

Notice of Decision

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Registrant | Hazel Keeton |
| Registration number | 3073143 |
| Part of Register | Children and young people's worker |
| Town of employment | [information redacted] |
| Sanction | Removal |
| Date of effect | 18 April 2025 |

This is notice of a decision of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Our decision

We decided:

1. that based on the facts found your fitness to practise is impaired, as defined in Rule 2 of Part 1 of the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021
2. to impose a Removal Order removing your registration from the part of the SSSC Register for children and young people's workers.

Findings of fact

We decided there is evidence that on or around 5 November 2024, at Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court, you were convicted of:

1. an offence contrary to section 26(1) and (4) of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, in particular that you did, between 22 July 2023 and 25 July 2023, [information redacted]
2. attempting to pervert the course of justice in that you did, between 25 July 2023 and 26 July 2023, following being made aware of a police investigation involving another, attempt to remove evidence from your home address and did delete content from your mobile telephone and this you did with the intent to pervert the course of justice

3. an offence contrary to section 52(1)(a) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 as amended, in particular that you did, between 12 June 2023 and 26 July 2023, both dates inclusive, take or permit to be taken or make, indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of children

and your fitness to practise is impaired because of your convictions as set out in allegations 1-3.

Reasons for finding your fitness to practise has been impaired

1. Your fitness to practise is impaired because:
 - a. Your behaviour falls at the highest end of the scale of seriousness. You acted contrary to section 26(1) and (4) of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009. You recorded a child in a private act with the intention of enabling yourself or another to look at the image of that child. You also acted contrary to section 52(1)(a) of the Civil Government (Scotland) Act 1982 in that you did take or permit to be taken or make indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of children. Further to this, you were convicted of an offence of attempting to pervert the course of justice after attempting to remove evidence from your home address and deleting content from your mobile phone with the intent to pervert the course of justice.
 - b. You have not provided comments to the SSSC. The SSSC is not aware of you having provided insight, regret or apology. Your actions placed children at a significant risk of harm. Your convictions appear to be indicative of an attitude or values-based issue. You have shown a disregard for the law and the welfare of others. Any repetition of the same or similar behaviour would be extremely serious and would place others at a real risk of harm. Offences involving sexual misconduct, child sexual abuse images and dishonesty are all extremely serious.
 - c. The SSSC would have significant concerns about you continuing to work with children or vulnerable people in a trusted position. There is also a collective need to maintain public confidence in the profession. You were employed in [information redacted] at the time of your behaviour leading to conviction. Your behaviour damaged the reputation of the profession.

- d. Ultimately, your convictions and the behaviour leading to your convictions is fundamentally incompatible with registration in a trusted and caring profession.
2. You have failed to follow parts 2.1, 5.7 and 5.8 of the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers in force from 1 November 2016.

Sanction

After referring to our Decisions Guidance, we decided to impose a Removal Order, removing your registration from the SSSC Register.

Reasons for the sanction

When making our decision we considered the following factors:

Factors of concern

- You have provided no comments and therefore the SSSC is not aware of you having shown insight, regret or apology.
- The behaviour leading to your convictions placed children at a significant risk of harm.
- You were convicted of three serious offences. There is a pattern of offending behaviour between June 2023 and July 2023.
- The behaviour leading to your convictions amounts to an abuse of trust. At the time of the behaviour, you were employed [information redacted] and trusted by your employer, the public and the SSSC to care for children.
- You were convicted of attempting to pervert the course of justice as you tried to conceal your wrongdoing.

Factors in your favour

- You worked in the sector between March 2016 and July 2023 without concerns being raised about your fitness to practise.

Reasons why other sanctions are not appropriate

- A warning would not be appropriate as your convictions are extremely serious. A warning would give no protection to people who use services or the public.

- A condition would not be appropriate because there are no conditions which could be placed on you which would address why your fitness to practise is impaired.
- A warning plus conditions would not be appropriate due to the reasons outlined above.
- A Suspension Order would not be appropriate as your impairment of your fitness to practise is fundamentally incompatible with continuing registration.
- For the reasons outlined above a Suspension Order plus conditions would not be appropriate.
- The SSSC considers a Removal Order is the most appropriate sanction as it is both necessary and justified in the public interest and to maintain the continuing trust and confidence in the social service profession and the SSSC as the regulator of the profession.

Documents we have referred to

- The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021.
- Decisions Guidance for Fitness to Practise Panels and Scottish Social Service Council staff.

Imposing the Removal Order

Under the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021, we can impose a Removal Order if you do not ask for a hearing before a Fitness to Practise Panel.

We wrote to you on 5 March 2025 to tell you we wanted to place a Removal Order on your registration. After explaining the consequences and recommending you take legal advice, you have not asked for the case to be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. We are therefore permitted by the Rules to impose this Removal Order.

Date of effect

The notice comes into effect on 18 April 2025.