# Experienced teacher struck off after court case over knives and drink-driving



An experienced primary school teacher has been struck off after a grave incident involving weapons and previous misconduct. Lauren Jenkins, aged 39, was a teacher at Merlin Top Primary Academy in Keighley, West Yorkshire, when police were called to a disturbance at an address in August 2022. Upon arrival, officers found Jenkins intoxicated and in possession of two large kitchen knives, which were later discovered in her bag.

During the court proceedings, Jenkins pleaded guilty to possessing a bladed article in a public place at North Yorkshire Magistrates’ Court. She was sentenced to 12 weeks in prison, although the sentence was suspended for the same duration. This incident came just a few months after Jenkins received a community sentence for a drink-driving offence earlier that same year. According to court reports, Jenkins had a history of mental health issues, a factor that was noted during both the knife possession case and her earlier convictions.

Following her resignation from the school in October 2022 after an internal investigation, Jenkins was referred to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). At a recent TRA hearing, it was revealed that Jenkins had already been absent from her teaching duties due to her prior drink-driving conviction. Insights from a witness at the school indicated that Jenkins had confided in him about losing her driving privileges due to that offence. However, the witness was taken aback when he learned about the more severe knife incident through a newspaper.

The TRA panel expressed grave concerns regarding Jenkins' conduct, noting that her behaviour could severely undermine public confidence in the teaching profession. “The panel considered that Jenkins’ behaviour in committing the offences could affect public confidence in the teaching profession,” the report stated, emphasising the weighty responsibility teachers bear in influencing the lives of their pupils and the community at large.

While Jenkins was not present at the hearing, a witness who spoke on her behalf described her as a "fantastic teacher," indicating that she had been well-received in her role, particularly with older year groups. Nonetheless, the panel maintained that her conduct fell significantly short of the standards expected from educators. Their decision to prohibit her from teaching indefinitely was backed by findings that her actions not only posed a risk to public safety but also reflected a lack of integrity, emphasizing the severity of her misconduct.

This case is not isolated. Jenkins is one among several education professionals recently disciplined for conduct that raises questions about the integrity of the profession. For instance, Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins, headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Ffwrnes, was found guilty of failing to disclose a business interest and subsequently banned from teaching for her dishonest conduct. Furthermore, Georgia Rogers, a teacher in Grantham, was dismissed for unprofessional behaviour, showcasing a troubling pattern of disciplinary actions against educators across the UK.

As the education sector grapples with such troubling incidents, the case of Lauren Jenkins serves as a stark reminder of the scrutiny teachers face, as well as the significant impact of their actions on the communities they serve. Moving forward, the responsibility to uphold the standards of the teaching profession remains paramount, with recent cases indicating that breaches of trust may result in substantial consequences for those involved.

In the wake of her licence revocation, Jenkins has the option to apply for her teaching order to be reassessed after five years, a period during which the implications of her actions will continue to resonate within the educational community and beyond.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[2]](https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/22572968.prison-sentence-woman-two-large-kitchen-knives-bag/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[2]](https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/22572968.prison-sentence-woman-two-large-kitchen-knives-bag/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[3]](https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/139229)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[4]](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/school-college-staff-disciplined-struck-27547885)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[5]](https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/grantham-primary-school-teacher-sacked-9238785)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[6]](https://www.educationaccountability.org/search?m=0&max-results=20&updated-max=2020-05-07T07%3A13%3A00%2B01%3A00)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html), [[4]](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/school-college-staff-disciplined-struck-27547885), [[5]](https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/grantham-primary-school-teacher-sacked-9238785)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lauren-jenkins-merlin-school-misconduct-teaching-b2756838.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/22572968.prison-sentence-woman-two-large-kitchen-knives-bag/> - In August 2022, Lauren Jenkins, a 36-year-old primary school teacher from Cross Hills, was found outside her parents' home with two large kitchen knives in her bag. Police responded to reports of aggressive behavior and discovered Jenkins, who had a history of mental health issues, being restrained by her father. She admitted to possessing the knives in a public place without lawful reason. At the time, Jenkins was serving a community order for a previous drink-driving offense. The court heard that she would lose her teaching position due to the incident.
3. <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/139229> - Merlin Top Primary Academy, located in Keighley, West Yorkshire, is an academy school with a capacity of 315 pupils aged 3 to 11. The school has undergone several Ofsted inspections, with the most recent full inspection in October 2024, resulting in an 'Outstanding' rating. Previous inspections in 2019 and 2016 also rated the school as 'Outstanding' and 'Requires Improvement,' respectively. The school is part of the Northern Education Trust and is led by Principal Mr. N Cooper.
4. <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/school-college-staff-disciplined-struck-27547885> - An Education Workforce Council (EWC) panel in Wales found Catherine Lloyd-Jenkins, headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Ffwrnes, guilty of unacceptable professional conduct. She failed to declare a business interest in a nursery operating from her school and allowed the nursery to benefit financially without proper disclosure. The panel ruled that her actions were dishonest and lacking in integrity, leading to her indefinite ban from the teaching register. She cannot apply for reinstatement for three years.
5. <https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/grantham-primary-school-teacher-sacked-9238785> - Georgia Rogers, a primary school teacher at West Grantham Church of England Primary Academy, was dismissed for teaching students TikTok dances and sending unprofessional messages to a year five pupil. The employment tribunal found that her actions breached the Teachers' Standards and safeguarding provisions. Rogers claimed she was suffering from PTSD following an ectopic pregnancy and sued for unfair dismissal and disability discrimination. However, the tribunal upheld her dismissal, stating her behavior amounted to gross misconduct.
6. <https://www.educationaccountability.org/search?m=0&max-results=20&updated-max=2020-05-07T07%3A13%3A00%2B01%3A00> - An incident at Ashley C of E Primary School involved a teacher, Mr. Dunne, who was instructed to attend a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) course but delayed registration until July 2019, despite being reminded in November 2018 and May 2019. The trust criticized the significant delay and Mr. Dunne's lack of appreciation for the importance of pupil safety. The panel found the delay in attending the course constituted unacceptable professional conduct, leading to further training requirements for Mr. Dunne to remain on the teaching register.
7. <https://www.arlingtonecho.org/author/ltucker/> - Lauren Jenkins, an educator, authored an article discussing the implementation of environmental literacy in Maryland schools. In 2010, Maryland became the first state to require environmental literacy for high school graduation. The following year, the Maryland State Department of Education established Pre-K through 12 Environmental Literacy Curriculum Standards, mandating integration into each school system's curriculum. Jenkins emphasizes the importance of providing curriculum and training to teachers to ensure environmental literacy is effectively taught in schools, aiming to engage every student outdoors annually.