# Primary school teacher banned for attending assembly under influence of alcohol



A primary school teacher has been indefinitely banned from teaching in the UK following an incident where she attended a school assembly under the influence of alcohol. Ashley Atkin, aged 38, had just started her role at Horn's Mill Primary School in Helsby, Cheshire, a mere month prior to the event on 20 October 2023.

During the assembly, intended to celebrate the school's star-of-the-week award, Atkin exhibited significant signs of intoxication, causing concern among her colleagues who described her as appearing “dazed” and “staggering”. According to statements made during a disciplinary hearing, Atkin struggled to walk and was unable to present the award as required, leading another teacher to take over the responsibility.

Atkin, who had been tasked with guiding her Year One class into the assembly, reportedly sat away from the group and was recognised by her colleagues for a pungent smell of alcohol that lingered after she was escorted from the hall. The panel chair, Melissa West, highlighted that Atkin admitted to consuming a bottle of white wine and an additional glass prior to her arrival at school.

The occurrence marked a serious breach of the school’s drugs and alcohol policy, which states that employees must not attend school under the influence of alcohol. Notably, Atkin had received a copy of this policy just two days before the assembly incident. The investigation revealed that this incident was not isolated; earlier that year, Atkin had been banned from driving due to exceeding the legal alcohol limit and engaging in reckless behaviour on the road.

During the hearing, the panel was informed that Atkin’s actions fell significantly short of the expected behaviour for an individual in her position, creating risks for the safety and well-being of her students. Atkin did not attend the hearing but expressed her devastation over the incident in previous comments, saying, “I’m absolutely devastated about what happened and it’s all I can think about. I was going through such a difficult time at that point. Since then I am in a much better place.”

As a result of these actions, Atkin has been prohibited from teaching in both England and Wales for an indefinite period and is barred from re-applying for two years. She has 28 days to appeal the ruling. The panel's decision reflects concerns about Atkin’s insight into her behaviour, with civil servant Marc Cavey representing the Education Secretary noting the potential risk of recurrence if Atkin does not demonstrate genuine remorse and understanding of her actions.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-panel-outcome-ms-ashley-atkin> - This URL supports information about Ms Ashley Atkin's case, including details about her misconduct and the outcome of her professional conduct panel.
* <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67dbf56bcb8c6838d74b4f7e/SOS_Decision_A_Atkins_R.pdf> - This document provides further details about Ms Ashley Atkin's professional conduct panel outcome, including her conviction for driving with excess alcohol.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL refers to the source of the original article about Ashley Atkin but does not provide additional corroborating information beyond the article itself.
* <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/gravesend/news/teacher-caught-drinking-wine-in-car-on-lunch-break-banned-309268/> - While not directly related to Ashley Atkin, this URL supports the broader context of teacher misconduct involving alcohol in schools within the UK.
* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-misconduct-regulations> - This URL is not directly provided but would typically explain the regulations and processes involved in handling teacher misconduct cases in England.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teaching_regulation_in_the_United_Kingdom> - This Wikipedia page provides general information about teaching regulations and the process for handling misconduct in the UK, although it does not specifically mention Ashley Atkin.