



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Joe Wilson: 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 Joe Wilson
TRA reference: 22870
Date of determination: 14 April 2026
Former employer: Listerdale Junior Academy, Rotheram

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 13 to 14 April 2025 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Wilson.

The panel members were Mr Gamel Byles (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Diane Underwood (lay panellist) and Mr Ramandeep Rai (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Elizabeth Gilbert of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Michael Bellis of Capsticks solicitors.

Mr Wilson 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 6 January 2026.

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

1. On or around 18 and 19 May 2023 he:
 - a. Was absent from the School without a proper reason;
 - b. Reported to the School that he was absent from the School because of sickness, when that was not the case.
2. On date unknown on or after 18 May 2023 he removed pages from his passport which would have contained stamps showing he was out of the country on the dates at allegation 1
3. Mr Wilson’s conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1(a) demonstrates lack of integrity.
4. Mr Wilson’s conduct as may be found proved at allegation 1(b) and/ or 2 was dishonest and/ or lacked integrity

In his written statements provided to the TRA, Mr Wilson admitted that he was absent from the School on the dates alleged, reported to the School that he was sick when that was not the case, and had removed pages from his passport. However, Mr Wilson was not present at the hearing. As such, the facts of the allegations and whether his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute was treated as not admitted by Mr Wilson.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology and list of key people – pages 2 to 3

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 4 to 30

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 31 to 178

Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 179 to 180

The panel also received the following documents relating to the preliminary applications:

- The presenting officer's proceeding in absence application bundle;
- Email correspondence between Mr Wilson and the TRA/presenting officer's firm; and
- [REDACTED]

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing. In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document 'Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession' 2020, (the "Procedures").

Witnesses

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

- Witness A – [REDACTED]

Mr Wilson did not attend the hearing and did not give oral evidence.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Wilson was employed as a teacher of a year 6 class at the School from 1 September 2016.

On 24 May 2023, the School initiated an investigation into Mr Wilson's conduct following an anonymous report regarding his absence from the School on 18 and 19 May 2023.

A referral was made to the TRA regarding Mr Wilson's conduct on 6 December 2023.

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. On or around 18 and 19 May 2023 you:**
 - a. Were absent from the School without a proper reason;**
 - b. Reported to the School that you were absent from the School because of sickness, when that was not the case.**

Mr Wilson was not present at the hearing. As such, the allegations were treated as not admitted by Mr Wilson.

Witness A stated in her written statement that she was appointed as the investigating officer on 8 June 2023, alongside Person B ([REDACTED]), to undertake a formal investigation into concerns raised regarding an allegation that Mr Wilson had “dishonestly reported sick for work and went on holiday” on 18 and 19 May 2023. The panel noted that the investigation report contained, amongst other things, screenshots of pictures on Facebook, a screenshot of text messages between Mr Wilson and Person B, a copy of Mr Wilson’s passport, a note of Mr Wilson’s first investigation meeting on 8 June 2023 and a note of Mr Wilson’s second investigation meeting dated 26 June 2023.

Witness A stated in her written statement that she “first became aware of the concerns” relating to Mr Wilson’s absence from the School on 18 and 19 May 2023 when Person B “had been provided with photos of a Facebook post by an anonymous member of staff, of [Mr Wilson] in an airport with a suitcase and a pint of beer in his hand, which [Person B] took screenshots of”.

The panel considered screenshots of the photographs on Facebook which were included in the School’s investigation report. The panel noted that one of the photographs was posted at 5:23am on 18 May 2023, not by Mr Wilson, with the caption “Early start for [REDACTED] stag do, few beers with the Portugal gaffer”. Witness A confirmed in her oral evidence that Mr Wilson could be identified in three of the thirteen photographs, including the photograph with this caption, in which Mr Wilson could be seen standing in an airport with a drink in his hand. In respect of the remaining photographs which were posted on 21 May 2023, the panel noted that it was the same group of people who could be seen on what appeared to be the same trip in Portugal.

The panel considered an exchange of text messages between Mr Wilson and Person B which was also included in the School’s investigation report. The panel noted that the messages showed that Mr Wilson messaged Person B at 5:19am on 18 May 2023, stating “I’m not going to be in school today. I’ve been up all night being sick and have got a really bad headache”. Mr Wilson again messaged Person B on 19 May 2023 at 6:11am stating “I’m still no better so won’t be in school today. Can’t keep any food or water down. I’ll keep you updated”. On 22 May 2023, Mr Wilson again messaged Person B at 6:57am confirming “I’ll be in school today”.

The panel considered the first investigation meeting note dated 8 June 2023, which was signed by Mr Wilson as a true record of the discussion, and the second investigation meeting note dated 26 June 2023, which was later agreed by Mr Wilson via email. The panel noted in the first investigation meeting that Mr Wilson stated he “wasn’t on a stag do on those days” when questioned by Person B as to whether it was him in the photographs on Facebook heading to Portugal on a stag do, but that he had attended Portugal on a stag do on a different date. Mr Wilson further stated in the interview that he was “at home in bed” on 18 and 19 May 2023 and that he did not consult a doctor. The panel noted that Mr Wilson continued to deny in the second investigation interview that he was in Portugal on 18 and 19 May 2023, but that he accepted that he was in some of the photographs posted on Facebook as they were taken from a previous trip.

The panel considered the following statements made by Mr Wilson during the course of the TRA’s proceedings, in which Mr Wilson changed his position as set out in the School’s investigation:

- Mr Wilson stated in an email to the TRA on 6 June 2024, that he “made the decision to attend the stag do while [REDACTED]”.
- In his written statement to the TRA, Mr Wilson stated that he “agreed to attend a stag do in Lisbon” in May 2023 when he [REDACTED]. Mr Wilson further stated that at the time of his conduct he “[REDACTED]”. Mr Wilson further stated that “these aren’t excuses” as he accepted that he “made a huge error of judgement but [felt] the situation at the time influenced [him] to make this poor decision”.
- Mr Wilson stated in an email to the TRA on 6 October 2025, that he has “accepted full responsibility” for his actions, including “falsifying a sickness”.
- In an email to the TRA on 3 February 2026, Mr Wilson further stated that he “pulled a sickie to go on [his] mates stag do”.

Witness A stated in her oral evidence that the School has a “special leave of absence policy” which allows teachers to request time off during the School’s term time, as time off during term time is an “exception rather than an automatic entitlement”. Witness A further stated that the Principal of the School makes a decision regarding an application, and a panel of governors may also consider the application if required. When questioned by the presenting officer, Witness A stated that the School would permit a teacher to take time off for circumstances such as moving house, but that a holiday would not be permitted unless there were “specific circumstances linked to a family member getting married abroad, for example”.

The panel noted that the School’s code of conduct, which was also included in the School’s investigation report, made clear that “all employees are expected to attend regularly and punctually, not to absent themselves from duty without permission”.

The panel was satisfied on the evidence presented during the School's investigation, including a screenshot of Mr Wilson's text message, that Mr Wilson was absent from School on 18 and 19 May 2023 and reported that this was due to sickness. In light of Mr Wilson's ultimate acceptance that he falsified his sickness absence and attended Portugal on 18 and 19 May 2023, as well as the photographs of Mr Wilson which support that he was travelling and attending a holiday in Portugal on those dates, the panel was also satisfied that Mr Wilson's report of absence due to sickness was false. The panel considered that Mr Wilson was therefore absent from the School on 18 and 19 May 2023 without proper reason, as permission to attend a holiday on 18 and 19 May 2023 had not been requested by Mr Wilson or granted by the School.

For the reasons set out above, the panel found allegations 1(a) and 1(b) proven.

2. On date unknown on or after 18 May 2023 you removed pages from your passport which would have contained stamps showing you were out of the country on the dates at allegation 1

Mr Wilson was not present at the hearing. As such, the allegation was treated as not admitted by Mr Wilson.

Mr Wilson stated in his written statement to the TRA that he "made a huge mistake of taking out a page of [his] passport" after "an informal chat with [his] headteacher" as "she encouraged [him] to show something 'to get them off my case'". Mr Wilson further stated that he "removed the page from [his] passport and takes full responsibility". Mr Wilson also stated that he was "ashamed" of his actions in this situation.

The panel considered an email from Mr Wilson dated 6 June 2024 in which he stated that the allegation of "tearing a page out of [his] passport is also true" and that he was "informally advised by [his] [REDACTED] to do this to make the investigation go away and keep [his] job".

Witness A stated in her written statement that Mr Wilson initially stated during the investigation that it was not him in the Facebook photographs obtained by the School and that he had never been to Portugal. Witness A further stated that Mr Wilson subsequently "changed his story" during the investigation stating that "he had been to Portugal but not on that date" as it was the previous summer he had been, not on 18 and 19 May 2023. Witness A stated that Mr Wilson was requested to provide evidence by way of his passport or previous travel documentation to confirm when he went to Portugal.

The panel considered the first investigation meeting note dated 8 June 2023, which was signed by Mr Wilson as a true record of the discussion. The panel noted that Mr Wilson was asked by Witness A to "produce evidence of the dates" when he went to Portugal, to which Mr Wilson responded that he would "speak to the best man". Witness A further requested in the interview that Mr Wilson bring in his passport as "since Brexit passports

are stamped for European trips, so that will also show that [he] did go to Portugal last year and confirm the dates”.

The panel noted that the investigation report stated that Mr Wilson handed his passport to Person B on 16 June 2023, and Person B photocopied the whole passport including all pages and stamps. The panel considered a copy of Mr Wilson’s passport and noted that there were four pages missing from the passport, being pages 9, 10, 27 and 28.

The panel considered the second investigation meeting note dated 26 June 2023, which was accepted by Mr Wilson by email on 4 July 2023. The panel noted that Mr Wilson was questioned by Person B about why there were pages missing from his passport, and Mr Wilson responded stating “I don’t know”. The panel further noted that Person B stated to Mr Wilson that the passport “shows no stamps to Portugal at all on any dates, and has four pages missing, for which you have no explanation” and asked Mr Wilson whether he had anything he wishes to say before they close the investigation and decide on next steps, to which Mr Wilson responded “No, nothing”.

The panel was satisfied on the evidence, including Mr Wilson’s acceptance of removing a page and the copy of his passport showing missing pages, that Mr Wilson removed pages from his passport. Additionally, the panel was satisfied, given the context of the circumstances in which Mr Wilson was providing his passport to the School and his acceptance that he was on a stag do in Portugal when he had reported his absence was due to sickness, it was more likely than not that the Mr Wilson removed pages from his passport sometime after 18 May 2023 which contained stamps showing that he was out of the country on 18 and 19 May 2023.

The panel therefore found allegation 2 proven.

3. Your conduct as may be found proven at allegation 1(a) demonstrates lack of integrity.

Mr Wilson was not present at the hearing. As such, the allegation was treated as not admitted by Mr Wilson.

The panel considered whether Mr Wilson had failed to act with integrity by his conduct at allegation 1(a). The panel considered the case of *Wingate & Anor v The Solicitors Regulation Authority* [2018]. The panel was mindful of the legal advice it received and that integrity is a more nebulous concept than honesty, for which it is not possible to formulate an all-purpose comprehensive definition but connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one’s own profession.

The panel noted that the School’s code of conduct clearly outlined that “all employees are expected to attend regularly and punctually, not to absent themselves from duty without permission”.

Witness A stated in her oral evidence that employees at the School are required to make a formal request for time off during term time to take a holiday, and that permission to do so was by exception in particular circumstances. The panel was satisfied that Mr Wilson failed to follow the School's process as he did not request time off from the School to attend a stag do in Portugal on 18 and 19 May 2023, and instead took paid sickness absence.

In reaching a decision in respect of integrity, the panel noted that Mr Wilson ultimately failed to put the interests of the School or his pupils first and took unauthorised absence from the School on 18 and 19 May 2023 in order to attend a 'stag do' with his friends when he should have been at work. The panel considered that this conduct fell below the standards expected of a teacher.

Witness A stated in her oral evidence that the School was required to make last minute alternative arrangements to cover Mr Wilson's class as a result of him not following the School's process for requesting leave. The panel considered that Mr Wilson's behaviour did not adhere to the ethical standards expected of a teacher and was contrary to the manner in which the profession professes to serve the public.

For the reasons set out above, the panel determined that Mr Wilson's conduct at allegation 1(a) lacked integrity. The panel therefore found allegation 3 proven.

4. Your conduct as may be found proved at allegation 1(b) and/ or 2 was dishonest and/ or lacked integrity

Mr Wilson was not present at the hearing. As such, the allegation was treated as not admitted by Mr Wilson.

The panel firstly considered whether Mr Wilson was dishonest by his conduct in allegation 1(b) and/or allegation 2. The panel considered the case of *Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd t/a Crockford* [2017].

In reaching a decision in respect of dishonesty, the panel needed to first ascertain, subjectively, the actual state of Mr Wilson's knowledge or belief as to the facts. Secondly, the panel needed to determine whether Mr Wilson's state of mind was honest or dishonest by the application of the objective standards of the ordinary honest person.

The panel firstly turned its mind to the actual state of Mr Wilson's knowledge or belief as to the facts.

In his written statement to the TRA, Mr Wilson stated that he "made a mistake and tried to cover this mistake with another mistake" as he "agreed to attend a stag do in Lisbon" when he "was under extreme pressure due to many personal issues". Mr Wilson further stated that at the time of his conduct he "was navigating the [REDACTED]. Mr Wilson

further stated that “these aren’t excuses” as he accepted that he “made a huge error of judgement but feel the situation at the time influenced me to make this poor decision”.

Mr Wilson further stated in his written statement to the TRA that he “made a huge mistake of taking out a page of [his] passport” and he takes “full responsibility” and is “ashamed” of his actions.

The panel considered that Mr Wilson would have known that it was wrong and deceitful to report to the School that he was absent on 18 and 19 May 2023 due to sickness, when that was not the case and he was in fact on a ‘stag do’. Additionally, the panel considered that Mr Wilson would have known that it was wrong and deceitful to remove pages from his passport, in an attempt to conceal that he was out of the country on the dates that he was absent from School due to his reported sickness.

In weighing up the evidence as to Mr Wilson’s knowledge of the facts, the panel considered that Mr Wilson understood that providing false information to the School regarding his absence was wrong and dishonest. The panel further considered that Mr Wilson understood that removing pages from his passport, in an attempt to conceal his whereabouts during his absence, was wrong and dishonest.

The panel then considered the objective standards of the ordinary honest person and was further satisfied that an ordinary honest person would consider that a teacher deliberately providing false information to a school regarding his absence during a teaching day, and then attempting to conceal his actions thereafter, to be dishonest. The panel determined that Mr Wilson’s conduct had a clear intention to prevent the School from finding out about his attendance on a ‘stag do’ abroad on 18 and 19 May 2023 which attempted to mislead the School and was fundamentally dishonest.

The panel therefore found Mr Wilson’s conduct as proven at allegations 1(b) and 2 to be dishonest.

The panel considered whether Mr Wilson had failed to act with integrity by his conduct at allegation 1(b) and 2. The panel considered the case of *Wingate & Anor v The Solicitors Regulation Authority* [2018]. The panel was mindful of the legal advice it received and that integrity is a more nebulous concept than honesty, for which it is not possible to formulate an all-purpose comprehensive definition but connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one’s own profession.

The panel noted that the School’s code of conduct outlined that “employees must not put themselves in a position where their honesty or integrity could be called into question”. Additionally, the panel noted that the School’s code of conduct was based on the key principles arising from the Nolan Principles, including that “holders of public office should be truthful”. The panel considered that Mr Wilson’s conduct in falsely reporting his absence from School being as a result of sickness, and removing pages from his

passport in an attempt to conceal his location on 18 and 19 May 2023 from the School, was in breach of these sections of the School's code of conduct which required honesty.

The panel noted that Mr Wilson ultimately received the benefit of sickness pay and had not offered to return this sum, despite his acceptance that he was not sick on 18 and 19 May 2023.

In reaching a decision in respect of integrity, the panel noted that Mr Wilson ultimately failed to put the interests of the School or his pupils first. In falsely reporting his sickness absence and providing an altered document during an investigation, Mr Wilson was intentionally misleading the School and concealing the truth. The panel considered that Mr Wilson's behaviour fell below the ethical standards expected of a teacher and was contrary to the manner in which the profession professes to serve the public.

For the reasons set out above, the panel determined that Mr Wilson's conduct at allegation 1(b) and allegation 2 lacked integrity. The panel therefore found allegation 4 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 Wilson, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

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

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

Whilst the panel noted that Mr Wilson's behaviour in being absent from the School without a proper reason was misconduct of a serious nature which lacked integrity, as found proven at allegation 1(a) and allegation 3, the panel was not satisfied that this behaviour fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession. The panel considered that being absent from the School without proper reason is, by itself, not a significant departure from the standards.

The panel also considered whether Mr Wilson'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 to allegation 1(b), allegation 2 and allegation 4. The panel considered that Mr Wilson was consistently dishonest on multiple occasions throughout the School's investigation, by denying his presence on a 'stag do' to Portugal and removing relevant pages from his passport in an attempt to conceal his location. The panel considered this repeated dishonest behaviour to be serious, particularly in circumstances where Mr Wilson benefited from sickness absence pay when he was not in fact sick and was on a 'stag do'.

The panel also noted that tampering with a passport can amount to a criminal offence, as it is an official document owned by the government. As such, the panel considered that Mr Wilson's conduct in removing pages of his passport in attempt to conceal his location from the School was a very serious matter.

For these reasons, the panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Wilson at allegation 1(b), allegation 2, and allegation 4 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 Wilson was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Wilson'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 Wilson's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 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 conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. As set out above in the panel's findings as to whether Mr Wilson was guilty of unacceptable professional

conduct, the panel found that the offence of fraud or serious dishonesty was relevant to allegation 1(b), allegation 2 and allegation 4.

The panel considered that Mr Wilson's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher. The panel determined that any ordinary person would view Mr Wilson's conduct to be concerning, as he was absent from his teaching duties without authorisation from the School and lied to the School about his whereabouts. In particular, the panel considered that the public would consider Mr Wilson's continued dishonesty to the School throughout the investigation, and his attempt to conceal his location by removing pages of his passport, to be completely unacceptable.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Wilson's actions at allegation 1(a), allegation 1(b), allegation 2, allegation 3 and allegation 4 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 punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found two of them to be relevant in this case, namely:

- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; and
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Wilson, which involved dishonesty and lack of integrity, there was a strong public interest consideration in the maintenance of public confidence in the profession. The panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Wilson were not treated with the utmost seriousness when regulating the conduct of the profession.

The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Wilson 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 Wilson in the profession. The panel decided that there was a public interest consideration in retaining the teacher in the profession, since no doubt had been cast upon his abilities as an educator.

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 Wilson.

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;
- 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; and
- 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.

The panel noted that Mr Wilson had stated that he was [REDACTED] the time of the conduct, as a result of his "[REDACTED]". However, the panel was satisfied that his conduct was deliberate, as he had a clear motivation to falsely report a sickness absence in order to attend a 'stag do' with his friends.

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Wilson was acting under extreme duress, such as a physical threat or significant intimidation.

The panel saw no evidence of Mr Wilson having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector.

There was no evidence before the panel of any previous disciplinary warnings or proceedings against Mr Wilson. No character references were provided on behalf of Mr Wilson, however, the panel noted that Mr Wilson's conduct in this instance did not align with his previous professional history as there was no pattern of similar behaviour.

Whilst the panel noted that Mr Wilson's conduct, and in particular his dishonesty, was serious, the conduct did not ultimately cause any harm to pupils, and there were no breaches of KCSIE or Working Together to Safeguard Children. The conduct caused operational inconvenience to the School, but no significant adverse consequences arose as a result. The panel heard oral evidence from Witness A who stated that other instances of unauthorised absence had occurred within the School which had resulted in a less severe outcome as that individual had accepted and apologised for their conduct at an early stage. The panel considered that, had Mr Wilson accepted responsibility for his actions at the first opportunity, the matter was unlikely to have escalated to a professional conduct panel hearing. Taking all of these matters into account, the panel considered that, on the spectrum of misconduct, the teacher's conduct, whilst not to be condoned, was not at the most serious end.

Mr Wilson expressed regret and demonstrated a degree of remorse for his conduct as he stated in his written statement that he "made a mistake and tried to cover this mistake with another mistake", had "made a huge error of judgement" and accepted that his behaviour was not acceptable and "would like to apologise" for his actions. The panel noted that Mr Wilson apologised and, although he initially denied the allegations during the School's investigation, he ultimately accepted that what he did was wrong.

[REDACTED]

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, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Having considered the mitigating factors that were present, including the teacher's [REDACTED], the extremely low risk of repetition, the absence of any harm to pupils, the expression of remorse, and the lack of any prior disciplinary history, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate in this case.

The panel considered that, on the basis of proportionality, a less intrusive measure of making an adverse finding would strike a fair balance between the rights of the individual and the interests of the public. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to

the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of upholding proper standards of the profession.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that some of those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute. In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations do not amount to unacceptable professional conduct or conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Joe Wilson should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the findings of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they 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 and conduct likely to bring the profession into

disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Wilson, 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:

“Whilst the panel noted that Mr Wilson’s conduct, and in particular his dishonesty, was serious, the conduct did not ultimately cause any harm to pupils, and there were no breaches of KCSIE or Working Together to Safeguard Children. The conduct caused operational inconvenience to the School, but no significant adverse consequences arose as a result.”

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

“Mr Wilson expressed regret and demonstrated a degree of remorse for his conduct as he stated in his written statement that he “made a mistake and tried to cover this mistake with another mistake”, had “made a huge error of judgement” and accepted that his behaviour was not acceptable and “would like to apologise” for his actions. The panel noted that Mr Wilson apologised and, although he initially denied the allegations during the School’s investigation, he ultimately accepted that what he did was wrong.”

I have therefore given this element some weight in reaching my decision.

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

“The panel considered that Mr Wilson’s conduct could potentially damage the public’s perception of a teacher. The panel determined that any ordinary person would view Mr Wilson’s conduct to be concerning, as he was absent from his teaching duties without authorisation from the School and lied to the School about his whereabouts. In particular, the panel considered that the public would consider Mr Wilson’s continued dishonesty to the School throughout the investigation, and his attempt to conceal his location by removing pages of his passport, to be completely unacceptable.”

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

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to

consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

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

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

“The panel saw no evidence of Mr Wilson having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector.

There was no evidence before the panel of any previous disciplinary warnings or proceedings against Mr Wilson. No character references were provided on behalf of Mr Wilson, however, the panel noted that Mr Wilson’s conduct in this instance did not align with his previous professional history as there was no pattern of similar behaviour.”

I have also noted the panel’s comments on Mr Wilson’s health and that it was extremely unlikely that he would return to work:

[REDACTED]

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Wilson from teaching, were he able to return to work, and so clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

The misconduct found in this case is serious, especially as it includes a finding of dishonesty. The panel has also found that Mr Wilson’s actions were deliberate and that there was no evidence to suggest that Mr Wilson was acting under extreme duress.

However, in this case, I have taken account of the panel’s comments that Mr Wilson’s conduct was not at the most serious end of the spectrum. The panel has said:

“The panel heard oral evidence from Witness A who stated that other instances of unauthorised absence had occurred within the School which had resulted in a less severe outcome as that individual had accepted and apologised for their conduct at an early stage. The panel considered that, had Mr Wilson accepted responsibility for his actions at the first opportunity, the matter was unlikely to have escalated to a professional conduct panel hearing. Taking all of these matters into account, the panel considered that, on the spectrum of misconduct, the teacher’s conduct, whilst not to be condoned, was not at the most serious end.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel's conclusion that a prohibition order would not be appropriate in the light of other mitigating factors which included "the teacher's [REDACTED], the extremely low risk of repetition, the absence of any harm to pupils, the expression of remorse, and the lack of any prior disciplinary history".

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

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

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 15 April 2026

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