# Teacher misconduct cases highlight the need for support in education



A recent professional conduct panel hearing has addressed the case of Stephen Bovey, a teacher formerly employed at The Globe Primary School in Lancing, following an incident involving a year one pupil with significant speech and communication issues. The incident took place on March 1, 2023, during an assembly when the child, referred to as Pupil A, ran to the back of the room. Mr Bovey admitted to grabbing Pupil A's wrist in an effort to guide them back, and during this interaction, he did not release the child's wrist when they fell over.

The panel, convened by the Teaching Regulation Agency, determined that Mr Bovey had used excessive force, resulting in Pupil A falling. An additional incident on the same day involved Mr Bovey dragging the child back to his classroom after they wandered away. Mr Bovey claimed he had attempted to follow the behaviour policy to encourage Pupil A to return but was unsuccessful, noting he was alone in the room and had called for support from senior leadership without receiving assistance.

In Mr Bovey's written defence, he expressed remorse over his actions and acknowledged that his "negligence" could have potentially harmed a child, regardless of his intentions. The panel's report highlighted witness testimonies stating that Pupil A was not visibly distressed by the occurrences and noted the absence of any injuries.

Witnesses described Mr Bovey as generally a kind and calm educator who, in the weeks before the incident, appeared to be struggling with his workload, which might have escalated his behaviour during the incident. One witness remarked that Mr Bovey seemed to display an unusual level of anger, stating he “just saw red” when addressing Pupil A. The panel acknowledged the behaviour was out of character and noted that there had been ongoing concerns regarding Mr Bovey's wellbeing leading up to the incident.

Despite finding Mr Bovey guilty of serious misconduct and unacceptable professional conduct, the panel concluded that his actions did not ultimately bring the teaching profession into disrepute, considering it a single isolated incident in the context of his extensive experience, which spans back to 2006. The parents of Pupil A expressed their view that dismissing Mr Bovey would not be beneficial for their child, highlighting that Pupil A performed well in his classes.

The Secretary of State for Education, represented by Sarah Buxcey, accepted the panel's recommendation to refrain from imposing a prohibition order, noting that it would suffice to publish the findings to serve as a cautionary message regarding professional conduct in education.

In an unrelated case, the Birmingham Mail reports on Anita Sawhney, a former teacher at the now-closed Midpoint Centre in Wolverhampton, who faced scrutiny for her conduct during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was accused of calling in sick with a temperature while having booked a flight to India. Sawhney had taken a private PCR test which yielded a negative result; however, she failed to disclose this to her employer.

On October 22, 2020, just a day after Ms Sawhney indicated she could not attend work due to her symptoms, she left a voicemail at the school stating she would be unable to return to work. She later contacted a colleague while in India, explaining her flight back was delayed due to a family issue, prompting the school to escalate the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

While Ms Sawhney admitted to travelling despite her reported illness, she maintained she had not intended to mislead her employer. The panel found that she did breach guidance by not isolating when experiencing symptoms, but had no doubt about her capabilities as an educator over her lengthy career. The panel acknowledged her remorse and insight into her actions, taking into account the mitigating circumstances of her personal challenges during the pandemic.

Ultimately, the panel deemed that a prohibition order was not appropriate, and Sarah Buxcey echoed this sentiment, affirming that the publication of the findings was a sufficient response to establish appropriate professional standards.

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

## References

* <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e41ba42621ba30ed9776b2/REDACTED_Bovey_Stephen_SoS_decision.pdf> - This document provides detailed findings from the professional conduct panel concerning Stephen Bovey, including the incidents involving Pupil A, and confirms that Bovey admitted to using excessive force.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-panel-outcome-mr-stephen-bovey> - The official publication outlines the outcomes of the misconduct panel regarding Stephen Bovey, stating the panel's determination and the nature of the misconduct he was found guilty of, which corroborates the summary presented in the article.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-28909548> - This article discusses broader issues of teacher conduct and the protocols surrounding incidents in schools, providing context to the seriousness of the misconduct discussed regarding Stephen Bovey.
* <https://www.tes.com/news/teaching-misconduct-panel-finds-teacher-used-excessive-force> - The TES report covers a range of cases similar to Bovey's, illustrating how panels evaluate teacher behavior and the consequences of excessive force, supporting claims made in the article about the panel's findings.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/mar/28/teacher-misconduct-what-happened-next-panel-recommendations> - This article provides insights into the Teaching Regulation Agency's processes and decisions regarding teacher misconduct cases, echoing the themes of professional misconduct and the implications of the hearings as discussed in the provided article.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/teachers-sacked-conduct-misconduct-cases-birmingham-b2059873.html> - This piece reviews various cases of teacher misconduct, including disciplinary actions taken by panels, reinforcing the article's assertions about the seriousness of the incidents involving Mr. Bovey and the outcomes of such cases.