissed whilst working as a teacher. The panel noted that in Mr Lord's statement, he did not deny this but claimed that his actions had been inadvertent.

The panel found allegation 3 proven in its entirety.

4. Your conduct at paragraphs 3a to 3c above was dishonest and/or lacked integrity.

The panel took account of Mr Lord's submissions that his actions were inadvertent, and that he had completed the registration form under "enormous pressure" to accept the role. The panel noted that the examples he gave of the employment incentives he was offered by Engage was not corroborated by Witness D. The panel had regard to the evidence of Witness E who confirmed that the School had been going through a difficult period having received an Ofsted outcome of "requiring improvement" and that there had been difficulties in recruiting staff.

Nevertheless, the panel also had regard to Mr Lord's CV and noted that it appeared to have been crafted to omit the names of REDACTED and REDACTED.

As a teacher, Mr Lord would or ought to have been aware of the requirements for safer recruitment and the importance of accurately declaring his employment history. The panel considered that it was unlikely that he would have forgotten that he had been subject to investigations, disciplinary proceedings and that he had been dismissed. Knowing that was the case, it seems unlikely that he was not alive to questions about his employment history when he was asked them.

The panel noted that Mr Lord had declared a previous conviction for which he had received a conditional discharge. The panel asked itself why Mr Lord had declared this but not his employment history if he had been trying to conceal information during the registration process. The panel noted that Mr Lord would have known that a DBS check would have been carried out which would have revealed Mr Lord's previous conviction. However, without knowing that he had previously been investigated and subject to disciplinary proceedings and without Mr Lord having declared his previous employers, there was no means by which this could have been checked. The panel considered that this indicated that Mr Lord had been calculated in his choices of what information to reveal.

Given the omissions from Mr Lord's CV and the improbability that Mr Lord would have been careless regarding his answers given his employment history, the panel considered that it was more likely than not that he knew when he gave answers during the registration process with Engage that he was giving false answers. The panel considered that he had made calculated efforts to conceal his adverse employment history. The

panel also considered that the ordinary honest person would consider this to be dishonest.

The panel found that Mr Lord had acted dishonestly.

The panel went on to consider whether Mr Lord had acted without integrity. The obligation to safeguard children is a fundamental tenet of the profession. As part of that, Mr Lord would have been aware of the need for schools to adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment. He would have been aware that schools were required to ensure that applicants provide their full employment history and that references were an important part of the recruitment process. This was apparent from the declaration that Mr Lord was asked to sign which stated “I understand my responsibility to safeguard children and am aware that I must notify Engage Partners of anything that may affect my suitability”. In failing to provide the details requested by Engage, he sought to circumvent that process and undermined the principles of safer recruitment which are designed to safeguard children. The panel therefore considered that Mr Lord failed to act with integrity.

The panel found allegation 4 proven.

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

- 1. Between in or around September 2023 and March 2024, you did not maintain professional boundaries with pupils in that you:**
 - d. On one or more occasions, you did not use language which was appropriate whilst teaching in that you used words to refer to individual B such as:**
 - i. bitch; and/or**
 - ii. cow; and/or**

Pupil C stated in her witness statement for these TRA proceedings that Mr Lord would bring up Individual B during lessons at least once a week in some capacity. She stated that she was aware that he was in REDACTED because he had shared this. She stated that she remembered Mr Lord having made a specific comment about Individual B referring to her as “Bitch” and “Cow”.

As referred to above, the panel was provided with a statement that Pupil C had made on 29 September 2023 (“Pupil C’s Original Statement”) after she had discussed concerns with Individual D. In Pupil C’s Original Statement, she made no reference to any comments Mr Lord had made about Individual B. In oral evidence, Pupil C stated that Mr

Lord had definitely made comments regarding Individual B before she wrote the Original Statement because she remembered having brought up, with Individual D, some of the phrases that Mr Lord had used.

As referred to above, the panel placed less weight upon Pupil C's evidence regarding Mr Lord's comments about Individual B. The panel found the explanation offered that she had found writing the Original Statement stressful did not align with her evidence that she did not necessarily understand the seriousness of it. The panel did not consider that it was probable that she had omitted reference to Mr Lord's comments about his Individual B, if those were some of the matters she had discussed with Individual D. If these concerns had been raised with Individual D, the panel would have expected these to have formed part of the concerns recorded in the School's internal conduct log.

Pupil C's evidence regarding Mr Lord having referred to Individual B as "Bitch" or "Cow" was not corroborated by any other witness.

The panel, therefore, found allegation 1d not proven.

f. stated to pupils that you "love all your students, especially the naughty girls" or words to that effect and/or

Pupil C stated in her Original Statement that Mr Lord had said to the class "I love all of you even my naughty girls".

In Pupil C's statement for these TRA proceedings, she stated that she could not remember exactly when this was, but it had been quite early on in Mr Lord being her teacher. She stated that she remembered that the comment was directed to pupils sat in the backrow where five girls were sat. She stated that the comment made her feel uncomfortable and she went home and told REDACTED.

In Pupil A's statement for these proceedings, he stated that, although he did not remember what Mr Lord had said, he did remember a comment being made by Mr Lord during a lesson towards pupils sat in the backrow of the class. Pupil A had not referred to this in his Original Statement.

The panel was provided with a statement of Pupil I dated 27 September given to the School which appeared to be approximately around the same time as Pupil C's Original Statement. The panel was aware that Pupil I's statement was hearsay as Pupil I was not called to give oral evidence, nor had Pupil I provided a witness statement for the purpose of these TRA proceedings. Pupil I stated that "Mr Lord referred to the same group of girls as 'naughty girls'. I see why this could be inappropriate, but Mr Lord is a kind teacher and nothing ever came across about him as predatory. I truly believe this was an attempt at banter as 90% of the time he is telling these girls to be quiet". The panel noted that Pupil I's statement was not sole and decisive as there was other evidence available regarding this allegation. The panel also noted that Pupil I did not appear to have any adverse

motive to have reported Mr Lord for making this comment. The panel was satisfied that it was fair to admit Pupil I's statement since it gave a balanced view of Mr Lord's conduct. The panel also considered that it could place some weight upon it, given that it corroborated other evidence available to the panel.

Given the consistency between the accounts given by Pupil C and Pupil I as well as the support given to it by Pupil A, the panel found it proven that Mr Lord had made the comment alleged.

However, the panel did not consider that this was a failure to maintain professional boundaries. The panel noted that the comment was not directed to any individual pupil. Whilst the comment was clumsy and avoidable, the panel did not consider that, as a standalone comment, it breached professional boundaries.

g. stated to pupils that "Hitler would have hated Pupil H" or words to that effect.

Pupil C stated in her witness statement for these TRA proceedings that Mr Lord would have said in front of the whole class "Hitler would have hated Pupil G". She stated that REDACTED. During the course of Pupil C's evidence it became apparent that there had been a redaction error in Pupil C's statement and that this ought to have been a reference to Pupil H. Pupil C stated in oral evidence that this had occurred during a GCSE lesson on "Nazi Germany" and they had been discussing "things that Hitler did not agree with". She stated that Pupil H had said something along the lines of "he wouldn't have liked me" to those sitting by her. Pupil C stated that the comment was then picked up by Mr Lord and he made the alleged comment to the whole class.

REDACTED Witness E was recalled to give evidence, after the panel were made aware of the redaction error in Pupil C's statement. REDACTED.

As referred to above, the panel was provided Pupil C's Original Statement after she had discussed concerns with Individual D. In Pupil C's Original Statement, she made no reference to this comment. Pupil C stated that she did not think that she had reported this comment to anyone.

The panel was concerned that Pupil C had made no reference to this concern at all until she provided her witness statement for these TRA proceedings.

Pupil C's evidence regarding this comment was not corroborated by any other witness. The panel also noted that the records pertaining to Pupil H did not support that Pupil H had the characteristics referred to by Pupil C.

The panel found allegation 1g 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 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 Lord in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards. The panel considered that Mr Lord had breached the preamble requiring teachers to act with honesty and integrity.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- 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 considered that Mr Lord failed to have regard to safeguarding pupils’ well-being since his comments normalised violence towards his spouse. He also sought to evade safer recruitment practices.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lord, in relation to the facts found proved breached the provisions of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2023 (“KCSIE”). The panel considered that Mr Lord was in breach of the requirement to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that he undermined the safer recruitment provisions. He also failed to ensure that the classroom was a safe environment. Mr Lord ought to have exercised care regarding his comments, since KCSIE states that all staff should understand the importance of challenging behaviour between children, and that down-playing behaviours as banter can lead to an unsafe environment for children, and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse. In this instance, it was Mr Lord,

himself that was making the comments that could have those consequences. Given the recognition in KCSIE of the detrimental and long term impact of domestic abuse on children's health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn, it was inappropriate for Mr Lord to have made comments normalising such behaviour within the classroom.

The panel was not satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lord breached Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel also considered whether Mr Lord'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 fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant.

With respect to allegation 1c, the panel considered that this was a low level concern that, on its own, did not meet the threshold for investigation or intervention. Nevertheless, the panel was satisfied that this was part of a pattern of behaviours indicated by the other comments the panel found proven that Mr Lord had made regarding Individual B. The panel therefore considered that, in those circumstances it could conclude that all of the conduct found proven 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 Lord was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Lord'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 Lord's 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 Lord was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that behaviours associated with the offence of fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant.

With respect to allegation 1c, as referred to above the panel considered that this was a low level concern that on its own did not meet the threshold for investigation or intervention. Nevertheless the panel was satisfied that this was part of a pattern of

behaviours indicated by the other comments the panel found that Mr Lord had made regarding Individual B. The panel therefore considered that, in those circumstances it could conclude that all of the conduct found proven amounted to conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Lord'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 and 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 a punitive effect.

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

There was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of failing to maintain appropriate boundaries with pupils and undermining the principles of safer recruitment.

The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Lord 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 Lord in the profession. Whilst there was some limited evidence that Mr Lord had ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Lord in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached 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.

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

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;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- dishonesty or a lack of integrity, including the deliberate concealment of their actions ... or had serious consequences...;
- collusion or concealment...

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 Lord's actions were deliberate. The panel considered that his failure to make disclosures during the registration process with Engage was calculated.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Lord was acting under extreme duress, e.g. a physical threat or significant intimidation. Mr Lord referred in his statement to having been under "enormous pressure" to accept the position at the School. The panel noted that Witness D stated that there was no record of Mr Lord having been reluctant to accept the role. In any event, it remained Mr Lord's obligation to ensure he honestly completed the declarations required, and there was no evidence of anything that could be said to amount to "extreme duress".

REDACTED

The panel did not see any evidence that Mr Lord had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector.

The panel saw evidence that showed Mr Lord was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings. He had been previously dismissed whilst working as a teacher at REDACTED, albeit the panel had no evidence as to the nature of his misconduct leading to that dismissal. The panel saw evidence that Mr Lord had been offered a first and final written warning by REDACTED (although the panel had no evidence whether that had been accepted by Mr Lord, or how the concerns under consideration had concluded). Nevertheless, given the nature of those concerns including the dangers of using a “jokey” approach towards students, Mr Lord ought to have taken care, going forwards, to ensure that he could not be subject to allegations regarding the propriety of his interactions with students.

No testimonial statements were adduced by Mr Lord attesting to his character or ability as a teacher.

Witness E was asked of his view of Mr Lord as a teacher. Witness E gave oral evidence that Mr Lord volunteered with the School’s cadet programme and made a positive contribution in that respect. He stated, that as a veteran member of the armed forces, he would wear his uniform on Remembrance Day. Witness E stated that in those respects, he had shown a willingness to offer the students extracurricular opportunities and to contribute to the improvement of the School. There was not a readily available pool of resources suitable for the head of year role, and it had, therefore, been thought that Mr Lord had potential, and he was given the role of head of year, albeit he remained employed by Engage. Witness E stated that Mr Lord was, however, very “black and white” in his approach, and that many students struggled with that.

Pupil C stated in oral evidence that Mr Lord was not “necessarily a bad teacher” and that she did remember a lot of “stuff” she was taught, although she stated that she had taught herself a lot as well, because not everything was covered in class.

Pupil A stated that he did not have a good relationship with Mr Lord because he did not feel that Mr Lord was teaching them and indicated that there was an over-reliance on worksheets. REDACTED.

In Pupil I’s statement provided to the School in September 2023, they stated that Mr Lord was a “kind teacher”.

The panel noted that Mr Lord had been willing to teach at a school with an Ofsted outcome of “requiring improvement”. Witness D referred to Mr Lord’s booking with the Agency having been renewed by the School on multiple occasions.

The panel was provided with three non-teaching references obtained by Engage during the course of the registration process. One dated 13 March 2023 stated that Mr Lord had failed his probationary period, although noted that he had not been subject to any “child safeguarding allegations” or “disciplinaries”. It did note that Mr Lord’s “punctuality and

attendance” was “excellent”, and that his diligence and attention to detail was “good”. His “approachability”, “relationship with colleagues” and “relationship with customer / clients / public” were all said to be “average”. A second reference provided Mr Lord’s dates of employment and confirmed that Mr Lord had not been subject of to “child safeguarding allegations” or “disciplinary”. This referee answered “no” to the question whether there was any reason why they would not re-employ Mr Lord. A third referee stated that their policy was only to provide dates of employment.

As at 8 March 2026, Mr Lord had shown insight as to the seriousness of the allegations relating to his comments, stating that if he had said the comments attributed to him that he would be “extremely concerned”. He stated that if he had said the comments alleged, he would be in serious breach of professional conduct and that he would “condemn it without hesitation”. He did not, however, demonstrate any appreciation of the potential impact on pupils of such comments.

Mr Lord appeared to have accepted that he had failed to declare matters he was required to declare in the registration form, but sought to attribute this to being an inadvertent error in ticking the wrong box as he “may not of [sic] read the small print correctly”. The panel did not consider that Mr Lord had shown any insight as to the importance of honesty in the completion of important declarations used to establish his suitability for the role, and that in failing to do this he undermined safer recruitment processes. Instead, Mr Lord sought to deflect attention away from his own failings to cast aspersions upon Witness D’s ability to make professional judgments.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, it would not be a proportionate and appropriate response to recommend no prohibition order. Recommending that the publication of adverse findings would be sufficient would unacceptably compromise the public interest considerations present in this case, despite the severity of the consequences for Mr Lord 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 Lord, particularly because of his dishonesty and his lack of appreciation of the potential impact of his actions on pupils. Accordingly, the panel made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be imposed with immediate effect.

The panel went on to consider whether or not it would be appropriate for it to decide to recommend a review period of the order. The panel was mindful that the Advice states that a prohibition order applies for life, but there may be circumstances, in any given

case, that may make it appropriate to allow a teacher to apply to have the prohibition order reviewed after a specified period of time that may not be less than 2 years.

The Advice indicates that there are certain types of case where, if relevant, the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of not offering a review period. None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

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

One of these includes:

- fraud or serious dishonesty.

In this case, there was no indication that Mr Lord understood the consequences of his dishonesty, and its impact on the principles of safer recruitment designed to ensure the suitability of candidates in order to safeguard children. Whilst Mr Lord recognised that the comments would constitute professional misconduct, he did not explain that he understood the potential impact on pupils of such comments. There was also no evidence that Mr Lord had undertaken any training to manage his interactions with students going forwards. Whilst there was no evidence of actual harm caused to the pupils in this case, there was a risk of psychological harm to pupils caused by normalising domestic violence. The panel therefore considered that a risk of repetition was present in this case.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period after 4 years.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

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

In this case, the panel has also found some of the allegations not proven. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lord involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance '*Keeping children safe in education*'.

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

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a teacher failing to maintain appropriate boundaries with pupils and undermining the principles of safer recruitment.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In assessing that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may 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 Lord, 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 makes this observation:

“The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lord, in relation to the facts found proved breached the provisions of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2023 (“KCSIE”). The panel considered that Mr Lord was in breach of the requirement to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that he undermined the safer recruitment provisions.”

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 it sets out as follows:

“As at 8 March 2026, Mr Lord had shown insight as to the seriousness of the allegations relating to his comments, stating that if he had said the comments attributed to him that he would be “extremely concerned”. He stated that if he had said the comments alleged, he would be in serious breach of professional conduct and that he would “condemn it without hesitation”. He did not, however, demonstrate any appreciation of the potential impact on pupils of such comments.

Mr Lord appeared to have accepted that he had failed to declare matters he was required to declare in the registration form, but sought to attribute this to being an inadvertent error in ticking the wrong box as he “may not of [sic] read the small print correctly”. The panel did not consider that Mr Lord had shown any insight as to the importance of honesty in the completion of important declarations used to establish his suitability for the role, and that in failing to do this he undermined safer recruitment processes. Instead, Mr Lord sought to deflect attention away from his own failings to cast aspersions upon Witness D’s ability to make professional judgments.”

In my judgement, the lack of evidence that Mr Lord has developed full insight into his actions 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 offers this observation:

“In relation to whether Mr Lord’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 Lord’s 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 Lord was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that behaviours associated with the offence of fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant.

With respect to allegation 1c, as referred to above the panel considered that this was a low level concern that on its own did not meet the threshold for investigation or intervention. Nevertheless the panel was satisfied that this was part of a pattern of behaviours indicated by the other comments the panel found that Mr Lord had made regarding Individual B. The panel therefore considered that, in those circumstances it could conclude that all of the conduct found proven amounted to conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

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

I am particularly mindful of the findings in this case of a teacher making comments in the presence of pupils normalising domestic violence and the negative impact that such a finding may 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 and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Lord himself. The panel records that it "...did not see any evidence that Mr Lord had demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector."

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Lord 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 serious nature of the misconduct found in this case, and in particular the serious dishonesty demonstrated by Mr Lord. I have also placed considerable weight on the lack of evidence of full insight and the consequent risk of repetition.

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

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

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

In doing so, the panel has made reference to the Advice as follows:

“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.

One of these includes:

- fraud or serious dishonesty.”

I have considered the panel’s concluding comments:

“In this case, there was no indication that Mr Lord understood the consequences of his dishonesty, and its impact on the principles of safer recruitment designed to ensure the suitability of candidates in order to safeguard children. Whilst Mr Lord recognised that the comments would constitute professional misconduct, he did not explain that he understood the potential impact on pupils of such comments. There was also no evidence that Mr Lord had undertaken any training to manage his interactions with students going forwards. Whilst there was no evidence of actual harm caused to the pupils in this case, there was a risk of psychological harm to pupils caused by normalising domestic violence. The panel therefore considered that a risk of repetition was present in this case.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period after 4 years.”

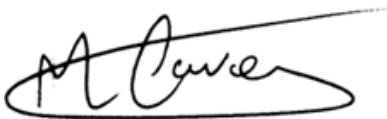
I have considered whether allowing a four-year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing such a review period is sufficient and proportionate to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found, as well as the lack of evidence of full insight.

I agree with the panel therefore that a four-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession and to allow Mr Lord to demonstrate that he has developed full insight into his behaviour and its potential impact should he wish to return to teaching in the future.

This means that Mr Stephen Lord 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 27 April 2030, four 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 Lord remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Lord 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 'M. Cavey', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Decision maker: Marc Cavey

Date: 22 April 2026

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