

## THE TEACHING AGENCY

Decision of a Professional Conduct Panel and the Secretary of State

**Teacher:** Mr Alan Francis Taylor  
**Teacher ref no:** 69/40529  
**Teacher date of birth:** 11 April 1950  
**TA Case ref no:** 5162  
**Date of Determination:** 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012  
**Former Employer:** Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield

### **A. Introduction**

A Professional Conduct Panel (“the Panel”) of the Teaching Agency convened on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH to consider the case of Mr Alan Taylor.

The Panel members were Mr Andrew Potts – in the Chair, Lay Panellist, Mr John Pemberton, Professional Panellist, and Ms Janet Draper, Lay Panellist.

The Legal Adviser to the Panel was Mr Angus Macpherson of Counsel.

The Presenting Officer for the Teaching Agency was Ms Mary Page of Kingsley Napley LLP.

Mr Alan Taylor was not present and not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

### **B. Allegations**

The allegations set out in the Notice of Proceedings dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and amended on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 were to the following effect:

It was alleged that Mr Alan Taylor was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct in that:

1. Whilst employed as a minibus driver and registered teacher with the Council, at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield, between 1 January 2006 and 7 January 2010 he acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards pupils A, B and C by:
  - a. Asking Pupil A for her mobile telephone number, on or around 14 May 2008;

- b. Attempting to collect Pupil A in his own private motor vehicle, on or around 14 May 2008;
- c. Said to Pupil A words to her to the effect of:
  - i. He would be at the Bowling Green (a public house) after 10pm if she ever wanted to say hello;
  - ii. He thought she had been naughty and should sit in the front of the minibus;
  - iii. He should put her over his knee;
  - iv. His wife was never at home, if she and other pupils ever got bored that he had a big garden that they could get lost in;
- d. He said to Pupil B words to the effect of:
  - i. Her PE shorts and / or skirt was a bit revealing;
  - ii. Would she, Pupil A and Pupil C like to go to his house when his wife was not in to have a chat;
- e. He asked Pupil B for her mobile telephone number.
- f. On a date between April and May 2008, he:
  - i. Said to Pupil C words to the effect that his wife was out in the afternoon and no one else was in;
  - ii. Wrote on the minibus, words to the effect of he wished his wife was as dirty as this;
- g. Commenting on Pupil C's, Pupil A's and Pupil B's bodies; and
- h. Commenting about girls on the bus in their bra and people beeping at them;

It was alleged that Mr Alan Taylor was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and / or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute in that:

- 2. Whilst employed as a minibus driver and registered teacher with the Council, at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield, between 1 January 2006 and 7 January 2010 he acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards ex - pupil D, a minor, in particular by:
  - a. on a date or dates unknown, saying to her words to the effect of I love you;
  - b. on or around August 2009, calling at her home uninvited;
  - c. on or around October 2009, asking for her mobile number;
  - d. on 22 October 2009:

- i. Engaging in physical contact with her by hugging her;
  - ii. Saying words to the effect of I love you;
- e. on 23 October 2009;
- i. Calling at her home invited;
  - ii. Saying to her words to the effect of I bet you have just got out of the shower;
  - iii. Engaging or attempting to engage in physical contact with her, by kissing her.

Mr Taylor did not admit the facts, nor unacceptable professional conduct / conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

### **C. Summary of Evidence**

#### Documents

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

<b>Section 1</b> Amended Anonymised Pupil list	19 <sup>th</sup> July 2012	Pages 1-2
<b>Section 2</b> Notice of Proceedings and Response		
Notice of Proceedings	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2012	Pages 3 - 8
Response pro forma		Pages 9 - 11
Letter to Mr Taylor	Undated	Pages 12 - 14
<b>Section 3</b> Witness Statements		
Witness A	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Pages 15 - 21
Witness B	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Pages 22 – 25
Witness C	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2011	Pages 26 - 32
<b>Section 4</b> Teaching Agency Documents		
Pages 33 - 145		
<b>Section 5</b> Teacher's Documents		
Letter Mr Taylor to Kingsley Napley	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2011	Pages 147 – 149
Letter Mr Taylor to Kingsley Napley	Undated	Pages 150 - 151

The Panel Members confirmed that they had read all of the documents in advance of the hearing.

#### **Opening Statement on behalf of the Teaching Agency**

Ms Page explained that there were now 2 allegations:, the first based on unacceptable professional conduct relating to the behaviour of Mr Taylor towards 3 female pupils at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield; the second based on unacceptable professional conduct and / or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute towards an ex-pupil of Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield who was a

girl and a minor. The allegations concerning the pupils A - C came to light in the context of pupil A becoming distressed concerning the matters set out in charge 1(a). An investigation was undertaken and other matters came to light concerning pupil A and concerning pupils B to C. Mr Taylor was suspended on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008. He was given a final written warning on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008. The matters concerning ex-pupil D then were brought to the school's attention by her father on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009. Ex-pupil D was interviewed on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009. She disclosed matters which had occurred since she had left the school in the summer of 2009 and which are set out in allegation 2. When those matters occurred, ex-pupil D was a minor. Mr Taylor was suspended and eventually dismissed on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

### **Brief summary of evidence given**

Please note that this is intended to be a summary – it does not reflect the complete evidence given.

The Panel heard evidence from the following witnesses:

#### **Witness A**

In her witness statement dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011, Ms Evans explained that she was the Business Manager for the School. Mr Taylor was employed as a relief handyman and mini-bus driver. He was also an occasional supply teacher. He drove Year 11 pupils between Tamworth and Lichfield College for sporting fixtures and educational visits. Matters came to light when pupil A reported that she felt uncomfortable when Mr Taylor said that he would pick her up in his car and asked for her mobile telephone number. The initial investigation was conducted by Witness B, Deputy Head Teacher. Witness A interviewed Mr Taylor on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008. In the interview Mr Taylor sought to give context to the matters set out in allegation 1. He invited her to interview pupil D and pupil B. Pupil D had nothing to say. Pupil B referred to the matters the subject of paragraph 1(d) of the allegations. Another member of staff took a statement from pupils B and C. Witness A had written to Mr Taylor concerning the use of his own car in July 2006. An expenses form which he completed indicated that he was continuing to use his own car in January 2007. At the end of her inquiry in 2008, Witness A recommended a final written warning. Mr Taylor had gone against school rules in using his own car.

In evidence in chief, Witness A said that Pupil B was already aware of the matters concerning pupil A when she interviewed her. She formed the impression that pupils A, B and C had not colluded. She concluded that Mr Taylor had been naïve in her investigation report dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

#### **Panel Questions**

Mr Taylor had remained a supply teacher during the whole time he was a mini bus driver, but he was not used so much in that capacity latterly. He had been a satisfactory supply teacher. Mr Taylor was employed part time.

#### **Witness B**

Witness Statement. Please refer to her evidence in chief.

In evidence in chief, Witness B said she talked to pupil A on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and then asked pupil A to write everything down. She said that pupil A was upset by what had occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008. She saw pupil A's mother the following day. By that time pupil A had reflected on the matter and wished to make reference to a number of other incidents. These are set out in allegation 1(b) and (c). Her mother was assured that the school would be dealing with the matter appropriately. She knew pupil A well. She had quite a strong character.

#### Panel Questions

As with taxi drivers who drove pupils Mr Taylor was CRB checked.

#### **Witness C**

Witness Statement: The school's attention to matters concerning Mr Taylor's behaviour towards ex-pupil D was initially raised by her father on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009. As a result of these allegations, Mr Taylor was suspended on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009. On 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 she interviewed ex-pupil D. She gave details about the matters contained in allegation 2. In particular that she said she saw Mr Taylor in town and that, after he had told her about his new grandson, he hugged her and whispered to her "I love you". The following morning he called at her door and stated that he had noted her window was open and said that he bet she had just got out of the shower. He said that he had been careful to call when her father was out. He had called on another occasion about a month after she had left the school. She interviewed Mr Taylor on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009. He acknowledged saying to ex-pupil D that he loved her, but explained that that was only in the context of her saying she loved him. It was said as a way of getting her to stop saying that. He acknowledged that they had cuddled one another, and that he had called at her home.

Witness C observed that Mr Taylor had not shown any insight. She completed her investigation report on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and recommended that Mr Taylor be dismissed for gross misconduct. In the disciplinary hearing, the governors concluded that Mr Taylor had behaved inappropriately in developing a relationship with ex-pupil D. He was dismissed for gross misconduct

In evidence in chief, Witness C said she interviewed ex-pupil D on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009. She was very credible. She recounted a situation which was beyond what was normal and she could not control it. There was an investigatory meeting with Mr Taylor on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009. He explained some of his conduct with ex pupil D by saying he was elated after the birth of his grandchild. She noted that ex-pupil D was saying that she did not want a friendship with Mr Taylor. Ex pupil D left at the end of year 11 when she was 15.

#### Panel Questions

Witness C became aware of behavioural issues on the minibus when she started in January 2009. She was aware of the final written warning. When ex-pupil D's allegations came to light, the matter reached a new level of seriousness.

Mr Taylor ought to have known that teachers don't have relationships with students. It is clearly set out in the handbook. He did not appeal against his dismissal.

## **Closing Submissions**

Ms Page acknowledged that the burden of proof was on her shoulders and advised that the standard was the balance of probabilities. She referred to her opening and to the oral evidence. She reminded the panel of the definitions of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

After the panel had returned having found against Mr Taylor (most of) the facts proved and unacceptable professional conduct in relation to allegation 1 and conduct which brought the profession into disrepute in relation to allegation 2, she addressed the panel on the recommendation which the panel should make to the Secretary of State. She referred to the guidance 'Teacher misconduct – the prohibition of teachers'.

## **D. Decision and Reasons**

### **Findings of fact**

Our findings of fact are as follows:

We have found the following particulars of the allegation against Mr Taylor proven, for the reasons that follow:

1. Whilst employed as a minibus driver and registered teacher with the Council, at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield, between 1 January 2006 and 7 January 2010 he acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards pupils A, B and C by:
  - a. Asking Pupil A for her mobile telephone number, on or around 14 May 2008;
  - b. Attempting to collect Pupil A in his own private motor vehicle, on or around 14 May 2008;
  - c. Said to Pupil A words to her to the effect of:
    - i. He would be at the Bowling Green (a public house) after 10pm if she ever wanted to say hello;
    - ii.
    - iii.
    - iv. His wife was never at home, if she and other pupils ever got bored that he had a big garden that they could get lost in;
  - d. He said to Pupil B words to the effect of:
    - i. Her PE shorts and / or skirt was a bit revealing;
    - ii. Would she, Pupil A and Pupil C like to go to his house when his wife was not in to have a chat;

- e. He asked Pupil B for her mobile telephone number.
  - f. On a date between April and May 2008, he:
    - i. Said to Pupil C words to the effect that his wife was out in the afternoon and no one else was in;
    - ii.
  - g.
  - h.
2. Whilst employed as a minibus driver and registered teacher with the Council, at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield, between 1 January 2006 and 7 January 2010 he acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards ex - pupil D, a minor, in particular by:
- a. on a date or dates unknown, saying to her words to the effect of I love you;
  - b. on or around August 2009, calling at her home uninvited;
  - c. on or around October 2009, asking for her mobile number;
  - d. on 22 October 2009:
    - i. Engaging in physical contact with her by hugging her;
    - ii. Saying words to the effect of I love you;
  - e. on 23 October 2009;
    - i. Calling at her home uninvited;
    - ii. Saying to her words to the effect of I bet you have just got out of the shower;
    - iii. Engaging or attempting to engage in physical contact with her, by kissing her.

The panel found Mr Taylor's employment at Nether Stowe High School between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 and 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 proved on the basis of the evidence of Witness A, the School Business Manager. That employment was essentially as a mini bus driver, but he was also engaged at the school as a supply teacher. It was that additional employment which gave the Teaching Agency jurisdiction to hear his case. He drove the mini-bus for Year 11 pupils between Tamworth and Lichfield College for sporting fixtures and educational visits.

So far as allegation 1 is concerned, the panel will return to the issue as to whether by reason of the matters alleged in subparagraphs 1(a) to (h), Mr Taylor acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards pupils A, B and / or C when it has made its individual findings of fact in relation to those sub-paragraphs.

As to the allegations concerning Mr Taylor's behaviour towards pupil A set out in 1(a) – (c), the panel noted that pupil A's manuscript statement at page 35 dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008 supported all these allegations. Her initial complaint was made on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008 when she had become upset in relation to the matters alleged in paragraph 1(a) and (b). The panel find the facts of paragraphs 1(a) and (b) proved based not only upon pupil A's statement but also upon Mr Taylor's admissions. He said in relation to paragraph 1(a) that he had requested pupil A's mobile telephone number in the context of wanting to give her career advice and in relation to paragraph 1(b) that he had indicated his intention to collect her in his private car in order to fill it with petrol.

The allegations concerning pupil A set out in paragraph 1(c) were not related by pupil A to the Deputy Head Teacher Witness B on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008, but were included in her statement of the following day after she had thought about matters further. The panel finds paragraph 1(c)(i) proved. Mr Taylor admits the allegation, suggesting that pupil A herself asked him where he drank. The panel finds the allegation at paragraph 1(c)(iv) proved on the basis that this was pupil A's evidence and it was an unlikely thing for a pupil to make up. Mr Taylor acknowledged some general discussion about his home and his wife. Moreover the panel noted that there is an echo of that allegation in paragraphs 1(d)(ii) and 1(f)(i) in relation to pupils B and C respectively.

As to the allegations concerning Mr Taylor's behaviour towards pupil B set out in paragraph 1(d), the panel noted that pupil B's manuscript statement dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and the notes of her interview taken by Individual A on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008 supported all these allegations. Notwithstanding Mr Taylor's denial, the panel finds paragraph 1(d)(i) proved on the basis of pupil B's statements and paragraph 1(d)(ii) on the basis, like the allegation concerning pupil A at paragraph 1(c)(iv), it was unlikely that pupil B would make that up, and paragraph 1(e) on the basis of Mr Taylor's admissions. He admits seeking her mobile telephone number in the context of pupil B offering to cut his hair.

As to the allegations concerning Mr Taylor's behaviour towards pupil C set out in paragraphs 1(f), 1(g) and 1(h), the panel noted that pupil C's undated manuscript statement supported all these allegations. The panel found paragraph 1(f)(i) proved on the basis that, like the allegation at paragraph 1(c)(iv) concerning pupil A, it was unlikely that pupil C would make that up.

In making its findings of fact in relation to the sub-paragraphs of allegation 1, the panel had in mind the view of Witness A. She was principally responsible for investigating the allegations after the initial interview of pupil A by the Deputy Head Teacher, Witness B. She clearly felt that the behaviour of Mr Taylor, as understood by Nether Stowe High School at the time, was not of the utmost seriousness. It was more to do with irregularity. She recommended that Mr Taylor be given a final written warning. At the Governor's Meeting which was held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008, he was indeed given a final written warning and it was recommended that relevant policies, guidelines and standards of conduct be issued to him and that Witness A monitors his compliance.

Nevertheless the panel finds that Mr Taylor's behaviour as found proved towards pupils A, B and C was highly inappropriate and unprofessional. Looked at together, it amounted to attempts on Mr Taylor's part to form or conduct an intimate or personal relationship with three Year 11 girls at the school. There may have been banter in his words or demeanour, but the panel find that the banter was purposeful, although it may not have got very far, primarily because pupil A had become upset and the school authorities became concerned.

So far as allegation 2 is concerned, the panel will return to the issue as to whether by reason of the matters alleged in paragraphs 2(a) to (e), Mr Taylor acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards ex – pupil D when it has made its individual findings of fact in relation to those sub-paragraphs.

The panel noted that subparagraphs 2(a) to (e) were all supported by the notes of the interview of ex-pupil D by Witness C the Headmistress of Nether Stowe School. The allegations really fall into 2 categories. The first relates to paragraphs 2(a) to (c) where it is alleged that Mr Taylor made isolated approaches towards ex-pupil D. The second relates to his meeting her in town on or about 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009 and the opportunities or aftermath that that meeting presented to him. At all these times ex-pupil D had left Nether Stowe School, but she was under the age of 18. The panel accepts the TA's definition that the meaning of minor in the allegation is under the age of 18 – that is the dictionary definition. It is supported by the definition in the publication HMG Working Together to Safeguard Children: a child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

So far as paragraphs 2(a) to (c) are concerned the panel finds them proved on the basis of ex-pupil D's statements in interview and Mr Taylor's admissions and, (in respect of paragraph 2(b)), the fact that Mr Taylor seems to have had a certain familiarity with ex-pupil D's house and, (in respect of paragraph 2(c)), the fact that he was in the habit of asking pupils for their mobile telephone numbers.

So far as paragraphs 2(d) and (e) are concerned, the panel finds them proved on the basis of ex-pupil D's statements in interview and certain admissions made by Mr Taylor as to his behaviour. He does admit meeting her in town and hugging and kissing her. He explains this in the context of his exuberance at the birth of his grandchild. Likewise he admits visiting ex-pupil D at her parent's home uninvited the following day for the purpose of informing ex-pupil D his grandchild's name. The panel formed the view that these were pretexts which he used to enable him to approach ex-pupil D in the way he did. She complained that his overtures were not welcome and that it felt like he was looking for her and that she was being stalked. In that context, the panel find paragraphs 2(d)(ii) and 2(e)(ii) and (iii) proved. He admitted saying he loved ex-pupil D in another context. His purpose in calling on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009 at her father's house was, and the panel so find, to further the opportunity for physical contact which had arisen the night before in town. The observation which he made as alleged in paragraph 2(e)(ii) was all of a piece with his having that philosophy.

The panel find that the behaviour of Mr Taylor as set out in allegation 2, all of which it has found proved, was inappropriate and unprofessional. It accepted ex-pupil D's assertion that she was being followed.

We have found the following particulars of the allegation against Mr Taylor not proven, for these reasons:

1. Whilst employed as a minibus driver and registered teacher with the Council, at Nether Stowe High School, Lichfield, between 1 January 2006 and 7 January 2010 he acted in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner towards pupils A, B and C by:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c. said to Pupil A words to her to the effect of:
    - i.
    - ii. He thought she had been naughty and should sit in the front of the minibus;
    - iii. He should put her over his knee;
    - iv.
  - d.
    - i.
    - ii.
  - e.
  - f. On a date between April and May 2008, he:
    - i.
    - ii. Wrote on the minibus, words to the effect of he wished his wife was as dirty as this;
  - g. Commenting on Pupil C's, Pupil A's and Pupil B's bodies; and
  - h. Commenting about girls on the bus in their bra and people beeping at them;

On the balance of probabilities the panel did not find paragraphs 1(c)(ii) and (iii) proved as, although these were matters included in pupil A's manuscript statement, they were not the subject of her original complaint and they were not put to Mr Taylor when he was interviewed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008. Moreover Ms Evans does not seem to have attributed much significance to them when she recommended that he receive a final written warning.

On the balance of probabilities the panel did not find paragraphs 1(f)(ii), 1(g) and (h) proved as although these were matters included in pupil C's manuscript statement, there were the following additional points in respect of each of them. As to paragraph 1(f)(ii), pupil C was the only pupil to make that observation. As to paragraph 1(g) and (h) the observation was not corroborated by Pupil B or C who are named in the allegation or anyone else respectively. Whilst the panel recognise that corroboration

is not a necessary factor in proof, it considered that the absence of corroboration undermined the evidence of Pupil C in these respects.

### **Findings as to Unacceptable Professional Conduct**

The panel further finds that Mr Taylor's actions set out in allegation 1 as proved amount to unacceptable professional conduct. Witness A the School Business Manager had warned Mr Taylor against using his private car to transport pupils to Nether Stowe High School in July 2006. A further letter was sent to like effect in January 2007 by the Head Teacher and Witness A had thereafter issued a number of oral warnings. Mr Taylor ignored those warnings and behaved in the way described in the findings of fact. He did not observe proper boundaries and was therefore in breach of the GTC code of conduct and practice for registered teachers. His inappropriate behaviour was repeated more than once in respect of each of 3 pupils in Year 11 who were under the age of 16. There was a persistence about that behaviour particularly when seen in the light of the warnings issued by the school. It was unprofessional and unacceptable. At the very least it fell short of the standards expected of a professional teacher. It caused all three of the pupils significant disquiet.

The panel does not find Mr Taylor's actions set out in allegation 2 as proved amount to unacceptable professional conduct. By the time Mr Taylor behaved and spoke towards ex-pupil D in the way in which the panel has found, she had left Nether Stowe High School. She was no longer a pupil in his charge. The panel reached the view that it would be inappropriate to make a finding of unacceptable professional conduct in respect of that behaviour particularly in the context of it also being alleged that, by his conduct, he may have brought the profession into disrepute.

### **Findings as to Conduct Bringing the Profession into Disrepute**

The panel finds that Mr Taylor's actions set out in allegation 2 as proved brought the profession into disrepute. By behaving as he did, Mr Taylor regularly failed to observe proper boundaries and was therefore in breach of the GTC code of conduct and practice for registered teachers. These were not isolated occasions of untoward behaviour. They suggest an attitude of mind on the part of Mr Taylor which was to exploit any pretext to see and possibly touch ex-pupil D. This behaviour included invading her privacy. The panel was particularly disturbed to note her evidence that on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009, he informed her that he had delayed calling at her house until her father had left in the morning. Ex-pupil D was significantly disquieted by Mr Taylor's attentions and did not welcome them. The general public would not accept a teacher exploiting his school relationship with a pupil after she had left the school. He breached school policies and disregarded safeguarding practices and policies which had been drawn to his attention.

### **Panel's Recommendation to the Secretary of State**

The panel has carefully considered the gravity of the behaviour of Mr Alan Taylor. It has noted that Mr Taylor failed to heed the fact that he was given a final written warning in July 2006 and warnings on a number of subsequent occasions. Mr Taylor's behaviour was repeated regularly in respect of 3 pupils at the school and in

respect of a pupil who had left the school. When interviewed on two occasions, Mr Taylor did not acknowledge any of his shortcomings, but sought to contextualise the contact which he had had with the pupils and suggest that the contact was, in reality, anodyne. He seemed to have learnt nothing from the disciplinary process which he had undergone in 2006 / 2007. Indeed in one interview he blamed the school for exposing him to allegations by causing him to drive pupils by himself. He stated that he hoped his friendship with ex-pupil D would continue in November 2009. Ex-pupil D was clearly upset by his attentions. It appeared to the panel that he felt he was not bound by the strictures against personal contact and the duty to observe boundaries. The panel was disappointed that he did not attend the hearing to give a full account of his behaviour. His observation in correspondence that communications from the GTC and / or Kingsley Napley LLP went straight to landfill demonstrated his contempt for this process. There was therefore really nothing to show that Mr Taylor had learnt anything from this process.

Ms Page, the Presenting Officer, reminded the panel of positive features concerning Mr Taylor. He had been a teacher for 37 years. Witness A said that he was a satisfactory supply teacher. Ms Page accepted that the case was not at the upper end of the scale of seriousness. The pupils concerned had come to no real harm.

The panel regard the behaviour of Mr Taylor as very serious. It may only have been as a result of the disclosures by pupil A, as to what was happening in May 2008 and which had caused her upset, that nothing more serious ever happened. The repetitive nature of Mr Taylor's conduct with, in fact, a number of 15 year old girls, is of great concern. All the features of public interest are in play here: the protection of children; the maintenance of public confidence in the profession; the need to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct.

The panel consider that the behaviour of Mr Taylor represented serious departures from the personal and professional conduct elements of teachers' standards. Mr Taylor's misconduct could have seriously affected the wellbeing of students in his care. Pupils A, B and C and ex-pupil D were disturbed by his behaviour. His behaviour was outwith the behaviour which pupils had a right to expect and anticipate from teachers in authority over them or who had been in authority over them. The behaviour of Mr Taylor suggests a deep seated attitude of mind towards those 15 year old pupils. There was an abuse of trust and of position.

The panel has reached the conclusion, for the above reasons, that it should recommend prohibition of Mr Taylor to the Secretary of State.

In addition the panel recommends that Mr Taylor be permitted to apply to the Secretary of State for any prohibition order imposed to be set aside after the elapse of 3 years. The reasons for that recommendation are as follows: this case does not fall into the category in paragraph 7 of the guidance 'Teacher misconduct – the prohibition of teachers' which makes such a recommendation inappropriate; Ms Page, the Case Presenter, acknowledged that it was not at the upper end of the scale of seriousness; if a prohibition order is made, it may well bring home to Mr Taylor the seriousness and unacceptability of his conduct and induce him to present to any reviewing panel, evidence that he has finally learnt significant lessons from

this process; the panel does not ignore the long service which he has given to the profession.

### **Secretary of State's Decision and Reasons**

**I have considered this case and the recommendation of the panel carefully.**

**Mr Taylor's behaviour represents a serious departure from the standards expected of a teacher. There is clear evidence of a repeated and sustained approach to forming inappropriate relationships with pupils that represents an abuse of trust and position.**

**Mr Taylor appears not to recognise the seriousness of his behaviour and although the panel understood that no individual pupil came to serious harm, nonetheless pupils were very upset and distressed by the behaviour.**

**Mr Taylor does not appear to understand the boundaries that should always be observed between teacher and pupil.**

**The panel recommend that a prohibition order be imposed and I support that for the reasons given.**

**In terms of the review period, the panel find this behaviour to be very serious, but have recommended a review period of at least three years which may provide Mr Taylor with the opportunity to evidence that he has insight into his conduct. I also support that recommendation.**

This means that Mr Alan Taylor 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 2015, 3 years from the date of this order at the earliest**. If he does apply, a panel will meet to consider whether the Prohibition Order should be set aside. Without a successful application, Mr Alan Taylor remains barred from teaching indefinitely.

This Order takes effect from the date on which it is served on the Teacher.

Mr Alan Taylor has a right of appeal to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court within 28 days from the date he is given notice of this Order.

**NAME OF DECISION MAKER: Alan Meyrick**

**Date: 20 July 2012**