



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Ms Natalie Kelly: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

July 2026

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

Teacher: Ms Natalie Kelly

TRA reference: 25182

Date of determination: 10 July 2026

Former employer: Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College,
Lancashire

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 8 July 2026 or by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Ms Natalie Kelly.

The panel members were Ms Mona Sood (lay panellist – in the chair), Mr Ben Greene (teacher panellist) and Ms Kim Chudley (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Delme Griffiths of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Mark Millin of Kingsley Napley solicitors.

Ms Kelly was 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 hearing dated 23 April 2026 (as amended at the outset of the hearing).

It was alleged that Ms Kelly was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that whilst working as a teacher at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College (“the School”):

1. She was under the influence of alcohol and/or smelled of alcohol during working hours and/or whilst on school premises, on one or more of the following dates:
 - a. 13 December 2023; and/or
 - b. on or around 20 June 2024.
2. On or around 20 June 2024, she brought alcohol onto the school premises during working hours.

Ms Kelly made admissions in relation to allegations 1(a) and (b), whereby she accepted the substance of the allegations but on a certain basis. Allegation 2 was admitted in full.

Ms Kelly also accepted that her actions, on the basis admitted, amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

Summary of evidence

Documents

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

Section 1: Chronology, list of key people and anonymised pupil list – pages 4 to 5

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 6 to 7

Section 3: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 8 to 20

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 21 to 211

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 212 to 221

In addition, the panel agreed to accept a 21-page bundle of additional documents.

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 (the “Procedures”).

Witnesses

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

- Witness A
- Witness B
- Witness C

Ms Kelly also gave 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.

Ms Kelly began working at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College (“the School”) in September 2015.

On 13 December 2023, Ms Kelly was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol whilst on duty. Following this incident, Ms Kelly was issued with a letter of management instruction.

On or around 20 June 2024, there was a further occasion when Ms Kelly was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol. As a consequence, Ms Kelly was suspended and the School commenced an investigation.

On 31 December 2024, prior to the conclusion of the School’s disciplinary process, Ms Kelly resigned from her position.

On 7 February 2025, Ms Kelly was referred to the TRA.

In considering this case, the panel had careful regard to the oral and documentary evidence presented and the parties' submissions.

It accepted the legal advice provided.

The panel formed its own, independent view based on the evidence presented to it.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

1. **You were under the influence of alcohol and/or smelled of alcohol during working hours and/or whilst on school premises, on one or more of the following dates:**

- a. **13 December 2023**

The panel heard evidence from Witness B that, on 13 December 2023, at the end of the school day, the English department met for their regular Wednesday meeting.

Witness B's statement recorded, in summary:

- Ms Kelly was slightly late for the meeting, by approximately 10 minutes
- She rushed into the room and bumped into a table, knocking her laptop.
- She spilt her cup of tea and, after putting it down, Ms Kelly knocked it twice with her hand. The second time she did so whilst gesticulating and some tea went over her.
- Ms Kelly seemed "*a little erratic*" and was gesticulating more than usual.
- Witness B could not make sense of what Ms Kelly was trying to say and "*even her pronunciation seemed different*".
- Ms Kelly took herself to the bathroom after the tea spillage and, as she left, appeared to be upset.
- Ms Kelly was followed by Individual A, another English teacher, and when Individual A returned she reported to Witness B that she could smell alcohol on Ms Kelly, who had been crying in the toilet.
- Witness B proceeded to report the matter and attended a meeting, very shortly afterwards, with Witness A. Whilst walking to Witness A's office, she could smell alcohol on Ms Kelly. She described the smell as "*a medicinal smell associated with a spirit*".

In oral evidence, Witness B stated that when the meeting began, she did not think about the possibility of Ms Kelly having consumed alcohol. She simply assumed that she was stressed and rushed at the beginning of the meeting and needed a moment to calm herself. In relation to the nature of the smell she detected, Witness B was asked to opine as to whether it was fresh or stale in nature. She responded that it seemed to be fresh.

Witness A also gave evidence about this incident and confirmed she could smell alcohol during the meeting with Ms Kelly. In oral evidence, she also described the smell as fresh rather than stale and she felt she was able to tell the difference between the two.

Witness A stated Ms Kelly admitted to having drunk one and a half glasses of wine before coming into school that day.

Following this incident, Ms Kelly was issued with a management instruction.

Ms Kelly admitted this allegation on the specific basis that she consumed alcohol the previous evening and approximately one and a half glasses of wine that morning, before school. She confirmed that she was particularly struggling at the time with personal matters, which she expanded upon in her oral evidence, in relation to which she had received upsetting news the previous day, which triggered the alcohol consumption.

Ms Kelly did not accept she was impaired to the point of misconduct, stating in particular:

- She had yard duty that day, taught four lessons and no concerns had been raised, by anyone, prior to the departmental meeting.
- She was not 'all over the place' or slurring her words and denied gesticulating wildly or spilling a drink all over herself.
- There were contradictions in relation to the evidence in terms of timings and whether or not she remained in the department meeting.
- She was very emotional when she spoke with Witness A in her office, with reference to personal matters.
- Witness A took her shopping afterwards and, upon returning to the School, did not seek to stop her driving home.

Having carefully considered all of the evidence, the panel concluded, firstly, that Ms Kelly did smell of alcohol whilst on school premises and during working hours. That was the clear evidence from Witness B and Witness A and was consistent with Ms Kelly's own account of her actions the previous evening and that morning.

The panel was not persuaded that Ms Kelly had consumed any alcohol whilst on the school premises. There was no direct evidence to that effect. The height of the TRA's case was the opinion of colleagues that they felt the alcohol smell was fresh rather than stale. Ms Kelly's explanation of her actions, in relation to which she was extremely candid, was accepted.

That being so, particularly given the admitted extent of the alcohol consumption the previous evening and that morning, the panel was persuaded that it was more likely than

not that when Ms Kelly arrived at the School and began her working day, she remained under the influence of alcohol. There was the potential for her to be affected by it, even if Ms Kelly may have genuinely felt she was perfectly capable of performing her duties.

That conclusion was also supported by the fact that she still smelled of alcohol later on in the afternoon. There were no complaints or issues raised by pupils or colleagues during the course of the day about Ms Kelly's presentation.

Insofar as her behaviour was perceived as being erratic at the end of the school day, the panel recognised that the difficult events she had experienced in her personal life the previous day and the after-effects of alcohol could have caused her to act in that manner. The panel did not consider it necessary to determine whether she remained under the influence of alcohol by the time of the department meeting. It was sufficient and the panel finds proven that she arrived at school under the influence of alcohol.

Allegation 1(a) was found proved on that basis.

b. on or around 20 June 2024

The evidence before the panel, deriving from the School's investigation, was premised on the alleged conduct occurring on 24 June 2024, as the second occasion when it was alleged that Ms Kelly was believed to be under the influence of and smelling of alcohol.

It was now apparent and accepted by all parties that it was more likely than not that the correct date was 20 June 2024. The panel agreed and made a finding to that effect.

[REDACTED]. Not least, there was evidence regarding what it was assumed Ms Kelly had been doing during 24 June 2024, particularly in terms of working with pupils, which it followed was unreliable in certain respects. Witness A sought to address that issue in her supplementary statement to the panel.

In any event, Witness C gave evidence that Ms Kelly's behaviour, on the day in question, was brought to her attention by a teaching assistant, Individual B. There was no evidence from Individual B on the basis that she was not asked to participate in the School's investigation. The panel heard that the School had deliberately restricted information sharing in Ms Kelly's interests.

Witness C stated that this occurred at around 11:00am, albeit her evidence varied on this point, and in response to the concerns, she asked for Ms Kelly to accompany her to a conference room.

Once there, Witness C stated it was not immediately obvious to her that Ms Kelly was intoxicated, but Ms Kelly did say that she felt terrible and that she had a headache.

However, Witness C said it became clear to her that she was under the influence of alcohol because she could smell alcohol on her.

Witness C stated she then accompanied Ms Kelly to Witness A's office and when there, Ms Kelly was asked if she had been drinking. Witness C said Ms Kelly originally said "no", in response to which, Witness C told her she could smell alcohol. Ms Kelly responded by saying she had wine the night before.

Witness C stated she directly asked whether Ms Kelly had consumed any alcohol that morning, as the smell was quite strong, in response to which Ms Kelly she said she had a glass of wine that morning, at which point Ms Kelly started to get upset.

Witness C also stated Ms Kelly was uncoordinated, knocked things over, appeared quite sleepy and was unable to use her phone properly.

Witness C stated that she noted there was a bottle of vodka in Ms Kelly's bag, with about a third of the content remaining. The bag was said to have been in Ms Kelly's classroom, behind her desk.

Ms Kelly had to be driven home by another member of staff accompanied by Witness C. During the course of the journey, Witness C confirmed an unopened bottle of wine was also noted within Ms Kelly's bag.

Witness A also gave evidence about events on 20 June 2024 and supported Witness C's account regarding events in her office.

Ms Kelly admitted allegation 1(b).

She accepted that she had a setback and consumed a significant amount of alcohol the previous evening, to the extent that she was "*really intoxicated*" on the morning of 20 June 2024. She also accepted that she drank some wine that morning. To that extent, she accepted she both smelled of alcohol and was under the influence of it.

Ms Kelly provided a very different narrative to Witness C in terms of the circumstances in which she was brought to Witness A's office, maintaining that she went directly from the School's yard following a Year 11 leavers assembly and photographs and was never before a class that morning.

Ultimately, the panel did not consider it necessary to resolve that factual dispute. Ms Kelly was, even on her case, in school and performing her duties with Year 11 pupils and was scheduled to teach Year 7 pupils in the third lesson that morning, whether or not that lesson ever started.

There were no complaints or issues raised by pupils about Ms Kelly's presentation during this morning.

Ms Kelly very candidly accepted her behaviour and that she should not have come into school under these circumstances.

In light of her admissions, which were consistent with the evidence presented by the TRA, the panel found the allegation proved whereby on the morning of 20 June 2024, Ms Kelly both smelled of and was under the influence of alcohol, in the sense that she was adversely affected by it. That was the appropriate inference to be drawn from Ms Kelly's own account and the evidence regarding how she presented. It was clear that staff were sufficiently concerned by how Ms Kelly presented to bring the matter to Witness A's attention and the balance of evidence supported that she had consumed sufficient alcohol to be adversely affected and impaired, albeit the extent of which was disputed.

The panel did not find that Ms Kelly consumed alcohol on the school premises that morning. There was no direct evidence to that effect and the panel queried whether there would have been the opportunity for her to have done so. The panel was satisfied that Ms Kelly's account was such that she had consumed sufficient alcohol the previous evening and that morning to have smelled of alcohol, and been under the influence of it, when at school.

The panel therefore found allegation 1(b) proved.

2. On or around 20 June 2024, you brought alcohol onto the school premises during working hours

The panel repeats its findings in allegation 1(b).

Ms Kelly admitted having an opened and partially consumed bottle of vodka and an unopened bottle of wine in her bag, which she brought onto the School's premises. The panel repeats that it does not find that Ms Kelly consumed alcohol whilst at the School.

The panel considered that Ms Kelly's admission was consistent with the other evidence presented and found allegation 2 proved.

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

Having found 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. Whilst both elements were admitted by Ms Kelly, the panel made its own, independent determination.

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

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

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Ms Kelly 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.
- 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

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

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

The panel found that none of these offences was relevant.

The panel took careful account of the fact that it was recorded that Ms Kelly had health and personal issues at the relevant time and subsequently.

However, she held a position of trust and responsibility and she had a duty to act as a role model. Ms Kelly was, fundamentally, responsible for her own actions and, to her credit, fully accepted that her actions were wrong and should not have happened. It was clearly unacceptable to attend work whilst smelling of and under the influence of alcohol in the manner she did.

The panel accepts that no harm came to pass and there was no suggestion that Ms Kelly behaved improperly in the presence of pupils. However, given she was under the influence of alcohol to at least some extent, on two separate occasions, there were safeguarding and health and safety implications, noting that Ms Kelly was in the presence of and scheduled to be in the presence of pupils.

Insofar as Ms Kelly brought alcohol into the School, whilst the risk may be regarded as remote it nonetheless could have been found by pupils, given on Ms Kelly's case the bag was not on her person and not locked away. By bringing alcohol into the School, Ms Kelly therefore showed poor judgement.

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

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Ms Kelly's actions, on both of these occasions, amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

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

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual's status as a teacher. There was also a reputational concern for the School and the profession. Members of the public and parents would be rightly troubled by a teacher smelling of alcohol and being under the influence of alcohol whilst at school, as well as bringing alcohol onto the school's premises. There was also an impact on colleagues who were forced to react to and raise concerns about Ms Kelly's conduct and cover lessons at short notice on 20 June 2024.

The panel therefore considered that Ms Kelly's conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher.

For these reasons, the panel found that Ms Kelly'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 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.

Given the panel was concerned with two occasions when Ms Kelly attended school smelling of and under the influence of alcohol, and on one occasion brought alcohol into school, the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils was engaged by its findings.

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

The panel was also of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Ms Kelly was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Ms Kelly in the profession.

The evidence from the witnesses called by the TRA was to the effect that Ms Kelly was clearly highly regarded as a teacher. Her passion for her subject was very apparent. However, Ms Kelly was adamant that she would not return to teaching. Notwithstanding her current position, the panel considered there was a positive public interest in retaining her in the profession.

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

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

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, the only one the panel felt was directly engaged by its findings was a serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards. [REDACTED].

Even though some of the behaviour found proved in this case indicated that a prohibition order would be appropriate, the panel went on to consider the mitigating factors.

Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

The panel considered the following mitigating factors were present in this case:

- Ms Kelly had fully engaged with the proceedings and made full admissions in relation to the conduct found proved.
- The conduct occurred on two, separate school days that were six months apart. This was not, therefore, a prolonged episode of misconduct.
- Ms Kelly was highly regarded as a teacher. For example, Witness B described her as an impressive and wonderful teacher, stating that she had a good relationship with pupils, some of whom still asked about her to this day. Witness A also described her as a committed and talented young teacher, providing examples of her good practice and acknowledging the very difficult personal circumstances Ms Kelly was enduring at the time. Ms Kelly told the panel she could not be without her subject and loved working with pupils.
- There was a specific context to Ms Kelly's actions, in two particular respects with reference to Ms Kelly's personal life and health:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
- There was clear evidence of regret, remorse and insight in relation to her conduct. Ms Kelly fully understood that her actions were wrong and accepted full responsibility for them. It was clear how much she had learned from events.
- The combination of the School's disciplinary processes and these proceedings were such that the impact of these events had been felt by Ms Kelly for some time.

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

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, on balance, a recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response.

Ms Kelly gave evidence in an open and straightforward way and was very candid in terms of the journey she had been on over the past few years.

It was clear to the panel that Ms Kelly had managed to navigate her way through [REDACTED] the TRA's process, over the past 14 months, [REDACTED]. It was clear she now had sustained and robust support structures in place.

Whilst she was not presently minded to do so, should she change her mind the panel was also satisfied that Ms Kelly would be able to make a positive contribution to teaching, education and the profession in the future by using her skills, experience and expertise.

The panel took account of the fact that, if she chose to do so, a return to the classroom could result in increased pressure and stress upon her. It was, inevitably, not possible to say that there was no risk of repetition [REDACTED]. The panel did not consider that presented an absolute bar to someone with such issues being a teacher, or that it was fundamentally incompatible with being a teacher in a binary way, provided there was sufficient insight, understanding and robust support and response measures in place. In Ms Kelly's instance, the panel was satisfied they were, in circumstances whereby she had previously worked highly effectively as a teacher and apart from these two aberrations, albeit serious, she had an otherwise unblemished record.

On balance, the panel was, therefore, satisfied that the risk of repetition [REDACTED]. It was clear that, at the time these events occurred, Ms Kelly did not have sufficient insight into the risks associated with her actions. In the panel's view, her understanding and reflections had clearly evolved and developed to the extent that, now, she did have that insight.

The panel also considered that the risk of repetition was mitigated by the passage of time, her previous and continuing rehabilitative steps, her current personal circumstances, her ongoing support structures, which were robust, and the mechanisms she stated she utilised to manage stress and challenging events.

The panel also had in mind that, having been through these events and the catastrophic impact there has been upon her, it would be likely that Ms Kelly would strive to avoid similar issues happening again, should she return to working in a position of trust.

The panel therefore concluded that Ms Kelly had demonstrated clear and unequivocal insight into the circumstances and her conduct that led to her actions.

For these reasons and having weighed all relevant considerations, whilst fully recognising the seriousness of the conduct, the panel concluded that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate in this case.

Having very carefully taken account of the public interest considerations Ms Kelly's proven conduct gave rise to, the panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it has made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message as to the standards of behaviour that were acceptable.

The panel considered this was a proportionate outcome, particularly in circumstances where the panel's published findings may have a residual impact in terms of Ms Kelly's professional reputation and future employment prospects.

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 those proven facts amount to unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Ms Natalie Kelly 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 Ms Kelly 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.
- 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

The panel has found that the conduct of Ms Kelly fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

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

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

“The panel accepts that no harm came to pass and there was no suggestion that Ms Kelly behaved improperly in the presence of pupils. However, given she was under the influence of alcohol to at least some extent, on two separate occasions, there were safeguarding and health and safety implications, noting that Ms Kelly was in the presence of and scheduled to be in the presence of pupils.

Insofar as Ms Kelly brought alcohol into the School, whilst the risk may be regarded as remote it nonetheless could have been found by pupils, given on Ms Kelly’s case the bag was not on her person and not locked away. By bringing alcohol into the School, Ms Kelly therefore showed poor judgement.”

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:

“There was clear evidence of regret, remorse and insight in relation to her conduct. Ms Kelly fully understood that her actions were wrong and accepted full responsibility for them. It was clear how much she had learned from events.”

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 findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on the individual’s status as a teacher. There was also a reputational concern for the School and the profession. Members of the public and parents would be rightly troubled by a teacher smelling of alcohol and being under the influence of alcohol whilst at school, as well as bringing alcohol onto the school’s premises.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding of being under the influence of alcohol whilst on school premises on 2 separate occasions 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 Ms Kelly herself. The panel has commented:

“The evidence from the witnesses called by the TRA was to the effect that Ms Kelly was clearly highly regarded as a teacher. Her passion for her subject was very apparent. However, Ms Kelly was adamant that she would not return to teaching. Notwithstanding her current position, the panel considered there was a positive public interest in retaining her in the profession.”

A prohibition order would prevent Ms Kelly from returning to teaching should she wish to do so in future. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of her potential 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 insight shown by Ms Kelly and the actions that she has taken which have reduced the risk of repetition. The panel has said:

“The panel also considered that the risk of repetition was mitigated by the passage of time, her previous and continuing rehabilitative steps, her current personal circumstances, her ongoing support structures, which were robust, and the mechanisms she stated she utilised to manage stress and challenging events.

The panel also had in mind that, having been through these events and the catastrophic impact there has been upon her, it would be likely that Ms Kelly would strive to avoid similar issues happening again, should she return to working in a position of trust.

The panel therefore concluded that Ms Kelly had demonstrated clear and unequivocal insight into the circumstances and her conduct that led to her actions.”

I have also placed weight on the panel’s comments on the context to Ms Kelly’s actions in terms of her personal life and health.

I have also taken account of other mitigating factors identified by the panel including:

“The conduct occurred on two, separate school days that were six months apart. This was not, therefore, a prolonged episode of misconduct.”

“Ms Kelly was highly regarded as a teacher. For example, Witness B described her as an impressive and wonderful teacher, stating that she had a good relationship with pupils, some of whom still asked about her to this day.”

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', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 13 July 2026

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