



Mr Christopher Clarkson: Professional conduct panel outcome

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

September 2026

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

Teacher: Mr Christopher Clarkson

Teacher ref number: 1964315

Teacher date of birth: 20 April 1982

TRA reference: 25540

Date of determination: 30 September 2026

Former employer: The de Ferrers Academy, Burton-on-Trent

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 28 September to 30 September 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Christopher Clarkson.

The panel members were Ms Lucy Childs (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mr Philip Trendall (lay panellist) and Ms Amy Howe (teacher panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Miss Lucy Churchill of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Aleksandra Manning-Rees of 5 St Andrew’s Hill chambers.

Mr Clarkson was not present and was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

It was alleged that Mr Christopher Clarkson was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that, whilst working as a Teacher of Maths at The de Ferrers Academy:

1. On or around 25 October 2024, he:
 - a. grabbed Pupil A's hood and/or coat;
 - b. said "don't swear at me you little shit", or words to that effect;
 - c. put his head and/or hand towards Pupil A's face;
 - d. blocked and/or prevented Pupil A from leaving;
 - e. grabbed Pupil A's shirt;
 - f. pulled Pupil A towards him;
 - g. pushed Pupil A towards and/or against a wall;
 - h. pushed Pupil C in and/or near the chest.
2. His conduct at paragraph 1 was unnecessary and/or excessive physical force.
3. As a result of his conduct at paragraph 1 he did not follow management advice about maintaining appropriate boundaries with pupils, given to him in January 2022.

Mr Clarkson denied the facts of the allegations, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

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 6 to 8

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

Section 3: TRA witness statements – pages 19 to 31

Section 4: TRA exhibits – pages 33 to 336

Section 5: Teacher's documents – pages 338 to 343

In addition, the panel received a proceeding in absence bundle of documents which consisted of 24 pages, and a copy of the CCTV footage documenting the alleged incident.

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within both bundles and viewed the CCTV footage in advance of the hearing.

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

Witnesses

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

Pupil A

Witness B – [REDACTED]

Mr Clarkson was not present at the hearing and did not give oral evidence.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

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

Mr Clarkson commenced employment as a mathematics teacher at The de Ferrers Academy (“the School”) on 1 September 2020.

It was alleged that, on 25 October 2024, Mr Clarkson reported to the assistant principal at the School that he had been involved in an incident and had pushed a pupil. On the same day, he was suspended pending an investigation.

The internal investigation was suspended whilst the police investigated the incident. The internal investigation recommenced in January 2025.

Mr Clarkson was subsequently dismissed by the School on 4 March 2025.

The matter was referred to the TRA on 8 May 2025.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

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

1. On or around 25 October 2024, you:

a. grabbed Pupil A's hood and/or coat;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered CCTV footage dated 25 October 2024 taken from three cameras located both inside and outside the School building where the incident allegedly took place (the 'CCTV Footage'). The panel noted that Mr Clarkson did not dispute during the School's investigation or the subsequent disciplinary process that he was the teacher shown in the CCTV Footage. The panel further noted that the CCTV Footage captured Mr Clarkson following Pupil A into a building corridor near an external door and then taking hold of Pupil A's hood from behind. The panel observed that the incident took place in a busy corridor full of other pupils.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Pupil A, who, in his written statement, confirmed that he provided a statement of facts to Individual C, [REDACTED], on the same day as the incident, which he believed he had been able to read and verify. He stated that he later reported the incident to the police and that his statement to the police was true and accurate.

The panel considered the appendices to the School's investigation report, including the incident report submitted by his [REDACTED], on 25 October 2024 following an interview with Pupil A (the 'Incident Report'). The panel noted that the Incident Report set out Pupil A's account of the events and recorded Pupil A as stating, *"I get to the double doors and Mr Clarkson grabs my bag and hood and pulls be [sic] backwards, I turn towards him and as I do he lets go of me"*.

The panel considered the notes of a police interview with Pupil A on 30 November 2024 (the 'Police Interview Notes'). The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the Police Interview Notes, *"I went into maths block to my lesson. Sir comes behind me and grabs my hood. I turn around and grab my hood abck [sic] off him"*.

The panel considered a written statement prepared by Mr Clarkson for the purposes of the School's investigation describing the events of 25 October 2024. In this written statement, Mr Clarkson stated, *"I followed, told them to stop, but they kept going. I*

reached out and grabbed his coat, he turned around and shouted 'Don't fucking touch me'.

The panel considered the written minutes of an investigation meeting which took place between Mr Clarkson and Individual D, the School's investigating officer on 17 January 2025 (the 'Investigation Meeting Minutes'). The panel noted that the Investigation Meeting Minutes recorded Mr Clarkson having been shown the CCTV Footage in the meeting and that his responses included, *"I mean I can't tell you why... but for some reason I did, I reached out & I grabbed and then he breaks the hold or whatever"*.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(a) proved on the balance of probabilities.

b. said "don't swear at me you little shit", or words to that effect;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Pupil A. In oral evidence Pupil A maintained that he could not recall what exactly Mr Clarkson said to him during the altercation.

The panel considered the Incident Report which set out Pupil A's account of the incident and recorded Pupil A as stating, *"Mr Clarkson then starts shouting in my face saying 'dont swear at a member of staff'"*.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in respect of Mr Clarkson, *"He starts shouting at me. Cant remember what he was saying...He started shouting louder and coming closer....he said "don't fucking swear at a member of staff"*.

The panel considered the written statement prepared by Mr Clarkson for the School's investigation describing the events of 25 October 2024. In this written statement, Mr Clarkson stated, *"I followed him and shouted 'Don't swear at me you little shit'. There was a lot of swearing back and forth from the student and myself"*.

The panel considered Mr Clarkson's Investigation Meeting Minutes. The panel noted that Mr Clarkson is recorded as stating: *"I advance towards him saying don't you swear at me, I definitely swore back at him and might have called him a fucking shit, I can't remember the exact words I used but I definitely swore back at him after he'd sworn at me already"*.

The panel considered the hearsay evidence of Pupil C contained in an incident report submitted by Individual E, [REDACTED], on 25 October 2024, following an interview with Pupil C. The panel noted that the incident report set out Pupil C's account of the incident and recorded him as stating: *"I entered the maths block and walked by the bottom of the*

stairs when I saw Pupil A getting pushed around by a teacher and the teacher was swearing at him and after that the teacher walked off.”

The panel considered the appropriate weight to attach to this evidence, and the fact that this hearsay evidence was unable to be tested by way of live witness testimony. The panel placed reasonable weight on the evidence contained in the incident report, which corroborated Mr Clarkson’s own apparent admission during the School’s investigation that he had sworn at Pupil A during the incident.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(b) proved on the balance of probabilities.

c. put your head and/or hand towards Pupil A’s face;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV Footage and noted that it showed Mr Clarkson lowering his head and putting his face close to Pupil A’s face when speaking as Pupil A attempted to back away from him.

The panel considered the Incident Report, setting out Pupil A’s account of the incident. The panel noted that the Incident Report recorded Pupil A as stating, *“Mr Clarkson then starts shouting in my face... I start backing away from him and shout back ‘don’t shout in my face’”*.

The panel considered Pupil A’s Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the interview, *“He started shouting louder and coming closer... this close to me. I’m moving back”*.

The panel noted that the CCTV footage did not show Mr Clarkson putting his hand towards Pupil A’s face, and this element of the allegation was not supported by any other evidence put before the panel.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel concluded that Mr Clarkson put his head towards Pupil A’s face and therefore found allegation 1(c) proved on the balance of probabilities.

d. blocked and/or prevented Pupil A from leaving;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV Footage. The panel noted that it captured Mr Clarkson following Pupil A closely in a corridor and then preventing Pupil A from walking past him

by putting out his arm with the effect of stopping Pupil A. The panel further noted that the CCTV Footage showed Mr Clarkson backing Pupil A into a corner, appearing to use his size and stature to prevent Pupil A from leaving the corridor.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the interview, *"I try and get past him. I'm going backwards, I didn't want to go into the PE changing rooms. Tried to get past him he blocked me"*.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(d) proved on the balance of probabilities.

e. grabbed Pupil A's shirt;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV Footage which captured Mr Clarkson walking away from Pupil A and then turning back. The panel noted that there was no audio recording to accompany the CCTV Footage, but Pupil A could be seen on the CCTV Footage, along with other pupils congregated in the corridor, appearing to be directing comments towards Mr Clarkson as he walked away. The panel noted the footage showed Mr Clarkson turned back towards Pupil A, advanced on him, grabbed Pupil A with his right hand near the top of Pupil A's shirt, around the top of his tie. The panel also had sight of the CCTV Footage at half speed, so it was able to closely scrutinise the incident.

The panel considered Pupil A's Incident Report. The panel noted that Pupil A described the incident stating, *"Then Mr Clarkson grabs me by the front of my shirt/coat near my neck"*.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the interview, *"He grabbed my tie and swinging me around. He has a drink in his right hand and swinging me in his left hand. He got hold of my tie near where the collar is, holding it tight...It was proper forceful. I couldn't do anything"*.

The panel considered the written statement prepared by Mr Clarkson for the School's investigation describing the events of 25 October 2024. In this written statement, Mr Clarkson stated, *"I started to walk away, and the student shouted something at me, I returned and I grabbed the front of his shirt"*.

The panel considered Mr Clarkson's Investigation Meeting Minutes. The panel noted that they record Mr Clarkson being shown the CCTV Footage during the investigation meeting and record him stating: *"I don't remember it being the collar, I remember it being the front of the shirt. Collar sounds more like I'm throttling him and I definitely wasn't doing that"*.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(e) proved on the balance of probabilities.

f. pulled Pupil A towards you;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV Footage and noted that it showed Mr Clarkson pulling Pupil A towards him whilst holding on to Pupil A's shirt near the collar. The panel also had sight of the footage at half speed, so it was able to closely review the detail of the incident.

The panel considered Pupil A's Incident Report, which included his statement that: *"Then Mr Clarkson grabs me by the front of my shirt/coat near my neck and starts swinging me around"*.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the interview regarding Mr Clarkson, *"He got hold of my tie near where the collar is, holding it tight. He was swinging me left and right to make me loose [sic] my balance"*.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(f) proved on the balance of probabilities.

g. pushed Pupil A towards and/or against a wall;

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV Footage and noted that it captured Mr Clarkson taking hold of Pupil A by the shirt at the top of his tie and then pushing Pupil A against the corridor wall whilst continuing to hold on to Pupil A. The panel also had sight of this section of the CCTV Footage at half speed and from alternative angles, and it clearly showed Mr Clarkson grabbing Pupil A's shirt and forcibly pushing him into a wall.

The panel considered Pupil A's Incident Report. The panel noted that Pupil A described the incident stating, *"Then Mr Clarkson grabs me by the front of my shirt/coat near my neck and starts swinging me around and during this he swings me into the wall and the doors and I bang my head"*.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes within which he states: *"I'm moving backwards, he is moving forwards. I go into the door and the wall"*.

The panel considered the written statement prepared by Mr Clarkson for the School's investigation describing the events of 25 October 2024. In this written statement, Mr Clarkson stated, *"I returned and I grabbed the front of his shirt, and pushed him backwards near a wall. I'm not sure which parts of him, if any, connected, the push was not very hard"*.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(g) proved on the balance of probabilities.

h. pushed Pupil C in and/or near the chest.

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel again considered the CCTV Footage. The panel noted that footage captured in a School corridor showed Mr Clarkson push Pupil C in the chest area while walking away from the incident with Pupil A. The CCTV Footage showed Pupil C respond by pushing Mr Clarkson back. The panel also had sight of the CCTV Footage at half speed and from alternative angles.

The panel considered Pupil A's Incident Report. The panel noted that Pupil A's description included: *"Mr Clarkson lets go of me and I stumble then he turns around to walk away and as he walks away he pushes Pupil C and says 'move out of my way'. Pupil C then pushed him back and he continues to walk away"*.

The panel considered the appendices to the School's investigation report, including an incident report submitted by the [REDACTED], setting out Pupil C's account following an interview with Pupil C on 25 October 2024. The panel noted that Pupil C described the incident stating, *"I saw [Pupil A] getting pushed around by the teacher and the teacher was swearing at him and after that, the teacher walked off. As he did, he grabbed me and pushed me"*.

The panel considered Pupil A's Police Interview Notes. The panel noted that Pupil A was recorded as stating in the interview, regarding Mr Clarkson, *"Sir goes outside and as he is going outside he pushes one of my other friends, he is in the year below me, my friend pushes him back"*.

The panel considered Mr Clarkson's Investigation Meeting Minutes. The panel noted that Mr Clarkson admitted during the meeting that he had been aware that he pushed another pupil as he walked away from Pupil A, but did not know the identity of the pupil.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 1(h) proved on the balance of probabilities.

2. Your conduct at paragraph 1 was unnecessary and/or excessive physical force.

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel's attention was drawn to *section 93 Education and Inspections Act 2006* which addresses the power of teachers to use force in schools. The panel also considered the non-statutory advice document *Use of reasonable force (2013 updated 2015)* in assessing whether Mr Clarkson's actions were reasonable in the circumstances or were unnecessary and excessive.

The panel had sight of the School's Positive Behaviour Policy 2024 which set out that, whilst staff at the School have a legal power to use reasonable force, force cannot be used as a punishment. The panel noted that the policy sets out that reasonable force means using no more force than is necessary in the circumstances.

The panel considered the evidence in the bundle, including training certificates, which set out the safeguarding and behaviour policy training sessions that Mr Clarkson had attended during his time at the School.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness B, who stated that Mr Clarkson had attended mandatory safeguarding training at the School and that all teachers had access to the School's policies including the Positive Behaviour Policy through the School's Google Drive. The panel further noted Witness B's response to the CCTV Footage in which she stated that she had never seen such a severe incident like it before in her career.

The panel considered that based on the evidence, particularly the clear, high-quality recording of the incident on the CCTV Footage, there were no legitimate grounds for Mr Clarkson to have used the force he did against Pupil A. There was no need to control or restrain Pupil A, he presented no physical harm to himself or others, and he had ceased vandalising the post that had prompted their interaction. The panel considered that there were alternative and more proportionate ways of managing the situation.

The panel considered Pupil A's Incident Report submitted by Pupil A's Head of Year, which contained Pupil A's account of the interaction with Mr Clarkson. The panel noted that Pupil A stated that he was "*panicking*" at the time of the incident and had been affected by what had happened because he didn't expect a member of staff to act in the way that Mr Clarkson had.

The panel considered Pupil A's oral evidence about the lasting impact of the incident on him, the upset it caused and that because a lot of pupils observed the incident, gossip spread around the School, and he had to deal with comments from pupils about the incident.

The panel concluded that Mr Clarkson's behaviour towards Pupil A was inconsistent with the School's behavioural strategy to deescalate situations, and the force used by Mr Clarkson grabbing Pupil A's shirt near his neck and maintaining a firm grip of Pupil A while swinging him about and pushing him into wall before pulling him back and shoving him into a door, was entirely unnecessary and used excessive force.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 2 proved on the balance of probabilities.

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

3. As a result of your conduct at paragraph 1 you did not follow management advice about maintaining appropriate boundaries with pupils, given to you in January 2022.

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson denied this allegation, as set out in his response to the notice of hearing dated 29 June 2026.

The panel considered an email from the former Executive Principal of the School to Mr Clarkson dated 24 January 2022, which thanked Mr Clarkson for his time talking through some CCTV footage and "*subsequent learning points*". The panel did not have sight of the CCTV footage referred to or the learning points discussed but was provided with a written statement from Pupil D which described an incident involving Mr Clarkson in which Mr Clarkson allegedly pushed Pupil D with two hands in the corridor and then into a classroom.

The panel considered the written statement of Witness B, who stated that Mr Clarkson had been given management advice in 2022 by the former Executive Principal. From her recollection, the management advice was given in response to an incident involving pushing or moving a pupil and included ensuring that Mr Clarkson understood that physical contact with pupils was not acceptable except in exceptional and limited circumstances.

The panel considered the oral evidence of Witness B who confirmed that she was not aware of what advice was provided to Mr Clarkson and confirmed that no records of the advice had been retained beyond the email referring to '*learning points*'.

The panel noted that it had not been provided with evidence of the alleged management advice provided to Mr Clarkson in 2022, and considered that an oblique reference to learning points was insufficient.

The panel concluded that, on balance, there was insufficient evidence to establish that Mr Clarkson had been provided with relevant management advice in 2022.

Having considered the evidence available, the panel found allegation 3 not proved on the balance of probabilities.

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

Having found allegations 1(a) to (h) and 2 proved, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

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

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including individual liberty and mutual respect
- 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 Clarkson, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education (“KCSIE”).

The panel considered that Mr Clarkson was in breach of the provision that: “*All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn*”.

The panel also considered whether Mr Clarkson's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice. The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual's conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found that the offence type of violence was relevant.

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

Accordingly, the panel was satisfied that Mr Clarkson was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Clarkson'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 panel considered that pupil, parent or any member of the public would be deeply shocked by the use of unwarranted and excessive force against Pupil A by Mr Clarkson, in front of a large audience of pupils.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Clarkson's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on page 12 of the Advice. As set out above in the panel's findings as to whether Mr Clarkson was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found the offence of violence was relevant.

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.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Clarkson'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/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 protection of other members of the public;
- the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; and
- declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Clarkson, which involved Mr Clarkson using excessive and unnecessary force against a pupil, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protection of the public.

Similarly, the panel considered that public confidence in the profession could be seriously weakened if conduct such as that found against Mr Clarkson 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 of declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present, as the conduct found against Mr Clarkson 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 Clarkson in the profession. The panel noted that Witness B stated Mr Clarkson was a '*good solid teacher*', but aside from that it was not presented with any evidence showing that Mr Clarkson had ability as an educator, and the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Clarkson 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 Clarkson.

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

- serious departure from the personal and professional conduct elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- misconduct seriously affecting the education and/or safeguarding and well-being of pupils, and particularly where there is a continuing risk;
- failure in their duty of care towards a child, including exposing a child to risk or failing to promote the safety and welfare of the children (as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE);
- violation of the rights of pupils;

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 Clarkson's actions were not deliberate.

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

Mr Clarkson did not demonstrate exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector.

The panel considered Mr Clarkson's evidence that he had never reacted in such a way to pupil behaviour before, even when provoked with [REDACTED]. The panel did not accept that the incident was out of character. The panel saw evidence that showed Mr Clarkson had previously made unnecessary physical contact with a pupil in 2022, and the incident with Pupil A was another example of using unnecessary and disproportionate force, in a relatively short career. Further, the panel noted Witness B's oral evidence that Mr Clarkson had not reported any incidents of pupils aiming [REDACTED] comments at him prior to the incident.

The panel was not presented with any character evidence submitted on behalf of Mr Clarkson, which pertained to his professional conduct, his contribution to the profession, or his history and ability as a teacher.

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson's position, as stated in his written statement provided to the School in January 2025 and in an email to the presenting officer on 18 August 2025, was that the only reason for the events set out in the allegations was that he had an [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

The panel noted the oral evidence of Witness B that Mr Clarkson had not formally reported any health or personal concerns with the School at around the time of the incident.

The panel was presented with limited evidence pertaining to Mr Clarkson's level of insight and remorse. The panel noted Witness B's evidence that Mr Clarkson had been shaken and remorseful following the incident on 25 October 2024. The panel considered that Mr Clarkson was candid about his behaviour and accepted responsibility for his actions immediately following the incident, but following time to reflect, he failed to accept responsibility for his behaviour and attributed it entirely to [REDACTED] without an evidenced basis to take this view.

The panel noted that Mr Clarkson's written statement submitted to the School as part of its investigation, does not show any insight into or remorse for the impact his behaviours had on Pupil A or other pupils observing the incident, regardless of their cause.

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 Clarkson 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 Clarkson. The unnecessary and disproportionate violence towards a pupil 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.

None of the listed characteristics were engaged by the panel's findings.

The Advice also indicates that there are certain other types of cases where it is likely that the public interest will have greater relevance and weigh in favour of a longer period before a review is considered appropriate. One of these listed characteristics is violence. The panel considered this was a relevant characteristic given Mr Clarkson had been found to have used unacceptable and excessive force against Pupil A, which included grabbing him by the shirt and pushing him forcibly into a wall in front of other pupils.

The panel considered that Mr Clarkson continued to attribute his actions, seeming without meaningful evidence, [REDACTED] rather than demonstrating full insight into his own conduct, which included the use of violence against a pupil.

The panel decided that the findings, taken overall, indicated a situation in which a review period would be appropriate and, as such, decided that it would be proportionate, in all the circumstances, for the prohibition order to be recommended with provisions for a review period of 5 years.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

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

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

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

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

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

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others

- not undermining fundamental British values, including individual liberty and mutual respect
- 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 Clarkson, involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a finding of violent behaviour towards a pupil.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Clarkson, 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 the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Clarkson, which involved Mr Clarkson using excessive and unnecessary force against a pupil, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and protection of the public.”* 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, *“The panel was presented with limited evidence pertaining to Mr Clarkson’s level of insight and remorse. The panel noted Witness B’s evidence that Mr Clarkson had been shaken and remorseful following the incident on 25 October 2024. The panel considered that Mr Clarkson was candid about his behaviour and accepted responsibility for his actions immediately following the incident, but following time to*

reflect, he failed to accept responsibility for his behaviour and attributed it entirely to [REDACTED] without an evidenced basis to take this view.”

The panel has also commented “... *that Mr Clarkson’s written statement submitted to the School as part of its investigation, does not show any insight into or remorse for the impact his behaviours had on Pupil A or other pupils observing the incident, regardless of their cause.*”

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

I am particularly mindful of the finding of violent conduct directed towards a pupil in this case, and the impact that such a finding has on the reputation of the profession.

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

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

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Clarkson himself. The panel comment “*Mr Clarkson did not demonstrate exceptionally high standards in his personal and professional conduct or that he had contributed significantly to the education sector.*”

I also note the evidence of Witness B, which the panel comment “...*Witness B stated Mr Clarkson was a ‘good solid teacher’, but aside from that it was not presented with any evidence showing that Mr Clarkson had ability as an educator...*”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Clarkson 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 lack of full insight or remorse.

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that Mr Clarkson *"...had been found to have used unacceptable and excessive force against Pupil A..."*

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Clarkson 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, that is not backed up by full remorse or insight, does not in my view satisfy the public interest requirement concerning public confidence in the profession.

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

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

The panel has identified that a characteristic of this case is violence, and that the Advice indicates that where this characteristic is present, the public interest will weigh in favour of a longer review period.

I have considered the panel's comments *"The panel considered that Mr Clarkson continued to attribute his actions, seeming without meaningful evidence, [REDACTED] rather than demonstrating full insight into his own conduct, which included the use of violence against a pupil."*

The review period may not be fewer than two years. I have considered whether a two-year review period reflects the seriousness of the findings and is a proportionate period to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. In this case, factors mean that allowing for a two-year review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the seriousness of the case, which involves the use of excessive force against a pupil, and the lack of full insight or remorse into the proven behaviour. I agree with the panel that a longer review period is required.

I consider therefore that a five-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, and to afford Mr Clarkson the necessary time to reflect on his behaviour and develop the necessary insight should he wish to apply to return to the profession.

This means that Mr Christopher Clarkson is prohibited from teaching indefinitely and cannot teach in any school, sixth form college, relevant youth accommodation or children's home in England. He may apply for the prohibition order to be set aside,

but not until 6 October 2031, five years from the date of this order at the earliest. This is not an automatic right to have the prohibition order removed. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the prohibition order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr Clarkson remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

Mr Clarkson 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 cursive script, appearing to read 'S. Blomfield'.

Decision maker: Stuart Blomfield

Date: 5 October 2026

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