



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Robert Collins: Professional conduct panel meeting outcome

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

August 2026

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

Teacher: Mr Robert Collins

Teacher ref number: 0668376

Teacher date of birth: 13 August 1985

TRA reference: 22306

Date of determination: 27 August 2026

Former employer: Formby High School, Liverpool

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 27 August 2026 by way of a virtual meeting, to consider the case of Mr Robert Collins.

The panel members were Mr Alan Wells (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Kate Hurley (teacher panellist) and Mr Paul Hawkins (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mrs Samantha Cass of Birketts LLP Solicitors.

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 Collins that the allegations be considered without a hearing. Mr Collins provided a signed statement of agreed facts and admitted conviction of a relevant offence. The panel considered the case at a meeting without the attendance of the presenting officer Ms Poppy George, Capsticks LLP, Mr Collins or any representative for Mr Collins.

The meeting took place in private by way of a virtual meeting.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Statement of Agreed Facts signed on 7 April 2026.

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

1. On 12 June 2024 he was found guilty and convicted at Sefton Magistrates Court for the following offences:
 - a) Engage in sexual communication with a child on 13/04/2022 to 30/07/2022, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - b) Attempt/Engage in sexual communication with a child on 31/05/2023 to 09/06/2023, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - c) Attempt/Engage in sexual communication with a child on 04/09/2020, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - d) Engage in sexual communication with a child on 26/03/2023, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - e) Attempt/cause/incite a female child under 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration on 31/05/2023 to 08/06/2023, contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - f) Possessing an indecent photograph or pseudo photograph of a child on 22/08/2019 to 27/08/2019, contrary to the Criminal Justice Act 1988
 - g) Attempt/cause/incite a female child under 18 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration on 08/06/2023, contrary to the Sexual Offence Act 2003
 - h) Cause/Incite female child under 16 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration on 12/04/2022 to 16/04/2022 contrary to the Sexual Offence Act 2003
 - i) Cause/incite female child under 16 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration on 26/03/2023, contrary to the Sexual Offence Act 2003

Mr Collins admitted the facts of allegations 1a) to i) as set out in the response to the notice of referral dated 28 November 2025 and in the Statement of Agreed Facts signed on 7 April 2026. Mr Collins also admitted that those admitted facts amount to conviction of relevant offences.

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 3 to 4

Section 2: Notice of referral, response and notice of meeting – pages 5 to 17

Section 3: Statement of agreed facts and presenting officer representations – pages 18 to 25

Section 4: TRA documents – pages 26 to 73

Section 5: Teacher documents – pages 119 to 132

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 which was signed by Mr Collins on 7 April 2026 and subsequently signed by the presenting officer on 10 April 2026.

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 Collins 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 Collins’ employment as assistant curriculum leader of art, design and technology at Formby High School (‘the School’) commenced on 16 April 2012.

On 9 June 2023, Mr Collins was arrested at the School by the Northwest Regional Organised Crime Unit in connection with his suspected involvement in sexual offences involving children.

On 12 June 2023, Mr Collins was suspended from his role at the School. Mr Collins was subsequently dismissed from the School on 6 July 2023.

Upon entering a guilty plea, Mr Collins was convicted on 12 June 2024 at Sefton Magistrates Court of 2 counts of engage in sexual communication with a child; 2 counts of adult attempt to engage in sexual communication with a child; 1 count of attempt to cause/ incite a female child aged under 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration; 1 count of possess indecent photograph/ pseudo-photograph of a child; 1 count 18 or over attempt to cause/ incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration; 2 counts offender 18 or over cause/ incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration SOA 2003.

On 24 September 2024, Mr Collins was sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court to a total of 27 months imprisonment; made subject to a requirement to register with police for 10 years; a £228 surcharge and a sexual harm prevention order was imposed for 10 years.

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:

You are guilty of conviction of a relevant offence in that you:

- 1. On 12 June 2024 you were convicted at Sefton Magistrates' Court in relation to the following offences:**
 - a) Engage in sexual communication with a child (in relation to 13 April 2022);**
 - b) Adult attempt to engage in sexual communication with a child (in relation to the period of 31 May – 9 June 2023);**
 - c) Adult attempt to engage in sexual communication with a child (in relation to 4 and/or 5 September 2020);**
 - d) Engage in sexual communication with a child (in relation to 26 March 2023);**
 - e) Attempt to cause / incite a female child aged under 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration (in relation to 31 May 2023 or 8 June 2023);**

- f) Possess indecent photograph / pseudo photograph of a child (in relation to the period of 21 August 2019 to 10 June 2023);**
- g) 18 or over attempt to cause/incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration (in relation to 5 September 2020 or 8 June 2023);**
- h) Offender 18 or over cause / incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration – SOA 2003 (in relation to the period of 12 – 16 April 2022);**
- i) Offender 18 or over cause / incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration – SOA 2003 (in relation to 26 March 2023).**

The panel considered the Statement of Agreed Facts, signed by Mr Collins on 7 April 2026. In the Statement of Agreed Facts, Mr Collins admitted the particulars of allegations 1a) to i) and accepted that his conduct amounted to conviction of a relevant offence.

The panel noted page 8 of the Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers ('the Advice') which states that where there has been a conviction at any time, of a criminal offence, the panel will accept the certificate of conviction as conclusive proof of both the conviction and the facts necessarily implied by the conviction, unless exceptional circumstances apply. The panel did not find that any exceptional circumstances applied in this case.

The panel had been provided with a certificate of conviction from Liverpool Crown Court which set out that on 12 June 2024, Mr Collins was convicted at Sefton Magistrates Court of 2 counts of engaging in sexual communication with a child; 2 counts of attempting to engage in sexual communication with a child; 1 count of possessing an indecent photograph/pseudo-photograph of a child; 1 count of attempting to cause/incite a female child aged under 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration; 3 counts of 18 or over attempting to cause/incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration.

Mr Collins was sentenced on 24 September 2024 at Liverpool Crown Court to a total of 27 months imprisonment; made subject to a requirement to register with police for 10 years; a £228 surcharge and a sexual harm prevention order was imposed for 10 years.

Following examination of the documents before them, including the Statement of Agreed Facts and the certificate of conviction, the panel was satisfied that allegations 1a) to i) were proven.

Findings as to conviction of a relevant offence

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

In doing so, the panel had regard to the Advice.

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

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Collins, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards. The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Collins was in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including...the rule of law...
- 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 noted that Mr Collins' actions were relevant to teaching, working with children, and working in an education setting.

The panel noted that the behaviour involved in committing the offences could have had an impact on the safety and/or security of pupils and/or members of the public.

The panel also took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel considered that Mr Collins' behaviour in committing these offences could undoubtedly affect public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly given the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. His conduct ran counter to what should have been at the very core of his practice as a teacher with a duty of care towards children.

The panel noted that Mr Collins' behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed. The child protection and public protection issues engaged by Mr Collins' actions were demonstrated by the Court's sentence.

The panel also considered the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

This was a case involving an offence of sexual activity; sexual communication with a child/viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent

photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, or permitting any such activity, including one-off incidents, which the Advice states is more likely to be considered a relevant offence.

The panel found that the seriousness of the offending behaviour that led to the conviction was relevant to Mr Collins' ongoing suitability to teach. The panel considered that a finding that these convictions were for relevant offences was necessary to reaffirm clear standards of conduct so as to maintain public confidence in the teaching profession.

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 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 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 Collins, which involved convictions for sexual communication and activity with children, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of inappropriate relationships with children.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Collins was 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 Collins 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 Collins in the profession. The panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Collins 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. The panel noted that a teacher's behaviour should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest. The panel considered the seriousness of Mr Collins' online behaviours and the appropriate weight to attach to this in reaching its decision.

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 Collins.

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;
- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing, or publishing any indecent photograph or image, or indecent pseudo photograph or image, of a child, or permitting such activity, including one-off incidents; and
- a deep-seated attitude that leads to harmful behaviour.

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

There was no evidence that Mr Collins' actions were not deliberate.

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

The panel noted that there was no evidence to demonstrate that Mr Collins had exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he contributed significantly to the education sector.

In his response statement, Mr Collins submitted that he had reflected on the harm he had caused and the impact his conduct had had on the victims.

In his response statement, Mr Collins also referred to [REDACTED] and suggested this had an influence on his mistaken belief that certain online behaviours, specifically the exchange of sexualised messages, were socially acceptable. The panel noted that it had seen no evidence of [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, 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 Collins 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 Collins. The seriousness of the offences 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 to recommend that a review period of the order should be considered. 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 e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons...;
- any sexual misconduct involving a child; and

- any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents.

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 Robert Collins should be the subject of a prohibition order, with no provision for a review period.

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including...the rule of law...
- 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 satisfied that the conduct of Mr Collins which led to the conviction was relevant to his ongoing suitability to teach.

The findings of misconduct are particularly serious as they include a finding of several criminal offences all relating to sexual conduct towards children.

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 Collins, 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 safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, *"In light of the panel's findings against Mr Collins, which involved convictions for sexual communication and activity with children, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils, given the serious findings of inappropriate relationships with children."*

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 sets out as follows, *"In his response statement, Mr Collins submitted that he had reflected on the harm he had caused and the impact his conduct had had on the victims."*

The panel has also commented that Mr Collins suggested that his [REDACTED] may have influenced his mistaken belief that some of his proven conduct was socially acceptable.

The panel does not record that Mr Collins has demonstrated full insight into his proven conduct. In my judgement, the lack of full insight 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 observe, *"...public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Collins was 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 Collins was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated."*

I am particularly mindful of the finding of a conviction of several offences of sexualised conduct towards children in this case and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession. Particularly where this conduct has occurred over several years.

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 Collins himself. The panel comment "...*there was no evidence to demonstrate that Mr Collins had exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he contributed significantly to the education sector*"

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

In this case, I have placed considerable weight on the panel's comments concerning the seriousness of the conduct. The panel has said "*The panel noted that Mr Collins' behaviour ultimately led to a sentence of imprisonment, which was indicative of the seriousness of the offences committed. The child protection and public protection issues engaged by Mr Collins' actions were demonstrated by the Court's sentence.*"

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Collins 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 e.g. where the act was sexually motivated and resulted in, or had the potential to result in, harm to a person or persons...;*
- *any sexual misconduct involving a child; and*
- *any activity involving viewing, taking, making, possessing, distributing or publishing any indecent photograph or image or indecent pseudo photograph or image of a child, including one off incidents."*

I have considered whether allowing a review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing a review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the seriousness of the conduct, which involved sexualised conduct towards children, the length of time over which the conduct occurred, and the lack of full insight into the proven conduct.

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



Decision maker: Stuart Blomfield

Date: 28 August 2026

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