

Accelerated Misconduct Hearing Finding and Outcome

Officer Name: _____ Officer X

Warrant No: _____ **[Redacted]**

Date of Hearing: _____ **[Redacted]**

Alleged Standards Breached:., Discreditable Conduct

Finding

I have had the benefit of the papers in advance of today and read them carefully before the hearing started. I am satisfied that the required notices under the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 have been served. These are matters which have not, in any case, been disputed before me.

The hearing was held in **Public**

Officer X did not attend the hearing, but I am satisfied that he had voluntarily absented himself, was aware of this hearing and had been served the required notice of hearing. He was represented by his Federation Representative **[Redacted]**. I decided to proceed in his absence, as there was no increased likelihood of Officer X attending if the matter was adjourned.

I have listened to the case presented on behalf of the Appropriate Authority by Molly Nairn.

The Allegations

1. Between 4-9 April 2025, you engaged in communications of a sexual nature with a 16-year-old child, on a Kik Messenger platform, attributed to you.
2. Between 4-9 April 2025, you sent an explicit image of yourself to a 16-year-old child, on a Kik Messenger platform, attributed to you.
3. Between 4-9 April 2025, you received an indecent image of a child, on a Kik Messenger platform, attributed to you.

Professional Standards of Behaviour

In the circumstances, the Appropriate Authority contends that your actions breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour as set out in Regulation 5 and Schedule 2 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 (as amended by the Police Conduct (Amendment) Regulations 2024, namely:

- **Discreditable Conduct**

In the that you behaved in a manner likely to bring discredit upon the police service and undermine public confidence. As a result of that stated herein, if proven, your conduct amounts to gross misconduct and your dismissal may be justified.

Facts

The main issues of fact which I have to decide is whether the Appropriate Authority has proved on the balance of probabilities whether Officer X

1. Between 4-9 April 2025, engaged in communications of a sexual nature with a 16-year-old child, on a Kik Messenger platform, attributed to him.
2. Between 4-9 April 2025, sent an explicit image of himself to a 16-year-old child, on a Kik Messenger platform , attributed to him.
3. Between 4-9 April 2025, received an indecent image of a child, on a Kik Messenger platform, attributed to him.

Breaches of Professional Standards

If these allegations are proven, then I must decide whether they amount to breach of the following standard of behaviour:

- **Discreditable Conduct** – Police officers behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence in it, whether on or off duty

Officer X provided a response under Regulation 54 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations dated 17 July 2026 stating that he denied all three allegations as he would never knowingly engage in sexualised conversations with a 16-year-old. He submits that the AA's evidence about age is inconclusive. He accepts using Kik platform in the past, has no recollection of the conduct alleged [Redacted]. He submits that what is alleged does not amount to gross misconduct in any event.

Decision on Finding of Facts

I have listened to the case presented by the Appropriate Authority and carefully considered the evidence provided to me from both sides in both documentary, video and live evidence from the Investigating Officer. I remind myself that the burden of proving the Facts lies with the Appropriate Authority to the civil standard.

1. I find this allegation proven for the following reasons:
 - (a) the attribution that Officer X communicated on Kik utilising an email he had created, accessing Kik on his own device, is admitted by him in full.

(b) and he admits that his communications on that platform were intentionally sexual and done with an element of secrecy.

The facts are admitted in all important aspects other than the Officer's knowledge of the age of the person that he was communicating with. Whilst I note the wording of the allegation does not include knowledge of age as a factual element, I am entitled to draw inferences from the following facts which I rely on to address the age of the other party that Officer X communicated with:

- (i) The Kik platform initiated a referral to their Cybertip line, via their own internal escalation process, identifying the user L*****16 as being "at risk of online child exploitation for sending and receiving sexualised images". I infer from this that there was something on his account which flagged up his actual age.
 - (ii) The NCA was able to access the actual conversation between the two parties, which confirmed the online messages were sexualised and contained a dialogue about meeting up in a hotel. The user L*****16 messaged the Officer (who utilised a username of S*****88) asking whether he would want to "eat my young boy shits?" to which the officer S*****88 replied "*I would love to eat your young boy shits*". The dialogue then progressed to the sharing of their respective locations and a suggested meeting up at a hotel [Redacted]. The terminology in this exchange should have put the Officer on notice that he was dealing with a "young boy" and he should have then sought confirmation of his exact age and/or terminated the conversation. The username ending in "16" whilst not determinative should also have raised a red flag in this particular context. Despite all of this the officer chose to exchange a photograph of his erect penis in response to a photograph of the user's buttocks and anus. The user's actual age has been confirmed by local officers attending the address connected to the account holder and IIP resolution. This visit established that a 16-year-old male was indeed connected with this address and believed to be the L*****16 user.
- 2. I find proven for the same reasons as set out in my rationale for allegation 1 above.
 - 3. I find proven for the same reasons as set out in my rationale for allegation 1 above

Breach of standards

The burden of proving a breach of professional standards also falls on the Appropriate authority to the civil standard. I find the breach of the Standard of Discreditable Conduct proven because on the proven facts, a [Redacted]-year-old police officer has engaged in sexualised communications with a 16 year old child which has included the exchange of explicit images accompanied by an intention to meet. This conduct would undoubtedly bring discredit to the police.

Provisional Assessment of Seriousness

I go on to make a provisional assessment of Culpability and Harm.

Culpability – Officer X alone was responsible for his actions. This communication was deliberate and intentional. It was planned in that it spanned several days. There was targeting in so far as there was a sharing of locations and an expressed intention to meet at a hotel. Whilst I note he does not face a criminal prosecution for possession of an indecent image of a child this is because the indecent image sent by the child is age indeterminate. On the balance of probability, I find that the image sent was of the anus of a 16-year-old child and constituting factually an indecent image of a child, which I note that this akin to a criminal offence. Misconduct involving sexual impropriety is serious and can significantly undermine public trust in the police. I therefore assess the Culpability is High.

Harm – Whilst I note communication was limited to an online exchange and there is no evidence that they did meet up in person, nevertheless the NCMEC report referred to this as “the online enticement of children for sexual acts”. The sharing of nude media is a form of sexual abuse which causes both a real and a potential risk of harm to the child involved in this case, but also to others. There is a significant risk of harm to public confidence should this conduct become known, which was exacerbated by a significant age disparity between the parties and the officer’s status as an officer in a specialist unit where he should have been more alive and proactive about the inherent risks. I assess the Harm as High.

Aggravating Factors

The officer’s conduct was purely for sexual gratification. His initial response when spoken to by police was to conceal his wrongdoing and to attempt to blame others. There is an admission (via Federation Representative at the hearing) that Officer X used social media for sexual communications with others, **[Redacted]**.

Mitigating Factors

There are no mitigating factors.

Gross Misconduct

I have reminded myself that gross misconduct is a breach of the *Standards of Professional Behaviour* so serious that it could justify dismissal. Applying that definition, I am satisfied that the breach/es of Professional standards both individually and cumulatively does amount to gross misconduct

Outcome Decision

In making my decision on outcome I adopt the three-stage process, as outlined in the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings to determine the appropriate sanction.

The first stage is to assess the seriousness of the conduct.

This is assessed by reference to:

- i. The officer's culpability
- ii. The harm caused by the misconduct
- iii. The existence of aggravating factors
- iv. The existence of mitigating factors

The second stage is to keep in mind the purpose of the police misconduct regime.

I remind myself this has three elements:

- i. To maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the police service
- ii. To uphold high standards and deter misconduct, and
- iii. To protect the public.

I further remind myself that the police misconduct regime is not designed to punish police officers – it is about the reputation and standing of the profession as a whole.

The third stage is to choose the outcome that most appropriately fulfils that purpose given the seriousness of the conduct in question.

I start by assessing the seriousness of the conduct:

Stage 1: the seriousness of the conduct

Culpability

I have already made a provisional assessment of Culpability, and I adopt that assessment here.

In this case, the Culpability is therefore High

Harm

I have already made a provisional assessment of Harm and I adopt that assessment here.

In this case, the harm is therefore High

Aggravating Factors

I have found these as above. am mindful not to double count matters that have already formed part of my assessment of harm and culpability.

Mitigating Factors

There are no mitigating factors

Conclusion on Seriousness

Taking all these matters into consideration, I assess the seriousness of the conduct as High.

Personal Mitigation

I was addressed by the Officer's Federation Representative on personal mitigation. **[Redacted]** I am mindful of the limits to the weight I should attach to personal mitigation as identified in the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings, and that the interests of the police service, and the protection of the public, are more important than those of the individual officer.

Stage 2: the purpose of the misconduct regime

I have reminded myself of the threefold purpose of the police misconduct regime carefully in considering the appropriate outcome in this case.

I further remind myself that the police misconduct regime is not designed to punish police officers – it is about the reputation and standing of the profession as a whole.

I do acknowledge that the outcome imposed can have a punitive effect: accordingly, the outcome should be no more than necessary to satisfy the purpose of the proceedings.

Stage 3: the appropriate outcome

I have considered the officer's record of service.

As these matters came to the attention of the Appropriate Authority after 28 May 2025, having found this to amount to Gross Misconduct I have to consider whether there are exceptional circumstances which would justify a sanction other than dismissal without notice. I find that there are not.

OUTCOME:

Therefore the sanction I impose is **dismissal without notice** and that Officer X be placed on the College of Policing's **public** barred list

Former Police Commander Katie Lilburn

Metropolitan Police Service **[Redacted]**