



Mr Richard Lewis: Professional conduct panel hearing outcome

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

October 2026

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

Teacher: Mr Richard Lewis

Teacher ref number: 0655720

Teacher date of birth: 31 May 1979

TRA reference: 20136

Date of determination: 2 October 2026

Former employer: Peak Academy, Dursley

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened on 28 September to 2 October 2026 by way of a virtual hearing, to consider the case of Mr Richard Lewis.

The panel members were Mr Peter Ward (lay panellist – in the chair), Ms Gill Lyon (teacher panellist) and Mrs Shabana Robertson (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Nicholas West of Birketts LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Ms Caroline Collins of Capsticks LLP solicitors.

Mr Richard Lewis was present and was represented by Mr Andrew Faux of The Reflective Practice.

The hearing took place in public by way of a virtual hearing and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the Notice of Hearing dated 14 July 2026.

It was alleged that Mr Lewis was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that, while employed as the Principal of Peak Academy ("the School") he:

1. On 21 October 2019:
 - a. encouraged and/or allowed Pupil A and Pupil B to fight;
 - b. failed to take adequate steps to safeguard Pupil A and/or Pupil B when Pupil A and Pupil B were fighting;
 - c. pushed Pupil A and/or Pupil B one or more times;
2. On an unknown date failed to disclose in a reference for Teacher C that he was subject to a criminal investigation;
3. Was dishonest in his conduct at paragraph 2 in that he knew that he ought to disclose the criminal investigation.

Mr Lewis denied allegations 1.a, 1.b, 1.c, 2 and 3, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026, albeit it was noted that there was no dispute regarding the factual matrix of allegation 2 in that the relevant reference form, which the panel had sight of, was completed by Mr Lewis and it did not disclose the fact that Teacher C was subject to a criminal investigation. Mr Lewis provided no admission as to whether his conduct amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or 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 6

Section 2: Notice of hearing and response – pages 7 to 32

Section 3: TRA witness statements – pages 33 to 76

Section 4: Local investigation documents – pages 77 to 197

Section 5: TRA documents – pages 198 to 272

Section 6: Teacher documents – pages 273 to 331

The panel also had an addendum bundle relating to Teacher C totalling 120 pages and CCTV footage. The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle and addendum bundle and had viewed the CCTV footage, in advance of the hearing.

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

Witnesses

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

Witness A – [REDACTED]

Mr Lewis was present at the hearing and therefore 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.

Mr Lewis commenced employment at Peak Academy (“the School”) in May 2014 as Principal.

On 21 October 2019, it was alleged that Mr Lewis and his colleague, Teacher C (“Teacher C”), encouraged and/or allowed Pupil A and Pupil B to engage in a fight. During this incident it was also alleged that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B and that he failed to take adequate steps to safeguard the pupils.

It was further alleged that Mr Lewis failed to disclose in a reference for Teacher C, that Teacher C was subject to a criminal investigation.

A police investigation was carried out in relation to the events of 21 October 2019 but was later discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service in or around February 2021. Following completion of the criminal investigation, the School followed its disciplinary procedure and subsequently issued Mr Lewis a first written warning.

The matter was referred to the TRA on 6 July 2021.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

You are guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that, while employed as the Principal of Peak Academy (“the School”) you:

1. On 21 October 2019:

a. encouraged and/or allowed Pupil A and Pupil B to fight;

The panel noted that Mr Lewis denied allegation 1.a, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV footage along with a written summary of the footage, from the incident on 21 October 2019. It was noted that the footage had no sound. The CCTV recorded Mr Lewis entering the room with Pupil B. Also present in the room were Pupil A and Teacher C. Shortly after, Pupil A and Pupil B started pushing each other. Mr Lewis appeared to offer Pupil B the opportunity to go into the adjacent sensory room, although he did not take this offer. The CCTV then recorded Pupil A and Pupil B started fighting, throwing punches and grappling with each other, and the footage showed there was no intervention from Mr Lewis or Teacher C, who are seen to have stood and watched. Pupil A and Pupil B separated, at which point Mr Lewis was seen to step in to stop further action and Pupil A was taken out of view of the CCTV camera by Teacher C. It appeared from the CCTV footage that Pupil A was not removed from the room, resulting in a further physical fight between Pupil A and Pupil B, until Pupil A was physically removed by Teacher C.

The panel carefully considered the fact that the evidence of Pupil A and Pupil B was hearsay evidence obtained from their police Achieving Best Evidence (“ABE”) interviews. In accordance with the legal advice received and the factors set out in section 4 of the Civil Evidence Act 1995, the panel considered the weight that could properly be attached to that evidence. The panel noted that both pupils’ accounts were provided relatively contemporaneously to the events in question, and were independently given in formal police interview circumstances by specialist officers who are trained in interviewing vulnerable witnesses including children. Whilst the panel recognised that the interviews had subsequently been transcribed from handwritten notes and that some parts of the interviews were unclear or incomplete, it was satisfied that those issues did not materially undermine the reliability of the relevant passages.

The panel considered the transcribed notes from a police interview with Pupil B, dated 11 December 2019. When recalling the events of 21 October 2019, Pupil B submitted that

Mr Lewis said “*if you wanna have a fight have a fight then*” before letting him into “*the basecamp room*” (“basecamp”) with Pupil A. Pupil B submitted that he fought with Pupil A until Mr Lewis separated them. He further submitted that although he wanted to, he would not have fought with Pupil A, and only proceeded to do so because Mr Lewis had said that they could fight if they wanted to.

The panel considered the transcribed notes from a police interview with Pupil A, dated 5 December 2019. When asked to recall the events of 21 October 2019 Pupil A submitted that Mr Lewis had brought Pupil B into the “*base camp*” room and that he had said, “*fight it out with each other*”. The notes recorded Pupil A having said that Mr Lewis separated himself and Pupil B, and that after the fight Mr Lewis and Teacher C were smiling and laughing. During the interview Pupil A stated that Mr Lewis encouraged the fight.

When assessing the weight to be given to this hearsay evidence, the panel noted that there was no evidence that either pupil had any motive to fabricate their accounts, and the suggestions that they had colluded with one another or had been influenced by others were speculative and unsupported by evidence. The panel also took into account that the accounts given by Pupils A and B were materially consistent with one another, both describing Mr Lewis as having allowed and encouraged the fight, thereby providing corroboration. In addition, aspects of the CCTV footage, whilst lacking audio and therefore incapable of proving the words spoken, were consistent with the pupils' accounts and showed behaviour which the panel considered capable of supporting their description of events. Having considered all of those matters, the panel was satisfied that appropriate weight could be attached to the evidence of Pupils A and B. The panel found their accounts to be credible and accepted, on the balance of probabilities, their evidence that Mr Lewis had provided oral instructions that could be interpreted as encouraging them to fight each other.

The panel considered the statement of Teacher C, the other teacher present in the room with Pupil A and Pupil B at the time of the fight, dated 30 November 2021. Teacher C submitted that at the start of the lunch break on 21 October 2019, there had been an incident in the dining hall between two pupils whereby Pupil A allegedly stood on Pupil B's foot. [REDACTED]. Pupil A was placed in basecamp with Teacher C. He submitted that Mr Lewis brought Pupil B into basecamp to try and find out what was going on, but that Pupil B started pushing Pupil A, at which point Mr Lewis offered him space in the sensory room but that he refused. Teacher C submitted that Pupil B said that he wanted to “*smash the fucking school up*” with [REDACTED] and was extremely threatening towards himself and Mr Lewis. Teacher C stated this was why he felt it was likely that Pupil B was going to try to run off down the corridor and that it seemed logical for himself and Mr Lewis to position themselves in the way of the door. Pupil A and Pupil B “*then both went for each other*” by pushing and shoving, which Teacher C recalled was an unpredictable event and it was difficult to know how to react considering one of the pupils had [REDACTED].

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Witness A, [REDACTED]. Witness A referred to his police statement to assist his recollection of the events of 21 October 2019, in which he stated that during lunch time he was made aware of “a flare up” between Pupil A and Pupil B. He submitted that he was aware the decision had been made to separate Pupil A and Pupil B, in light of their heightened state, to avoid further conflict. Whilst Pupil A was taken to basecamp, Pupil B was allowed to go for a walk to help him regulate, however Witness A noted that, on this occasion, Pupil B did not seem able to do this and that he still wanted to communicate with Pupil A. Witness A submitted that towards the end of lunch Mr Lewis came over to him and asked what was going on, to which Witness A responded by giving a brief explanation that Pupil A was in basecamp and that Pupil B was still heightened. He stated that Mr Lewis then invited Pupil B to come with him to go and talk to Pupil A, saying something along the lines of “let’s get this sorted”. Witness A stated that he had thought this to mean bringing the two students together to talk and resolve their conflict. Witness A recalled that he remained in the corridor outside of the room whilst Mr Lewis and Teacher C were in the room with Pupil A and Pupil B. He noted that at the end of lunch Pupil A had left for a lesson, and Teacher C had left to go to teach. Witness A then entered the room to find Mr Lewis in what he described as a “shield to floor hold” with Pupil B, who was being verbally aggressive. He submitted that he then left the room when he believed Pupil B had calmed down, to go and get him an ice pack for his hand as he had hit a metal casing. Witness A submitted that when he re-entered the room Pupil B had been released from Mr Lewis’ hold and that they were both sat talking. He submitted that five minutes later Pupil A reappeared and offered an apology to Pupil B and that it was clear both students were very sorry for what had happened.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written witness statements of Mr Lewis, including his evidence provided for the police investigation, dated 16 December 2019. When asked whether he told Pupil A and Pupil B that they could “fight it out”, Mr Lewis submitted that there was no way he would have encouraged any pupil to fight and that he would not have taken two young people to go and have an altercation. During his oral evidence, Mr Lewis accepted that the fight took place and that there was a period of approximately 23 seconds during which he did not physically intervene. Mr Lewis stated that he was carrying out a dynamic risk assessment and did not want to intervene where there was a risk of physical harm to himself, Teacher C or either Pupil A or Pupil B. Mr Lewis accepted that, viewed in hindsight, he could and should have intervened sooner, stating, “Any professional would reflect and consider in hindsight”. Mr Lewis further accepted that the criticism contained within the School’s disciplinary findings, that he had been too slow to intervene, was fair.

In relation to the allegation that Mr Lewis allowed Pupil A and Pupil B to fight, the panel placed significant weight on the CCTV footage, which clearly showed a physical altercation taking place over a period of approximately 20 seconds during which punches were exchanged and no intervention occurred until the latter stages of the incident. The

panel also took into account the admission of Mr Lewis that the fight took place and was not stopped immediately, together with Mr Lewis' acceptance in oral evidence that he could have, and, in hindsight, should have, intervened sooner. The accounts of Pupil A and Pupil B were consistent with the CCTV evidence in asserting that the fight was permitted to occur and Mr Lewis failed to take steps to prevent it. The panel therefore concluded that Mr Lewis had allowed the fight to take place.

The panel recognised that the allegation that Mr Lewis encouraged the fight presented greater evidential difficulty because the CCTV footage contained no audio and could not establish what was said. The panel noted from the CCTV footage that Mr Lewis was talking to Pupil B and then stepped aside and with his right hand appeared to point towards Pupil A. Mr Lewis then put his hand behind Pupil B's back whilst saying something immediately before Pupil B moved to initiate the first physical attack on Pupil A. The panel considered this evidence was supported by the hearsay accounts of Pupil A and Pupil B recorded during their police ABE interviews. On balance, the panel found the evidence of Pupil A and Pupil B, taken with the CCTV footage sufficient to establish that Mr Lewis encouraged the fight by telling the pupils to "*fight it out*" or words to that effect. Accordingly, the panel concluded that Mr Lewis both encouraged and allowed a fight between Pupil A and Pupil B to take place on 21 October 2019.

The panel found allegation 1.a. proven.

b. failed to take adequate steps to safeguard Pupil A and/or Pupil B when Pupil A and Pupil B were fighting;

The panel noted that Mr Lewis denied allegation 1.b, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026.

The panel considered the copy of an incident report logged onto the School's behaviour management system, regarding Pupil A and Pupil B. This showed that on 21 October 2019 at 18:08 Mr Lewis had logged an incident: "*An incident occurred at break where Pupil A accidentally bumped into Pupil B. Pupil B took grievance to this as [REDACTED]. Pupil B couldn't let this go and this spilled into lunch time where Pupil B was intent on fighting with Pupil A who was also in high arousal. When we took Pupil B to discuss this with Pupil A they ended up shouting at each other and then started to throw punches. At this point we intervened with physical intervention to keep both parties safe*". Mr Lewis recorded the physical intervention as "*full shield*" for two minutes, and "*phased release*" for one minute.

The panel noted the meeting notes from the School's investigation meeting with Mr Lewis dated 3 March 2021. Mr Lewis stated that basecamp was a purpose-built sensory room that pupils can use when they are experiencing difficulties controlling their emotions. Mr Lewis also stated that when a situation continued to escalate it may be necessary to employ positive handling or restrictive physical intervention ("RPI"). In relation to the

incident on 21 October 2019, Mr Lewis submitted that his dynamic risk assessment was different and that he did not intervene earlier due to [REDACTED]. Mr Lewis submitted that at no point during the incident did he indicate that he wanted the pupils to fight and that he gave clear instructions for both boys to cease their physical aggression. Mr Lewis submitted that he positioned himself in front of the door with Teacher C as Pupil B had stated that he was going to *“get his fucking crutch and smash the fucking school up”*. It was stated in the interview that the boys fought for 23 seconds, with one of the pupils punching the other in the head nine or 10 times before there was any intervention and Mr Lewis was asked why it took him so long to intervene. Mr Lewis answered that he made at least 15 risk assessments and that he was focused on not using restraint as a method of control, so he waited for a natural lull in the scuffle which at the time he felt was the safest and best option. When Mr Lewis was asked whether he upheld the Teacher's Standards regarding safeguarding children's wellbeing, he submitted that he believed he dealt with an unpredictable situation with volatile pupils to the best of his ability at the time. Mr Lewis added that he had no intention of the fight occurring and that he had tried his best to resolve the situation.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written witness statement of Witness A who submitted that all staff at the School were involved in training called “Team Teach”, which Mr Lewis was also a course instructor for. He stated that the training involved de-escalation techniques and that it clearly set out to staff that they had a duty of care to use physical intervention when necessary, and that the training taught staff a variety of different restraints. Witness A stated that he would not be able to comment on what occasions it would be appropriate for staff not to intervene between two pupils, as he was not present in the room at the time of the incident nor had he seen the CCTV footage.

The panel considered the witness statement of Mr Lewis, provided for the police investigation, dated 16 December 2019. Mr Lewis stated that when Pupil B and Pupil A got into what he described as a *“melee”*, he decided that it was unsafe to jump in or to start using physical restraint, based on Pupil B's [REDACTED]. Mr Lewis stated, *“I felt that it was more unsafe to go in there and start wrestling with two, you know, two big lads than it was to go and get in there and, and, and have an RPI with Pupil B”*. Mr Lewis submitted that there became *“a natural lull, if uncomfortable to get to, but they did get to it”* and that was when he was able to separate them. Mr Lewis provided a response to concerns during the police investigation, that Pupil B had threatened to smash up the school and that he did not intervene as he felt physical restraint would harm both pupils. When shown the CCTV footage Mr Lewis responded that he did not recall that and he did not know why he did not separate the pupils, but he denied that he encouraged them to fight.

Having found, at allegation 1.a, that Mr Lewis encouraged and allowed the fight between Pupil A and Pupil B to occur the panel considered it followed that he had failed to take adequate steps to safeguard the pupils. The panel noted that, although no injuries were

sustained, this appeared to be a matter of good fortune given the force of the punches exchanged and the obvious risk of harm arising from the incident. Accordingly, the panel found that Mr Lewis failed to take appropriate steps to safeguard the pupils in his care.

The panel found allegation 1.b. proven.

c. pushed Pupil A and/or Pupil B one or more times;

The panel noted that Mr Lewis denied allegation 1.c, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026.

The panel considered the CCTV footage along with the summary provided from the incident on 21 October 2019. It was noted that the footage had no sound. The CCTV recorded that once Pupil A had left the room Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B onto the sofa and Mr Lewis is then seen standing over Pupil B who throws [REDACTED]. The CCTV footage recorded that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B back onto the sofa and was pointing and remonstrating with Pupil B. The panel noted from the CCTV recording that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B back onto the sofa a further four times. Pupil A then took the opportunity to jump on Pupil B and threw further punches, to which Teacher C responded by pulling him off. Mr Lewis pulled and restrained Pupil B pushing him onto the floor where he was held until he calmed down.

The panel noted the meeting notes from the School's investigation meeting with Mr Lewis dated 3 March 2021. Mr Lewis submitted that once Pupil A had left basecamp with the Teacher C, he felt he had to take a more assertive approach with Pupil B as he assessed that the risk was escalating. Mr Lewis stated that Pupil B then took off [REDACTED] and threw it at him, and submitted that he felt Pupil B's level of threat was increasing. He submitted that Pupil B stepped up a couple of times from the sofa and that he guided him back towards the sofa with some force, as he felt that Pupil B was trying to threaten him. He submitted that he felt this was proportionate, necessary and reasonable at the time. Mr Lewis recalled that Pupil B headbutted and punched an electronic box, and that Pupil B threatened to "*kill me*" and anyone else whilst also kicking him. This is when Mr Lewis reported using the full shield technique to guide Pupil B to the floor.

The panel considered the transcribed notes from a police interview with Pupil A, dated 5 December 2019. The notes record Pupil A to have said that after Mr Lewis had separated the boys from fighting, Pupil B was bashing his head on a box on the wall and that Mr Lewis then put Pupil B on the sofa.

The panel considered the statement of Teacher C, the other teacher present in the room with Pupil A and Pupil B at the time of the fight, dated 30 November 2021. He submitted that after Pupil A and Pupil B had stopped fighting, Pupil B was still being abusive and wanted his metal crutch to smash up the school, stating that "*he wanted to shank everyone in this fucking school*". Teacher C recalled that this was when Mr Lewis stepped

in and placed Pupil B back on the sofa, he submitted Pupil B was extremely aggressive towards Mr Lewis and was kicking him. Mr Lewis responded by telling Pupil B to sit on the couch and take the weight off his foot.

Although the evidence of Pupil A and Teacher C was hearsay, the panel considered that appropriate weight could be given to each of their accounts as set out above.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written witness statements of Mr Lewis, including the police investigation, dated 16 December 2019. Mr Lewis submitted that when Pupil B threw [REDACTED], this “*triggered*” in him a need to take a more assertive approach. When Pupil B stood up off the sofa Mr Lewis stated that he was threatening, so he had pushed him back down. Mr Lewis explained that his intent was to keep Pupil B on the couch as that is where he wanted him to stay. He stated that he felt this was proportionate and necessary. He submitted that when Pupil B started punching the electronics box he was “50/50” on whether to use physical intervention, and that it was when he headbutted the box that Mr Lewis decided to use the advanced Team Teach technique of a full shield.

The panel concluded that there was no evidence to support the allegation that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil A. The TRA accepted this position during the hearing and the panel was satisfied that there was no evidential basis upon which such a finding could be made.

In contrast, the panel was satisfied that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B on one or more occasions. The panel regarded the CCTV footage as clear and compelling evidence of this conduct. The footage showed Mr Lewis using physical force to push Pupil B back onto the sofa in an attempt to prevent him from getting up. The panel noted that, during his oral evidence, Mr Lewis ultimately accepted that his actions amounted to a push. This was consistent with other evidence before the panel, including Mr Lewis' police interview, in which he referred to having “pushed him back”, and Teacher C's account, which similarly described Mr Lewis pushing Pupil B back onto the sofa. The panel also noted that the use of the word “push” had been accepted by Mr Lewis' representative in opening submissions.

Whilst the panel accepted that the push was carried out in the context of managing the situation and preventing Pupil B from leaving the sofa, the allegation concerned whether a push occurred, not whether it was justified or accompanied by any improper motive. On the basis of the CCTV footage, the contemporaneous accounts and Mr Lewis' own evidence, the panel considered the evidence to be clear that Mr Lewis pushed Pupil B one or more times.

Accordingly, the panel found allegation 1.c. proven.

2. On an unknown date failed to disclose in a reference for Teacher C that he was subject to a criminal investigation;

The panel noted that Mr Lewis denied allegation 2, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026, albeit it was noted that there was no dispute regarding the factual matrix of allegation 2 in that the reference form the panel had sight of was completed by Mr Lewis and did not disclose the fact that Teacher C was subject to a criminal investigation. However, Mr Lewis did not accept that this was a failure on his part.

The panel considered a copy of the reference form that Mr Lewis provided on behalf of Teacher C. The panel noted specifically the section titled “*conduct, safeguarding and data protection*”, where Mr Lewis submitted “yes” to Teacher C having given him cause for concern or having been subject to a safeguarding issue. In the following box which asked, “*if yes to either of the above questions, please provide details*”, Mr Lewis wrote “*unfounded allegation*”.

The panel considered copies of emails between Mr Lewis and Individual A, [REDACTED], dated 11 March 2021. In regard to the reference Mr Lewis had provided for Teacher C, Individual A asked why it did not appear to make any reference to the ongoing police investigation. Mr Lewis stated that, at the time of the reference request, Teacher C had left employment at the School, and that he was not clear on whether or not providing information about a live police investigation would have been appropriate in the reference. Mr Lewis further wrote that he had received no instruction at that time that providing Teacher C with a reference would have been inappropriate.

The panel considered the oral evidence and written statement of Mr Lewis dated 29 August 2026. Mr Lewis submitted that he had informed the supply agency that requested the reference for Teacher C, that there had been an allegation in relation to Teacher C but that he described it as “*unfounded*”. He stated that to the best of his recollection “*unfounded*” was one of a number of drop-down options available to him. Mr Lewis also submitted that he believed he had explained further details of the police investigation involving Teacher C separately to the supply agency in either a phone call or an email. Mr Lewis submitted that he was then subsequently contacted to provide a reference for the school that Teacher C was to be placed at. In this reference form, Mr Lewis submitted that he deleted the “YES” in respect of disciplinary offences. He stated that this was because Teacher C had handed his notice in before the incident which gave rise to the police investigation, and that Teacher C’s suspension had been lifted. Mr Lewis submitted that he accepted he should have sought advice on the point as to whether to provide information about the live police investigation Teacher C was involved in. However, Mr Lewis stated that he remained unclear as to whether there was a positive duty upon him to make the disclosure in relation to Teacher C’s involvement in a police investigation, as he submitted that he had already told Teacher C’s employer, being the supply agency, about the allegation.

The panel was satisfied that Mr Lewis had provided the reference for Teacher C and that, at the time the reference was given, Teacher C was the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation. The panel noted that Mr Lewis accepted he did not disclose that information in the reference.

The panel considered and rejected Mr Lewis' explanation that he had not failed to disclose the information because the standard reference form did not specifically ask whether Teacher C was subject to a criminal investigation. The panel concluded that the allegation was concerned with whether the information had in fact been disclosed, rather than whether there was an express question requiring disclosure. The panel noted that Mr Lewis accepted in his evidence, with the benefit of hindsight, that he should have sought HR advice as to whether he should have disclosed the ongoing police investigation.

The panel also attached significance to the fact that Mr Lewis went beyond merely completing a standard reference form. In addition to the form itself, he provided a separate written reference in which he positively commented on Teacher C's suitability and performance. The panel considered that, in doing so, Mr Lewis had opportunities to include information about the ongoing criminal investigation had he wished to disclose it. The panel therefore did not accept that the absence of a specific question or dropdown box prevented disclosure.

Accordingly, the panel concluded that Mr Lewis failed to disclose in the reference that Teacher C was subject to an ongoing criminal investigation and found allegation 2 proven.

3. Were dishonest in your conduct at paragraph 2 in that you knew that you ought to disclose the criminal investigation.

The panel noted that Mr Lewis denied allegation 3, as set out in an email dated 31 July 2026.

The panel considered whether Mr Lewis had acted dishonestly. In reaching its decision on this, the panel considered the case of *Ivey v Genting Casinos (UK) Ltd t/a Crockford*.

The panel was assisted by guidance from the case of *Wingate & Anor v The Solicitors Regulation Authority*, which states "*honesty is a basic moral quality which is expected of all members of society. It involves being truthful about important matters [...] Telling lies about things that matter [...] [is] generally regarded as dishonest conduct [...] The legal concept of dishonesty is grounded upon the shared values of our multi-cultural society. Because dishonesty is grounded upon basic shared values, there is no undue difficulty in identifying what is or is not dishonest.*"

The panel firstly sought to ascertain the actual state of Mr Lewis' knowledge or belief as to the facts. In relation to this first stage, the panel accepted that Mr Lewis knew Teacher C was subject to an active criminal investigation when he completed the reference. The panel noted that Mr Lewis had recently received updates from the police indicating that the matter remained under investigation and would be referred to the Crown Prosecution Service for a charging decision. The panel also recognised Mr Lewis' considerable professional experience as a headteacher, safeguarding lead and educational leader, and accepted that he understood the seriousness of the allegations and the significance of safeguarding information in the context of school recruitment.

Whilst the TRA contended that Mr Lewis withheld the information in order to assist Teacher C in obtaining employment, the panel found there was no direct evidence to support that assertion. There was no evidence of any agreement or discussion between Mr Lewis and Teacher C about concealing the investigation, nor any other evidence demonstrating a dishonest motive. The panel considered Mr Lewis' explanation that he was uncertain whether disclosure was required and simply chose not to include the information. Although the panel regarded that position as difficult to reconcile with his experience and expertise, it was not satisfied that this asserted belief was not genuinely held.

The panel acknowledged that there were a number of features which pointed towards disclosure having been expected. Mr Lewis knew the purpose of the reference, was aware of the safeguarding implications of an ongoing criminal investigation and had opportunities to disclose the information, including in the additional narrative reference that he chose to provide. Nevertheless, the panel considered that these matters were more indicative of poor judgement, negligence or unprofessional conduct, rather than of dishonesty.

Having accepted Mr Lewis' evidence as to his state of mind, the panel concluded that the first limb of the dishonesty test was not established. Accordingly, the panel concluded that allegation 3 was not proven.

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

Having found allegations 1.a, 1.b, 1.c 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 Lewis, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered that, by reference to Part 2, Mr Lewis 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lewis, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of Keeping Children Safe In Education ("KCSIE").

The panel considered that Mr Lewis was in breach of the following provisions of KCSIE, September 2019:

4. *Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:*
 - *protecting children from maltreatment;*
 - *preventing impairment of children's health or development;*
 - *ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and*
 - *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes*

The panel considered that its findings against Mr Lewis, namely that he allowed and encouraged two pupils to fight was a serious breach of his safeguarding responsibilities and duty of care towards pupils and this fell significantly short of the standard of behaviour expected of a teacher. The panel considered that the seriousness of Mr Lewis' conduct was aggravated by the inherent vulnerabilities of the pupils. [REDACTED].

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

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

The panel found that the offence of violence was relevant, given that the conduct found proven against Mr Lewis concerned the deliberate allowing and encouragement of a physical fight between pupils in which punches were exchanged.

For these reasons, the panel found that the conduct of Mr Lewis 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 Lewis was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct.

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

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Lewis' 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 Lewis was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the panel found that the offence of violence was relevant.

The panel noted that the advice is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other behaviours that panels consider to be "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute".

The findings of misconduct are serious, and the conduct displayed would be likely to have a negative impact on Mr Lewis' status as a teacher.

The panel considered that Mr Lewis' conduct could potentially damage the public's perception of a teacher. The panel considered that ordinary members of the public would be shocked to learn that an experienced, senior teacher had allowed, and encouraged, pupils to engage in a fight. The panel regarded teachers as standing in a position of trust and acting *in loco parentis*, and considered that parents would reasonably expect teachers to protect pupils from harm rather than facilitate physical violence between them. The panel therefore concluded that the conduct had the potential to damage public confidence in the profession.

For these reasons, the panel found that Mr Lewis' 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.

Prior to the panel considering sanction, the presenting officer requested for the Advice dated October 2018 ("2018 Advice") to be considered as the document that would have applied at the time that the conduct found proven took place. It was noted by the panel that Mr Lewis' representative did not object to this request by the TRA.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have a punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the 2018 Advice and, having done so, found all of them to be relevant in this case, namely: the protection of pupils and 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 Lewis, which involved allowing and encouraging a physical fight between two pupils, pushing a pupil and failing to disclose in a reference for a teacher that they were subject to a criminal investigation, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of protecting pupils.

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

The panel was of the view that a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession was also present as the conduct found against Mr Lewis 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 Lewis in the profession. Whilst there is evidence that Mr Lewis had ability as an educator, the panel considered that the adverse public interest considerations above outweigh any interest in retaining Mr Lewis 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 2018 Advice states that it is important to consider the influential role that a teacher can play in the formation of pupils' views and behaviours. The panel noted separately that a teacher's behaviour that seeks to exploit their position of trust should be viewed very seriously in terms of its potential influence on pupils and be seen as a possible threat to the public interest.

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 Lewis.

The panel took further account of the 2018 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 well-being of pupils...; and
- abuse of position or trust (particularly involving vulnerable pupils) or violating of the rights of pupils.

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.

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

There was no evidence to suggest that Mr Lewis was acting under duress.

There was evidence that Mr Lewis had a previously good history.

The panel considered Mr Lewis' statement dated 19 June 2025. Mr Lewis referred to his career having worked with SEMH children. He submitted that this had been an incredibly demanding and sometimes dangerous task. However, he stated that against the odds he had transformed the School at 33 years old, from special measures to "good" in just under a year, which earned praise from Individual B and won him '*Principal of the Year for the White Horse Federation.*' It was further noted by the panel that Mr Lewis' statement dated 29 August 2026 stated, he "*had a very active Royal Marine career and served with distinction before training as a teacher. After a spell in mainstream, I dedicated my professional life to special schools*".

The panel took into account the following character reference which was provided as part of Mr Lewis' statement, whilst noting that it was unclear whether Individual C was aware

of the allegations against Mr Lewis at the time of providing this reference, meaning limited weight could be given to his evidence:

- Individual C, [REDACTED]:

“I have been profoundly impressed with Richard's dignity, professionalism, poise, and nobility in carrying out his duties. His growth as a Director and colleague within a wider Trust has been remarkable, resulting in significant progress at St Luke's, the stabilization of Nylands, and the continued advancement of TPA—all due to his dedicated efforts.”

No further character evidence was provided to the panel by Mr Lewis.

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 Lewis 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 Lewis. Mr Lewis' conduct, which was found proven by the panel, relating to his failure to safeguard children, 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 2018 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 two years.

The 2018 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. This includes where the case involved violence or the permitting of violence.

The panel identified a number of mitigating factors. It noted that Mr Lewis had no previous findings of misconduct over a lengthy career in education and that there was no evidence of any subsequent disciplinary concerns or similar incidents since the events in

question. The panel accepted that the misconduct arose from a single, one-off incident rather than a pattern of behaviour. It also noted that neither Pupil A nor Pupil B suffered any physical injury as a result of the incident.

Further, the panel accepted that the significant delay in the progression of the proceedings had had a substantial impact upon Mr Lewis personally and professionally. The panel noted Mr Lewis' representative's submissions regarding the case of *Selvarajan v General Medical Council [2008] EWHC 182* and accepted legal advice that any delay, but particularly unreasonable delay, can be taken into account in respect of mitigation.

The panel noted the decision from the case management hearing dated 30 January 2026 in which the panel had expressed concern about the length of time it had taken to progress the case. Whilst recognising that some aspects of the delay were outside the control of the TRA, the panel considered and took into account the lengthy passage of time since the events of 2019, and the effect this had had upon Mr Lewis.

Mr Lewis' statement dated 19 June 2025 set out the impact of allegations made against him over five and a half years ago (at that time). [REDACTED].

The panel also considered the extent of Mr Lewis' insight and remorse. It recognised that Mr Lewis had demonstrated some insight into aspects of his conduct. In particular, he accepted that he should have intervened earlier in the physical fight and that, in relation to the reference issue, he should have sought HR advice before deciding whether information concerning the ongoing criminal investigation should have been disclosed. The panel accepted that Mr Lewis had understood the nature and gravity of the allegations throughout the proceedings and had engaged fully with the process. In his police interview dated 16 December 2019, Mr Lewis, stated, *"Watching anything back it's, it's never nice, especially if it's two young pupil that come into conflict, and especially when you see your own practice, and you think you can do things slightly better in a better way another time"*.

However, the panel concluded that Mr Lewis' insight remained limited. The panel was concerned that much of his reflection focused upon the impact of the events and proceedings upon himself, rather than upon the pupils involved or the seriousness of encouraging and allowing vulnerable pupils to engage in violence. The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that he fully appreciated the gravity of the safeguarding failures identified in its findings.

In considering the risk of repetition, the panel concluded that the risk was low. The misconduct occurred many years ago, there was no evidence of repetition, and the panel considered it unlikely that Mr Lewis would again allow pupils to engage in a physical fight in similar circumstances. The panel was satisfied that he would be likely to intervene differently if faced with a comparable situation in the future. Nevertheless, the panel

retained some concern regarding his judgement and decision-making, particularly in safeguarding contexts.

The panel regarded the misconduct it found proven as serious. Mr Lewis was the Principal of a specialist SEMH school and therefore occupied a position of significant trust and responsibility. The panel found that he had encouraged and allowed two highly vulnerable pupils, one of whom was [REDACTED], to engage in a physical fight. The panel considered that members of the public would be shocked by such conduct and would reasonably expect robust regulatory action to protect the public interest considerations. The panel also attached weight to Mr Lewis' conduct regarding a reference, which involved his failure to disclose an ongoing criminal investigation concerning another teacher seeking employment in an educational setting. The panel concluded that the misconduct represented a serious departure from the standards expected of a headteacher and safeguarding leader.

The panel was satisfied that the findings involved a significant abuse of a position of trust and serious safeguarding failures. Whilst it did not consider that pupils would be at a significant risk of harm if Mr Lewis were permitted to teach in the future, it concluded that a prohibition order was nevertheless necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct. The panel considered that a published finding alone would be insufficient to meet those important public interest objectives.

Having weighed the seriousness of the behaviour and public interest considerations against the mitigating factors, including Mr Lewis' previous good character, significant public service, low risk of repetition, and the substantial delay in the proceedings, the panel concluded that a prohibition order was still appropriate and proportionate.

In relation to the review period, the panel considered that the seriousness of the misconduct would ordinarily justify a longer period before any review could be sought. However, the panel recognised the passage of time since the misconduct occurred, the absence of any further concerns, and the impact of the delay in the proceedings. Balancing all relevant considerations, the panel concluded that a review period of three years was appropriate. The panel considered that such a period would properly reflect the seriousness of the misconduct, whilst providing Mr Lewis with an opportunity to develop further insight and reflect before any future application for the prohibition order to be set aside.

The panel decided that its findings 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 three 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 of the allegations not proven, and I have therefore put that matter entirely from my mind.

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

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Lewis 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
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach...
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Lewis involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE).

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

The findings of misconduct are serious as they include a finding that the principal of a school allowed and encouraged two pupils to fight each other.

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 or 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 Lewis, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

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

“In light of the panel’s findings against Mr Lewis, which involved allowing and encouraging a physical fight between two pupils, pushing a pupil and failing to disclose in a reference for a teacher that they were subject to a criminal investigation, there was a strong public interest consideration in respect of protecting pupils.”

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. The panel has observed:

“It recognised that Mr Lewis had demonstrated some insight into aspects of his conduct. In particular, he accepted that he should have intervened earlier in the physical fight and that, in relation to the reference issue, he should have sought HR advice before deciding whether information concerning the ongoing criminal investigation should have been disclosed. The panel accepted that Mr Lewis had understood the nature and gravity of the allegations throughout the proceedings and had engaged fully with the process.”

The panel has also observed:

“However, the panel concluded that Mr Lewis’ insight remained limited. The panel was concerned that much of his reflection focused upon the impact of the events and proceedings upon himself, rather than upon the pupils involved or the seriousness of encouraging and allowing vulnerable pupils to engage in violence. The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that he fully appreciated the gravity of the safeguarding failures identified in its findings.”

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

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

“The panel considered that ordinary members of the public would be shocked to learn that an experienced, senior teacher had allowed, and encouraged, pupils to engage in a fight. The panel regarded teachers as standing in a position of trust and acting in loco parentis, and considered that parents would reasonably expect teachers to protect pupils from harm rather than facilitate physical violence between them. The panel therefore concluded that the conduct had the potential to damage public confidence in the profession.”

I am particularly mindful of the finding that the principal of a school allowed and encouraged two pupils to fight each other 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 or 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 Lewis himself. The panel has noted that Mr Lewis had a previously good history and has observed:

“The panel considered Mr Lewis’ statement dated 19 June 2025. Mr Lewis referred to his career having worked with SEMH children. He submitted that this had been an incredibly demanding and sometimes dangerous task. However, he stated that against the odds he had transformed the School at 33 years old, from special measures to “good” in just under a year, which earned praise from Individual B and won him ‘Principal of the Year for the White Horse Federation.’ It was further noted by the panel that Mr Lewis’ statement dated 29 August 2026 stated, he “had a very active Royal Marine career and served with distinction before training as a teacher. After a spell in mainstream, I dedicated my professional life to special schools”.”

The panel has also noted one written character reference that attested positively to Mr Lewis’ professionalism.

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Lewis 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 misconduct and the failure to safeguard children. The panel has said:

“The panel regarded the misconduct it found proven as serious. Mr Lewis was the Principal of a specialist SEMH school and therefore occupied a position of significant trust and responsibility. The panel found that he had encouraged and allowed two highly vulnerable pupils, one of whom was [REDACTED], to engage in a physical fight. The panel considered that members of the public would be shocked by such conduct and would reasonably expect robust regulatory action to protect the public interest considerations. The panel also attached weight to Mr Lewis’ conduct regarding a reference, which involved his failure to disclose an ongoing criminal investigation concerning another teacher seeking employment in an educational setting. The panel concluded that the misconduct represented a serious departure from the standards expected of a headteacher and safeguarding leader.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding of the panel that Mr Lewis’ insight into his behaviour remained limited.

I have given less weight in my consideration of sanction therefore to the contribution that Mr Lewis 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 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 three-year review period. The panel has noted:

“The 2018 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. This includes where the case involved violence or the permitting of violence.”

I have considered the panel’s comments on the mitigating factors, including:

“The panel identified a number of mitigating factors. It noted that Mr Lewis had no previous findings of misconduct over a lengthy career in education and that there was no evidence of any subsequent disciplinary concerns or similar incidents since the events in question. The panel accepted that the misconduct arose from a single, one-off incident rather than a pattern of behaviour. It also noted that neither Pupil A nor Pupil B suffered any physical injury as a result of the incident.”

The panel has concluded:

“In relation to the review period, the panel considered that the seriousness of the misconduct would ordinarily justify a longer period before any review could be

sought. However, the panel recognised the passage of time since the misconduct occurred, the absence of any further concerns, and the impact of the delay in the proceedings. Balancing all relevant considerations, the panel concluded that a review period of three years was appropriate. The panel considered that such a period would properly reflect the seriousness of the misconduct, whilst providing Mr Lewis with an opportunity to develop further insight and reflect before any future application for the prohibition order to be set aside.”

I have considered whether a three-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 a shorter review period is not sufficient to achieve the aim of maintaining public confidence in the profession. These elements are the serious nature of the misconduct found proven, the lack of full insight and the potential damage to the public's perception of the teaching profession.

I consider therefore that a three-year review period is required to satisfy the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

This means that Mr Richard Lewis 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 12 October 2029, three 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 Lewis remains prohibited from teaching indefinitely.

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

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



Decision maker: David Oatley

Date: 6 October 2026

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