



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Stephen Squire: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

May 2026

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

Teacher:	Mr Stephen Squire
Teacher ref number:	1788686
Teacher date of birth:	11 November 1985
TRA reference:	19395
Date of determination:	26 May 2026
Former employer:	Penrice Academy, Cornwall (the “School”)

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 26 May 2026 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Squire.

The panel members were Mr Nigel Shock (lay panellist – in the chair), Mrs Erin Sudds (teacher panellist) and Mrs Sharon Bhogal (teacher panellist).

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

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Matila Heselton of Browne Jacobson LLP solicitors.

Mr Squire was not present and was not represented.

In advance of the meeting, after taking into consideration the public interest and the interests of justice, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Squire that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Squire provided a signed Statement of Agreed Facts and admitted that the facts amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer or Mr Squire.

The meeting took place in private.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Meeting dated 11 May 2026.

It was alleged that Mr Squire was guilty of having been convicted of a relevant offence, in that:

1. He was convicted in the Plymouth Crown Court on or around 8 November 2024 of;
 - a. attempting to cause or incite a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity;
 - b. attempt to cause a child to watch a sexual act; and
 - c. attempting to sexually communicate with a child.

In a Statement of Agreed Facts, Mr Squire admitted the allegations and admitted that his conduct amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology – page 4

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 6 to 27

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 28 to 63

Section 4: Teacher documents – pages 67 to 68

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the meeting.

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

Statement of Agreed Facts

The panel considered a Statement of Agreed Facts signed by Mr Squire on 10 October 2025.

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 advance of the meeting, the TRA agreed to a request from Mr Squire for the allegations to be considered without a hearing. The panel had the ability to direct that the case be considered at a hearing if required in the interests of justice or in the public interest. The panel did not determine that such a direction was necessary or appropriate in this case.

Mr Squire was employed at the School as a teacher from 1 September 2019 to 16 July 2020.

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. You were convicted in the Plymouth Crown Court on or around 8 November 2024 of;**
 - a. attempting to cause or incite a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity;**
 - b. attempt to cause a child to watch a sexual act; and**
 - c. attempting to sexually communicate with a child.**

In the Statement of Agreed Facts, Mr Squire admitted allegation 1(a), allegation 1(b) and allegation 1(c).

The panel considered a certificate of conviction from Plymouth Crown Court, confirming that Mr Squire was convicted on 8 November 2024 of the offences particularised in allegation 1(a), allegation 1(b) and allegation 1(c). The panel noted that Mr Squire was sentenced on 12 December 2024 to 3 years and 4 months of imprisonment, a sexual harm prevention order for 10 years and was added to the sex offenders register indefinitely.

The panel considered the transcript of the sentencing remarks dated 12 December 2024, summarising the offences and the reason for the sentence imposed. The panel noted the following remarks:

- “Between 2 and 30 June of 2020, [Mr Squire] communicated with a person using the profile, ‘Gemma’, a girl aged 12, through the online chat platform, #1 Chat Avenue, and the social media applications Snapchat and Kik. In reality, ‘Gemma’ was an undercover [sic] police officer. It was [Mr Squire] who started the chat having sought out the team chat room on Chat Avenue.”
- “[Mr Squire was] told by Gemma that she was 12 years old. [Mr Squire] received two photographs of Gemma which showed a young female, and Gemma described elements of her life consistent with being a child, including attending school. The jury rejected your assertion that you believed Gemma to be an adult engaged in roleplay and found that [Mr Squire] believed that she was under the age of 13.”
- “The messages [Mr Squire] sent included, specifically in relation to Count 1, on 5 June, where [Mr Squire] encouraged Gemma to penetrate her vagina with her middle finger, and on 9 June, where [Mr Squire] asked if she wanted to repeat exploring her vagina with her finger again, and encouraged her to do it. In relation to Count 2 on 17 June 2020, [Mr Squire] sent two videos of yourself masturbating. Count 3, in addition to those matters, [Mr Squire] said that [he] wanted Gemma to get naked, for her to touch [his] penis.”

The panel noted that there was no evidence of any exceptional circumstances to call into question the facts necessarily implied by the conviction. The panel therefore accepted the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of the commission of these offences by Mr Squire.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(a), allegation 1(b) and allegation 1(c) proven.

Findings as to a conviction of a relevant offence

Having found all of the allegations proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence.

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 Squire, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers’ Standards.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by

- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; and
 - not undermining the rule of law.
- 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 noted that Mr Squire's actions were relevant to teaching, working with children and working in an education setting, as Mr Squire's convictions relate to sexual offences against a child.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offences could have had an impact on the safety and security of pupils and members of the public, given the harm caused by sexual offences against children.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Squire's behaviour in committing the offences could affect public confidence in the teaching profession, given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community.

The panel noted that Mr Squire's behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed.

The panel also considered the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. This was a case concerning an offence involving sexual communication with a child, which the Advice states is likely to be considered a relevant offence.

The panel considered Mr Squire's behaviour in committing the offences to be grave, as his actions had a clear intention to engage in sexual communication with a child. Whilst Mr Squire was corresponding with an undercover law enforcement operative, Mr Squire was made aware that he was corresponding with a child but he continued to engage in sexual communication. The panel noted that Mr Squire's offending behaviour was not a one off incident, as his behaviour was repeated on multiple occasions.

The panel noted that Mr Squire had no previous convictions before this offending behaviour. However, there was no further mitigating evidence provided.

The panel saw no evidence in relation to Mr Squire's previous ability as a teacher or any other mitigating circumstances. Even if the panel had seen such evidence, the panel found the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the convictions was relevant to Mr Squire's fitness to be a teacher. The panel considered a finding that the convictions

were a relevant offence was necessary to reaffirm clear standards of conduct so as to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession. As such, the panel found that allegation 1(a), allegation 1(b) and allegation 1(c) each amounted to a conviction of a relevant offence.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of a conviction of a relevant offence, 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 and the protection of other members of the public;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; and
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In light of the panel's findings against Mr Squire, which involved a conviction of a relevant offence, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. The serious findings relating to sexual offences against a child raises significant public and child protection concerns.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Squire 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 Squire 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 Squire in the profession. The panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweighed any

interest in retaining Mr Squire in the profession, since his behaviour fundamentally breached the standard 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 Squire.

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

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- the commission of a serious criminal offence, including those that resulted in a conviction or caution, paying particular attention to offences that are 'relevant matters' for the purposes of the Police Act 1997 and criminal record disclosures;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- sexual misconduct, e.g. involving actions that were sexually motivated or of a sexual nature and/or that use or exploit the trust, knowledge or influence derived from the individual's professional position;
- 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); and
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour.

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

The panel considered that Mr Squire's actions were deliberate, as he repeatedly engaged in sexual communication with an individual who stated they were a child. The panel was satisfied that Mr Squire's offending behaviour was a calculated course of conduct.

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

There was no evidence of Mr Squire having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector. Similarly, the panel saw no evidence that showed Mr Squire was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings or warnings.

The panel was not provided with any character references regarding Mr Squire. As such, the panel did not accept that the incident was out of character.

The panel considered the following statement made within the police report dated 9 April 2022:

- “The subject initiated sexual conversation and discusses sexual acts such as oral sex and orgasms. He sent images of his erect penis, videos of himself masturbating, incited Gemma to touch herself as well as touching boys' penises at the park. He requested images of the 12-year-old in her leggings and images of her touching herself.”

The panel also considered the following statements made within the sentencing remarks dated 12 December 2024:

- “[Mr Squire] started the chat having sought out the team chat room on Chat Avenue. [Mr Squire was] told by Gemma that she was 12 years old. [Mr Squire] received two photographs of Gemma which showed a young female, and Gemma described elements of her life consistent with being a child, including attending school. The jury rejected [Mr Squire’s assertion that [he] believed Gemma to be an adult engaged in roleplay and found that [he] believed that she was under the age of 13”.
- “Your job, whilst not a factor in the commission of the offence, such that it would have been significant aggravation, nevertheless meant you had a clear understanding of the impact on children that online sexual exploitation can have.”

The panel considered the above statements to highlight the aggravating factors in Mr Squire’s offending behaviour, being that he would have been aware of the impact of sexual offences against children as a teacher yet sought out this communication in any case.

Whilst Mr Squire admitted the allegations in the Statement of Agreed Facts, the panel noted that Mr Squire entered a ‘Not Guilty’ plea in response to his offences. Additionally, Mr Squire sent a handwritten letter to the TRA dated 4 March 2026, in which he stated the following:

“Whilst I do not contest that I was convicted I have maintained a not guilty plea through the investigation, trial and to this date. Whilst I acknowledge this holds no weight with a jury not finding my defence more credible than the prosecutions case. That said my behaviour did fall short of the expectations of myself and was not that of someone in my

position. I therefore expect to be removed from the teacher registry and would/will not do anything to contest this decision.”

In light of Mr Squire’s above statement, the panel considered that Mr Squire had not taken full accountability for his actions.

The panel considered that there was no evidence of Mr Squire displaying any remorse for his actions. As such, the panel was not satisfied that Mr Squire demonstrated any insight into his conduct, meaning the risk of him repeating his behaviour is high.

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 Squire 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 Squire. Mr Squire’s offending behaviour was deliberate and had the potential to cause significant harm to a child, which was a significant factor in forming that opinion. 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. These include serious sexual misconduct and any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel noted these cases were relevant to Mr Squire’s offending behaviour.

The panel considered that Mr Squire’s behaviour was extremely serious, as Mr Squire’s offending behaviour was of a sexual nature in relation to an individual who stated they were a child. The panel considered there to be a risk of Mr Squire repeating his behaviour, as the panel saw no evidence that Mr Squire was remorseful or that he showed any insight into the harm caused by his behaviour.

The panel noted that public confidence in the profession could be seriously damaged if Mr Squire was provided any opportunity to return to teaching. The panel considered that any contribution that Mr Squire could make to the teaching profession in the future was outweighed by the seriousness of his conduct.

The panel decided that the findings indicated a situation in which a review period would not be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended without provisions for a review period.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

In this case, the panel has found all of the allegations proven and found that those proven facts amount to a relevant conviction.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Stephen Squire should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; and
 - not undermining the rule of law.
- 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 has found that the conduct of Mr Squire fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession, which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they involve a conviction for attempting to engage in sexual communication with a person he believed to be a child.

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 a relevant conviction, 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 Squire, 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:

“In light of the panel’s findings against Mr Squire, which involved a conviction of a relevant offence, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. The serious findings relating to sexual offences against a child raises significant public and child protection concerns.”

A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future.

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

“The panel considered that there was no evidence of Mr Squire displaying any remorse for his actions. As such, the panel was not satisfied that Mr Squire demonstrated any insight into his conduct, meaning the risk of him repeating his behaviour is high.”

In my judgement, the lack of insight and remorse 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 has observed:

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a conviction for attempting to engage in sexual communication with a person whom the teacher believed to be a child 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 a relevant conviction, 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 Squire himself. The panel has commented:

“There was no evidence of Mr Squire having demonstrated exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or having contributed significantly to the education sector. Similarly, the panel saw no evidence that showed Mr Squire was previously subject to disciplinary proceedings or warnings.”

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

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel’s comments concerning the serious and deliberate of the offending behaviour which had the potential to cause significant harm to a child. The panel has said:

“The panel considered that Mr Squire’s actions were deliberate, as he repeatedly engaged in sexual communication with an individual who stated they were a child. The panel was satisfied that Mr Squire’s offending behaviour was a calculated course of conduct.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the panel’s finding that Mr Squire had not demonstrated insight into, or remorse for, his actions, and that there was therefore a risk that he would repeat the behaviour.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Squire 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 that no provision should be made for a review period.

I have considered the panel's comments:

"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. These include serious sexual misconduct and any sexual misconduct involving a child. The panel noted these cases were relevant to Mr Squire's offending behaviour.

The panel considered that Mr Squire's behaviour was extremely serious, as Mr Squire's offending behaviour was of a sexual nature in relation to an individual who stated they were a child. The panel considered there to be a risk of Mr Squire repeating his behaviour, as the panel saw no evidence that Mr Squire was remorseful or that he showed any insight into the harm caused by his behaviour.

The panel noted that public confidence in the profession could be seriously damaged if Mr Squire was provided any opportunity to return to teaching. The panel considered that any contribution that Mr Squire could make to the teaching profession in the future was outweighed by the seriousness of his conduct."

I have considered whether not allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate response to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the offences of which Mr Squire was convicted and received a sentence of imprisonment, the lack of insight and remorse, and the risk of repetition.

I consider therefore that allowing for no review period is necessary to maintain public confidence and is proportionate and in the public interest.

This means that Mr Stephen Squire is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England. Furthermore, in view of the seriousness of the allegations found proved against him, I have decided that Mr Squire shall not be entitled to apply for restoration of his eligibility to teach.

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

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

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

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 27 May 2026

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