



In the matter of the British Transport Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020;

APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY FOR  
THE BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

V

PC GAVIN PARSONS [6077]

[CASE REF CO/836/24]

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**Regulation 43 Outcome Report**

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**Location:** PSD Offices, Ivason House, 8A London Bridge Street, SE1 9SG

**Date:** 23 February 2026 – 27 February 2026, 25 March 2026

**Legally Qualified Chair:** Cameron Brown

**Independent Panel Member:** Karen McArthur

**BTP Superintendent:** Andrew Morgan

**Outcome:** Gross Misconduct

**Sanction:** Final Written Warning

**IN THE POLICE MISCONDUCT HEARING**

**Pursuant to the British Transport Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**POLICE CONSTABLE GAVIN PARSONS**

**DECISION OF THE PANEL**

**Cameron Brown KC (Chair)**

**Superintendent Morgan (PM)**

**and**

**Karen McArthur (IPM)**

**Introduction**

1. These misconduct proceedings are brought under the British Transport Police (conduct) Regulations 2020.

**The Allegations**

2. The Panel was referred to a Regulation 30 notice in respect of PC Parsons (“the Officer”) and allegations that his conduct amounted to gross misconduct.
3. In particular, it was alleged that PC Parsons had breached the following standards of professional behaviour, as set out in the notice in the following terms.

**“BACKGROUND**

*A. By virtue of your office as constable, you were obliged to have regard to the National Police Chiefs Council's Personal Safety Manual*

*B. By virtue of that position, you were obliged to have regard to the APP on the National Decision Model.*

*C. By virtue of that position, you had undertaken training in respect of the use of force.*

### **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

*1. On Saturday 14 December 2024, you were on duty at London Bridge Underground Station attending a medical emergency. After you left the medical emergency, you walked towards the train platforms at the station.*

*2. At approximately 19:32hrs, a member of the public approached you stating that there was "trouble" on the platform as "a couple of Somalian lads [are] beating up some woman".*

*3. As you entered the platform, there was a Tannoy announcement which called for the British Transport Police stating that there was "a fight".*

*4. You approached a group of people, including Child A and Child B.*

*5. Your Use of Force forms recorded the perceived ethnicity of Child A and Child B as "Black (or Black British)". Additionally, Child B's self-defined ethnicity is "B9 – Any other Black ethnic background". Child A has no recorded self-defined ethnicity.*

*6. At the time of the incident, Child A and Child B were fifteen years of age.*

*7. It was, or ought to have been, apparent that Child A and Child B were children.*

8. *Child A and Child B's race influenced your perception of their age and your treatment of them.*
9. *You did not approach the situation with an open and impartial mind.*
10. *You immediately racked your baton and shouted "stop". You then shouted, "get back" and placed your hand on the shoulder of Child B. You instructed Child A and Child B to get down onto the floor.*
11. *You did not seek further information from any of the parties present*
12. *Other officers arrived at the scene.*
13. *Whilst shouting at Child B, you struck his knee with a baton. Child B was then handcuffed.*
14. *Whilst Child B was being handcuffed, Child A could be heard shouting "help".*
15. *You went to assist other officers who were dealing with Child A. You shouted at Child A to get onto the floor. You struck Child A's body with your baton. You struck Child A for a second time, after which he fell to the floor. He continued to shout "help" throughout.*
16. *Child A was placed in handcuffs. During the application of the handcuffs, Child A told officers (including you) that he could not breathe.*
17. *You arrested Child A and Child B for assault and gave the caution.*
18. *Child B asked you what he and Child A had done. You responded that you were told that they "were both beating up children ... about ten people pointed you out and said that you were beating up children".*
19. *This comment to Child B was false. You knew this to be false.*
20. *You then went to speak to the Cundall family who stated that they had observed Child A and Child B intimidating a male on the train.*

21. *Both children were subsequently searched by you.*
22. *You repeated to Child B that you had had a “report from about fifteen different members of the public ... they’ve said there’s two young black boys and they’re beating up children”.*
23. *This comment to Child B was false. You knew this to be false.*
24. *You further arrested Child A and Child B for offences under the Public Order Act 1986 and reminded them that they remained under caution.*
25. *Child A and Child B were taken to the headquarters of the British Transport Police, where their parents collected them.*
26. *Child B remained in handcuffs until 20:37hrs. Child A remained in handcuffs until 21:12hrs.*
27. *The allegations against Child A and Child B were subsequently NFA’d.*
28. *Following the incident, you recorded in your ePNB:  
“I was dealing with a separate medial [sic] incident when I was approached by a concerned member of the public who stated THERE ARE 2 SOMALIAN MALES BEATING UP CHILDREN ON THE JUBILEE LINE. I was pointed towards the platform and where the males were, as I made my way over around 10 other members of the public called me and told me the exact same information.  
  
Based on this and the fact that I was on my own, I looked to my side and couldn't see any colleagues with me, I considered how I might be able to stop a fight, especially on subjects who have assaulted children.  
  
I have been based at London Bridge station for around 4 years and know that it one of the highest crime stations in the entire United Kingdom for violence against the person offences including assaults and robberies involving*

*violence, knives and weapons, I considered this in my strategy and thought that the use of weapons may be involved. The 2 males fit the subject profile of a lot of offenders at London Bridge. The platform was very busy as it was a Saturday evening close to [sic] Christmas, the chance of other people being caught up in potential violence was high, I considered the safety of them when assessing the threat.*

*The victim in this case was there with a pushchair and several small children. I decided to rack my baton for shock factor and as a deterrent for the suspects to become violent, I was outnumbered 2 to 1 and felt that I had a better chance of holding them there alone until I could get further support and be in the best position if weapons were to come into play. When more officers arrived, I could arrest the males and place them in handcuffs. I told the males to get down on the floor a few times and they refused. When more officers got involved, they tried using takedown methods but they were not successful, the males continued to resist arrest, pushing against officers. I used a couple baton strikes, taking pauses between them so I could determine if they were effective.”*

*29. What was recorded in the ePNB was not an accurate reflection of what had occurred. You knew that such an entry was false.*

*30. Your phrase ‘The 2 males fit the subject profile of a lot of offenders at London Bridge’ was discriminatory and adultifying against Child A and Child B.*

### **STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR BREACHED**

*31. Your behaviour set out above breached the following Standards of Professional Behaviour:*

*i. Use of force*

*Police officers only use force to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances.*

*ii. Honest and Integrity*

*Officers must be truthful and act with integrity, not abusing their position.*

*iii. Equality and Diversity*

*Police officers act with fairness and impartiality. They do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.*

*iv. Authority, Respect, and Courtesy*

*Police officers act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy. Police officers do not abuse their powers or authority and respect the rights of all individuals.*

*v. Orders and Instructions*

*Police officers only give and carry out lawful orders and instructions. Police officers abide by police regulations, force policies and lawful orders.*

*vi. Duties and Responsibilities*

*Police officers are diligent in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities.*

*vii. 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.*

**ASSESSMENT OF BREACH**

*Your actions described above, taken individually or cumulatively, are so serious as to justify dismissal. Accordingly, your breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour amount to gross misconduct.”*

### *Representation*

4. Throughout the hearing the Appropriate Authority ('AA') has been ably represented by Ms Verrall-Withers of Counsel. The Officer was ably represented by Mr Baumber of Counsel.
5. The Panel would like to thank both Counsel and representatives for their assistance in hearing this case, including the provision of an opening note.

### *Preliminary Issues*

6. Child A and Child B were both 15 years old at the time of the incident. Their identities had been anonymised. They are referred to as Child A and Child B.
7. On the first day of the hearing, 23 March 2026, Mr Baumber had to leave the hearing due to a family medical emergency. The following day it was confirmed he would be unable to return as the condition may have been infectious. The hearing resumed on the Wednesday 25 March 2026.

### *Regulation 30 and 31 Notices*

8. On the morning of the hearing on the Regulation 30 notice, as set out above, was read out. In summary, the officer denied the allegations per his regulation 31 response in the following terms: -
  - a. He denied breaching the Standards of Professional Behaviour.
  - b. He described his use of force as being an example of the utilisation of the National Decision Model. He contended that the location was

high risk with a high volume of crime, as well as the location being dangerous by virtue of its proximity to tracks.

- c. He denied discrimination and lying.
- d. He stated that, whilst age is relevant to decision-making, he did not know the children's ages. In any event, he states that their actual of age of 15 would have been "*of limited comfort [...] the potential violence, criminality, seriousness, and dangerousness of 15-year-olds can remain significant*" (at §16).
- e. He denied not approaching the situation with an open and impartial mind. He states he was duty bound to act based on the intelligence he had received. He contends that, had the children complied with his commands or not resisted, he would have behaved differently (at §23 and §33).
- f. He stated that there was a "*significant risk of weapons*", he was outnumbered, incapacitant spray was "*too dangerous*", and the location was dangerous.
- g. He stated that he used a variety of tactics that did not work, which then demanded a different approach (at §§35-36). He asserts that he tried to use the least invasive means available and/or minimal force in the circumstances (at §40, §45, and §52).
- h. Child A did not require help (at §38 and §50).
- i. The statements made by the Officer about ten or fifteen people making reports were a "*brief and loose approximation of the general position and information*" that he had (at §§5557). j. The ePNB was

completed after a nineteen-hour shift; he was stressed, fatigued, and had no incentive to lie (at §59).

- j. Young people fit the subject profile of offenders (at §60).
- k. The Officer has exhibited statistics on weapons at London Bridge Underground Station

### **The Panel's Approach**

- 9. The Panel determined it was: -
  - a. Required to consider the facts of the case and to make its findings of fact in relation to each of the allegations;
  - b. Determine whether those findings of fact found constitute a breach of the relevant standards;
  - c. Determine whether the conduct found proven against the Officer amounted to misconduct or gross misconduct.
- 10. The Panel reminded itself that the burden of proof is on the Appropriate Authority throughout and the standard of proof is the balance of probability, namely what is more likely than not.
- 11. The Panel also reminded itself of relevant guidance from the Home Office:  
*"2.265. The more serious the allegation of misconduct that is made or the more serious the consequences for the individual which flow from a finding against him or her, **the more persuasive (cogent) the evidence will need to be in order to meet that standard (bold added)**. This does not mean that the standard is higher. It means only that the inherent probability or improbability of the conduct occurring is itself a matter to be*

*taken into account when weighing the probability and deciding whether on balance the conduct occurred.”*

#### *Use of Force*

12. The law provides that officers may use “*reasonable force, if necessary, in the exercise of*” their powers (pursuant to s.117 of the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*), or to “[*prevent*] crime, or [*effect*] or [*assist*] in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders or of persons unlawfully at large” (per s.3 *Criminal Law Act 1967*).
13. Force, to be lawful, must be reasonable, necessary, and proportionate. This is judged according to the civil law test of self-defence which means assessing an officer’s actions having regard to his honest and reasonable belief as to the situation which confronted him.
14. In R (Officer W80) v Director General of the Office for Police Conduct [2023] UKSC 24 at [118] the following was applied “*Under the civil law test of self-defence, the necessity, proportionality and reasonableness of the officer’s conduct will be assessed having regard to his honest and reasonable belief as to the situation which confronted him. His conduct must be assessed on the basis of the information of which he was aware at the time.*”

#### *Police Guidance – Use of Force*

15. PACE Code G deals with the statutory power officers have to arrest a person who is involved, or suspected of being involved, in a criminal offence. The power of arrest must be used fairly and responsibly, with

respect for the people suspected of committing offences and without unlawful discrimination.

16. The use of the power must be fully justified and officers exercising the power should consider if the necessary objectives can be met by other, less intrusive means.
17. An arrested person must also be given sufficient information to enable them to understand they have been deprived of their liberty and the reason they have been arrested, as soon as practicable after the arrest. The suspect must also be informed of the reason why arrest is considered necessary.
18. The standard in relation to use of force provides that Police officers only use force to the extent that it is necessary, proportionate, and reasonable in all the circumstances.
19. The Personal Safety Manual - Conflict Management module ('The Manual') highlights several categories of behaviour that police officers may encounter that should form part of their decision-making process:
  - a. Compliance: *"the subject offers no resistance and complies with requests. It is important that the officer understands that this could change rapidly."*
  - b. Verbal resistance and gestures: *"the subject refuses to comply either verbally or, by their body language, non-verbally."*
  - c. Active resistance: *"the subject pulls away or pushes the officer but makes no attempt to strike them."*

- d. Serious or aggravated resistance: *“the subject commits an assault which presents the possibility of serious injury or death. This includes the use of weapons.”*

20. The Manual highlights the need for Officers to gather information and intelligence – this is more likely to result in a correct and defensible decision. It also stresses the need to constantly assess the threat and risk posed – it is a fluid entity. Presence and communications skills are reasonable response options. The option chosen must be proportionate to the threat posed. The aim should be to gain control of any situation.

21. The PSM Baton module provides guidance as to batons techniques which are issued to the UK Police Service as a tactical option to assist in managing conflict. The module states that *“whatever action the officer takes, this must be necessary and proportionate”*.

#### *Evidence*

22. The Panel was referred to a bundle of documentary evidence (740 pages). The Panel was also provided with an opening note and chronology. There was no defence bundle.

23. Having opened the case and played the CCTV and body worn video, the AA closed its case. No witnesses were called, the AA relying upon the agreed bundle.

#### *PC Parsons*

24. The Panel then heard from one witness, PC Parsons. His evidence largely reflected what he had said in his regulation 31 response and interview.

25. Among other matters the Panel noted the following:
- a. PC Parsons had served as a PCSO prior to joining the BTP. He had a number of years of experience as a BTP Officer.
  - b. The decisions he had to make were split second. He acknowledged any force had to be both reasonable and proportionate to the threat posed.
  - c. He referred to the threat posed by other young males at London Bridge station, including the risk of carrying weapons. It was a hotspot for violent crime.
  - d. His risk assessment was that the risk was very high. He thought a robbery was in progress in view of prior experiences. Everyone who spoke to him seemed panicked.
  - e. Child B was 5ft 7 or 5ft 8 and Child A was over 6ft.
  - f. He had racked his baton in show of strength. It had the desired effect.
  - g. There was a lot of time for the boys to comply with his order. There were lots of verbal commands. He was concerned they had weapons. His commands did not have the desired effect with them. He had tried carrying on but made the decision to use baton. He deliberately chose the leg area to avoid injury. He had engaged in thought process and only used further force when his first action had not worked. He did not want to cause any physical damage.
  - h. He accepted the rugby tackle did bring child A to the ground.

- i. Their race and age had not made any difference to his approach. If they had obeyed his commands there would have been no need for baton strikes. He had kept an open mind but had been stressed.
- j. He accepted he had not been informed by 10 persons as described – more like 4 or 5. He was not however seeking mathematical precision.
- k. He accepted that at start Child A and B had been stood still with their backs against the wall. They had not attempted to leave. It had not however been safe to ask questions. He acknowledged he had not arrested them or explained why they must get on the floor. He was concerned that if he told them they were under arrest they would have reacted badly.

### *The Background*

- 26. In considering the facts, save for the matters set out above we make it plain that the Panel has reviewed and considered the entirety of the evidence presented to us.

### *London Bridge Station*

- 27. PC Parsons was in attendance London Bridge underground station on 14 December 2024. He attended a medical emergency with a member of the public. He was working with PC's Clarke, Marinova and Roob. All had been at the scene of the medical emergency.

### *The Verbal Altercation*

28. An altercation had been taking place between the Cundall family and the children, following alleged comments made by the children towards an unknown male on the tube. The Cundall family were heard to say to the boys "get away from us." Mr Cundall had pressed the emergency button on the platform during the altercation, at around 7.31. He relayed in his statement that he had then said to the children "*what's your problem?*".
29. Ms Crosdale, a witness, had become involved and told the children to walk away. She described them as not leaving and "*mouthing off.*" One of the boys took out his phone and started recording the family. Her account was corroborated by the CCTV. On the phone recording Child A can be heard saying he was frightened for his safety and asking Mr Cundall "*to get away from me.*" There was no evidence of any actual violence.

### *Information about the Altercation*

30. As PC Parsons walked along the corridor alongside platform 3, at 7.31.40pm a male member of the public walked out of the entrance to platform three. He said to PC Parsons "*Excuse me mate, there's trouble round there*", while gesturing over his shoulder towards the platform. A female member of the public reiterated "*There's trouble round there*", and the male added, "*There's a couple of Somalian lads beating up some woman.*" PC Parsons made his way down the platform in the direction the male gestured.
31. As PC Parsons entered platform three, at 7.31.48pm. the BWV captures a loudspeaker announcement which stated "*This is a call for the British*

*Transport Police on the station, call for the British Transport Police on the station, platform number three, platform number three, Fight.*” As this announcement was being made, PC Parsons started running down the platform and said, *“What’s going on?”*

32. According to both the CCTV, and the BWV footage of PCSO Roob and PCSO Marinova, PC Clarke followed in the direction of PC Parsons, with PCSO Roob behind him, and PCSO Marinova at the back.

33. PC Parsons ran towards Child A and Child B who were standing on the platform and racked his police issued baton. PC Sean Clarke, PCSO Omar Roob and PCSO Denitsa Marinova arrived approximately 16 seconds after PC Parsons. The two children were in a verbal altercation with the Cundall family. Ms Crosdale, the witness, was also present.

#### *PC Parsons Arrival*

34. At approximately 7.31:57pm, BWV, CCTV and Child A’s mobile phone footage show PC Parsons arrived at the scene and extended his police baton. PC Parsons then immediately raised the baton and shouted *“Stop.”*

35. At 7.31.59pm, Ms Crosdale stepped back, raised her right hand towards PC Parsons and said *“Whoa, whoa whoa whoa whoa whoa”* due to her possible alarm at the escalation from PC Parsons. At the same time PC Parsons raised his baton up above his right shoulder and pointed it towards Child A and Child B while appearing to place his left hand on Child B’s right shoulder and shouting *“Get back, get back.”*

36. As PC Parsons was doing this, Ms Groves, part of the Cundall family, shouted whilst pointing at Child A and Child B *“Them, them, they was fighting”* and Ms Cundall added that Child A and Child B had been fighting over her son.

#### *Lack of Threat*

37. Child A and Child B both turned away from the Cundall family and Ms Crosdale, towards PC Parsons and stood with their backs against the wall of the platform. Child B appeared to have both hands by his sides, the palms turned upwards, and Child A continued to film on his mobile phone.

#### *Floor Command*

38. At 7.32.07pm, PC Parsons repeatedly instructed Child A and Child B to get down onto the floor. In response to this, Child A can be heard saying *“no, no, no”* and *“it’s for my safety and wellbeing”*.

#### *Restraint of Child B*

39. PC Parsons moved his left hand off Child B’s shoulder and appeared to reach forward towards Child A. PC Parsons moved in closer towards Child A and his right shoulder appeared to be in contact with or near to Child B’s upper body.

40. As this was taking place, Ms Crosdale removed her phone from her bag and started recording. This footage was provided to the IOPC.

41. PC Clarke arrived at approximately 19.32.12. He asked what was going on multiple times, whilst approaching Child A. In response, Ms Crosdale said “they didn’t do anything” and she started backing away, whilst still filming. PCSO Roob arrived a couple of seconds after PC Clarke and also asked what was happening. PC Clarke took hold of Child A’s left arm with his right hand, while PC Parsons took hold of Child B’s right arm and pulled him forwards and away from Child A. PCSO Roob also took hold of Child B and they both instructed Child B to get down onto the floor, while Child B questioned what they had done. At this time, Child B’s demeanour appeared relaxed, with both hands down by his side.
42. PCSO Marinova arrived approximately four seconds after PCSO Roob and approached Child A.
43. Immediately after PCSO Marinova’s arrival, at 7.32.21pm PC Parsons struck Child B’s knee with his baton while shouting at him to get down on the floor. At that moment Child B was stood relatively still and was being held by each arm by PC Parsons and PCSO Roob. Child B was not offering any form of active resistance but he was not complying with the instruction to go to the floor. Child B’s knee bent and he went to the floor. His arms were still being held by PC Parsons and PCSO Roob.
44. At 7.32.23pm, PC Parsons and PCSO Roob put their hands on Child B’s upper back and pushed him forwards until he was face down on the floor.
45. As Child B was being manoeuvred to the floor, Ms Crosdale shouted to the officers “*they didn’t do anything*” in apparent reference to Child A and Child B. PC Parsons and PCSO Roob knelt on either side of Child B and

held him down to the ground by keeping their hands on his upper back.  
He was placed in handcuffs at 7.32.40.

#### *Restraint of Child A*

46. At 7.32.21pm, when PC Parsons used his baton on Child B, Child A was stood next to them with PC Clarke holding onto his arm. PCSO Marinova's BWV footage, and the CCTV footage, appear to show Child A moving around and appearing to struggle against and attempt to move away from PC Clarke. This continued, with Child A attempting to struggle against PC Clarke and PCSO Marinova. Child A was shouting for help. PCSO Marinova was trying to put handcuffs on him and telling him to get to the ground.

47. Following PC Clarke trying to hold Child A, at around 7.32.45pm, PC Parsons stood up from the floor where he had been restraining Child B. His baton was in his right hand. PC Parsons approached Child A, PC Clarke and PCSO Marinova and, at 7.32.48pm, PC Parsons shouted to Child A to get down on the floor. At 7.32.51pm, footage shows PC Parsons struck the lower part of Child A's body with his baton and shouted, "down on the floor".

48. At 7.32.55pm, PC Parsons took hold of Child A by his waist and appeared to start attempts to pull Child A down to the ground. As he did this, PC Clarke retained his grip on Child A's right hand, and PCSO Marinova continued to hold onto Child A's left hand. As PC Parsons pulled Child A towards the floor, PCSO Marinova hit her open handcuffs

against Child A's wrist on two further occasions in an apparent attempt to place her handcuffs on his wrist.

49. At 7.32.59pm, Child A was pulled into a seated position on the floor by PC Parsons. At this exact moment, as Child A fell to the floor, PC Parsons appeared to raise his arm to strike Child A with his baton a second time. This second strike is not fully captured on the CCTV or BWV footage. The struggle continued with Child A on the ground. Throughout Child A shouted for help. He said the officers were attacking him and he had not done anything wrong. He continued to struggle against the officers. Eventually he was fully handcuffed at around 7.34.16pm.

#### *The Arrests*

50. At 7.33.54pm, PC Parsons said, *"They're both under arrest for assault by the way"*. While this was ongoing, at 7.34.22pm, PC Parsons repeated that both Child A and Child B were under arrest for assault and then gave the criminal caution.

51. At 7.35.32pm, Child B asked PC Parsons what they had done. PC Parsons responded, *"I was told you were both beating up children."* Child B denied this, and PC Parsons then said, *"Well about ten people pointed you out and said you were beating up children."*

52. At 7.40.59pm Child B again asked PC Parsons what he had been arrested for and PC Parsons confirmed it was for common assault. Child B again then asked what he had done, and at 7.41pm, PC Parsons responded, *"well that's what I'm trying to figure out"*. Child B started to

respond saying he had not done anything, PC Lawley reminded Child B that he was under caution and reiterated that Child B was under arrest. In response, Child B said, "I've never been arrested". The officers again clarified that Child B had been arrested for common assault, and PCSO Roob repeated the caution to Child B. PC Parsons then told Child B he had been told Child B was intimidating people on the tube.

53. At 7.43pm, PC Parsons said he needed to *"figure out what we've got"* and indicated this would help him decide whether Child A and Child B needed taking to police custody. Child B again asked PC Parsons what he had done and PC Parsons responded, *"Okay, I had a report from about fifteen different members of the public... they've said there's two young black boys and they're beating up children"*. PC Parsons then walked away from Child B and spoke to PC May, who advised PC Parsons to arrest Child A and Child B for offences under Section 4A of the Public Order Act. PC May stated this advice had come about based on a conversation PC Clarke had with the Cundall family.

54. At 7.45pm, PC Parsons arrested Child A and Child B for offences under Section 4A of the Public Order Act.

55. At approximately 7.54pm, PC Parsons spoke with PC Lam regarding the original allegation. PC Parsons stated there were about 15 members of the public saying there were two Somalian boys beating up children. PC Parsons explained to PC Lam that was why he racked his baton. PC Parsons stated, *"I'm outnumbered, I'm two to one, got (inaudible) baton in the air and then they said oh yeah they were beating up children"*

*(inaudible) say get down on the floor, and then more colleagues turn up they wouldn't go down and it's like so alright fair, fair enough."*

56. Both children were searched – no weapons were found.

57. Child B's handcuffs were removed at 08.37 pm. At approximately 9.11pm, Child A's mother arrived with two male family members. Child A's handcuffs were removed by PC Parsons

#### *Use of Force Forms*

58. PC Parsons provided use of force forms for both Child A and Child B. He stated the primary conduct of both Child A and Child B when he used force was passive resistance, that he used force to "*Protect self, protect public, protect other officers, prevent offence, effect arrest, prevent harm, and prevent escape,*" and that the impact factors he considered were "Prior knowledge, size/gender/build, and crowd." For both Child A and Child B PC Parsons noted he used force on the front right upper and lower arm and the back right and left lower leg. He stated on both use of force forms that he initially used tactical communications, then drew his baton, then used unarmed skills none of which were effective. PC Parsons stated for both Child A and Child B that he then used his baton and non-compliant handcuffing, both of which were effective.

#### *Electronic Police Notebook*

59. PC Parsons recorded in his ePNB D40a that a concerned member of the public stated that the Somalian males were beating up 'children' and that around ten members of the public called him and told him the exact

same information. This account of what took place by PC Parsons is not supported by BWV evidence. It was accepted by PC Parsons that it was not accurate.

60. He added this

*"I have been based at London Bridge station for around 4 years and know that it one of the highest crime stations in the entire United Kingdom for violence against the person offences including assaults and robberies involving violence, knives and weapons<sup>1</sup>, I considered this in my strategy and thought that the use of weapons may be involved. The 2 males fit the subject profile of a lot of offenders at London Bridge.*

*The platform was very busy as it was a Saturday evening close to Christmas, the chance of other people being caught up in potential violence was high, I considered the safety of them when assessing the threat.*

*The victim in this case was there with a pushchair and several small children. I decided to rack my baton for shock factor and as a deterrent for the suspects to become violent, I was outnumbered 2 to 1 and felt that I had a better chance of holding them there alone until I could get further support and be in the best position if weapons were to come into play.*

*When more officers arrived I could arrest the males and place them in handcuffs. I told the males to get down on the floor a few times and they refused. When more officers got involved, they tried using takedown*

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<sup>1</sup> At pages 711-740 the Officer provided material showing weapons that had been recovered from London Bridge, including a large number of knives. This was for the period 01.01.24 – 03.01.26, a two-year period. The weapons were seized as part of targeted operations. The mean average of the offender was 16. In total there were 29 pictures of knives and other weapons.

*methods but they were not successful, the males continued to resist arrest, pushing against officers.*

*I used a couple baton strikes, taking pauses between them so I could determine if they were effective. Once the males were on the floor cuffs were applied in a rear stack position, double locked and checked for tightness. The UOF portal is down so I will complete this when I return to work from leave.”*

### *Criminal Prosecution*

61. Both Child A and Child B were told that they would be required to attend for voluntary interview. Both matters were subsequently recorded as No Further Action ('NFA').

### *Complaints*

62. Three separate complaints were received by BTP on 20 December 2024, which were referred to the IOPC on 31 January 2025. The complaints alleged inappropriate use of force, discrimination and bias. The complaint came from two members of the public and the mother of Child A. In particular they alleged the following:
  - a. That the use of force on Child A and Child B was inappropriate and excessive. Child A and Child B were treated differently because of their race.
  - b. Officers his head on the ground whilst he was shouting that he could not breathe.

- c. That officers did not de-escalate the situation and in fact escalated the situation to violence
- d. That there was a failure to investigate the situation fairly

#### *Investigation into PC Parsons*

- 63. PC Parsons was served with a Regulation 17 Notice and a criminal letter on 20 March 2025. BTP restricted PC Parsons from full duties the same day.
- 64. He was interviewed under criminal caution on 8 May 2025. He answered all questions put to him.

#### *Training Records*

- 65. PC Parsons training record showed he undertook training on the Equality Act 2010, Conflict Management, Powers of Arrest, and the National Decision Model for policing between October 2017 and July 2018. PC Parsons also passed his most recent Personal Safety refresher on 22 November 2024.

#### **Determination of the Facts**

- 66. There is no dispute in this case that force was used. The key question for the Panel to determine was whether the force used was necessary, reasonable, and proportionate.

#### *Margin of Appreciation*

67. The Panel gave PC Parsons a wide margin of appreciation as he had to deal with a fast moving situation and did not have time to carefully analyse what was taking place.
68. Furthermore, PC Parsons had been on duty for some 11.5 hours at the time of the incident, which may have affected his responses to some degree. He had been on duty 19.5 hours when he completed the ePNB.

#### *Information Received*

69. The Panel carefully considered the information provided to PC Parsons prior to the incident.
  - a. That he had been informed over the tannoy that there was a fight, which was supported by the accounts of three members of the public. The call over the tannoy had come from a call for emergency assistance.
  - b. He was responding to the scene quickly.
  - c. When he initially arrived he was not supported by other officers.
  - d. That the Cundall extended family made allegations of fighting against Child A and B.
  - e. The Panel also noted the location of the incident on the platform on the Jubilee Line. The risk of any conflict spilling onto the train tracks was significantly mitigated by the presence of platform edge doors, with full height barriers between passengers and the tracks and doors which only opened when a train was properly aligned at the platform. There was however the risk of other

passengers becoming involved when leaving tube trains. 2 trains were seen to arrive and leave on the footage that the Panel had seen.

- f. That there was material to suggest that those involved in violence at the station might be carrying weapons.

### *Ethnicity and Diversity*

70. On reaching the scene of the incident the Panel determined that the Officer was entitled to form the view that Child A and B were likely to be involved, based on the description he had been given, namely a “*couple of Somalian lads*”. There were no other individuals the Panel could see on the footage who matched that description.
71. The Panel did not consider that he had targeted Child A and B based on their race but rather that they matched the description he had been given by a member of the public. The Panel determined he had approached the situation at that point with an open and impartial mind.
72. Equally the Panel did not consider the phrase “the 2 males fit the subject profile of a lot of offenders at London Bridge” was discriminatory. There was no explanation of why the males fit the profile but the Panel determined that this may have been a reference to young males potentially engaged in violence.
73. In all the circumstances the Panel determined that the allegations set out at §8, §9 and §30 and alleged breach of the standards in relation to ethnicity and diversity were not proven.

### *Age of Child A and B*

74. Furthermore, the Panel did not agree that PC Parsons ought to have formed the view that they were children in terms of their size or demeanour. While both Child A and B were aged 15, they were large, with Child A over 6 feet in height. Both children were wearing hoodies which potentially disguised their true ages. Child B was also wearing a scarf on his face. The Panel did not agree that there was anything specifically indicating they were children as opposed to young persons.

### *Initial Approach*

75. The Panel also determined that, in light of the information received and not knowing exactly what he was dealing with, PC Parsons was entitled to rack his baton in an attempt to control the situation. The action of doing so and issuing the commands “stop” and “get back” did in fact have the intended effect of ensuring the parties were compliant. The Panel determined that these actions were necessary, reasonable and proportionate.

### *Duty to Investigate*

76. At that point the Panel determined that PC Parsons should have appreciated, even in the heat of the moment, that Child A and B were not engaged in a fight and were not threatening to the Officer or other members of the public. They had moved backwards on his command and

were standing still. They were not trying to leave. Both appeared to back away from him and Child B had his palms in a face up position. Child A was holding a phone. They did not, in the Panel's view, appear to offer any threat and this should have been evident to the Officer. Neither appeared to have a weapon, whatever the Officer's concerns may have been generally about weapons within the station. He had not been told that either had a weapon at any stage. Furthermore, he was joined at the scene shortly afterwards by other officers, thus reducing the risk to himself and to other members of the public.

77. Based in particular on Child A and B's demeanour at that moment in time the Panel determined that the proportionate and appropriate course would have been to separate the parties and obtain further information from each of them. It was not a "classic example of utilisation of the NDM", as described in his regulation 31. While he had some information over the tannoy and from members of the public about what might have taken place, he had a clear opportunity to obtain further information but declined to do so. The failure to do so was, in the Panel's, view a significant error of judgment. The Panel was supported in that view by the comments made by PC Parsons. When asked why they were under arrest, he responded "*well that's what I'm trying to figure out*" and his statement that he needed to "*figure out what we've got.*"

### *Use of Force*

78. The Officer ordered Child A and B to the ground<sup>2</sup>. The Panel did not consider that this was necessary, reasonable or proportionate in light of the circumstances the officer found himself in. By that point he was supported by other Officers, who could have assisted him in finding out further information. As noted above, Child A and B appeared compliant. The command ordering them to the ground was excessive and furthermore appeared to be a breach of the guidance provided in the NPCC PSM module on communication, with reasonable force a final option. There was no real attempt to deescalate any situation and communicate. Ordering them to the floor was a serious escalation.
79. If the Officer had formed the view that he had sufficient grounds to arrest Child A and B, he should have informed them of this. He failed to do so and this was a further serious error of judgment. One of the purposes of informing a suspect that they are under arrest is to give notice that force might be used upon them. By failing to do so they were not given such notice. The Panel did not accept that, in view of their apparent disposition as seen on the CCTV and body worn video, that telling them that they were under arrest would have provoked a violent reaction. Furthermore, the Panel considered that there would be few cases where concern about a suspect's reaction would justify not informing them they were under arrest and the grounds for such an arrest.
80. PC Parsons also failed to explain to them why they were required to follow his commands. Ordering them to ground, instead of informing them they

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<sup>2</sup> The NPCC PSM module on communication provides a five-step communication model for officers in cases of resistance whereby individuals are given every chance to comply with the officer's requests. The initial steps focus on asking the individual to comply with the officer's request, then to explain why the request has been made and what is required from them. The final step states that reasonable force may be the only option left in a case of continued resistance.

were under arrest and the reason for that arrest, was not a proportionate use of force. The order in fact escalated a deescalating situation. Both children did not appear to understand why they were being ordered to the ground and/or why they under arrest, as demonstrated by their subsequent questioning.

81. The Officer then used his baton to strike both Child A and B. The Panel did not consider that these actions were necessary, reasonable or proportionate, because

- a. That the appropriate course would have been one of finding out further information as both Child A and B were compliant.
- b. They were not told why they had to get on the floor.
- c. That the Officer had failed to indicate to either Child A or B that they were under arrest and thus put them on notice as to the fact that force was going to be used upon them. They were not informed of the reasons for that arrest.
- d. That the use of the baton to both Child A and Child B was generally excessive, in that the Officer with the assistance of other officers could have brought Child A and Child B to the ground without the use of the baton, which should have been a last resort, by lifting their legs. The Officer was in fact able to do this with Child A.
- e. While Child A did struggle against the officers, no explanation was given of why he had to get on the floor. He had witnessed Child B being struck with a baton, when there had been no explanation as to why this had occurred. He offered physical resistance when

ordered to the ground but he was not aggressive towards the officers.

- f. While the use of the baton to the legs was the least amount of force that could have been used with the use of the baton, it was not reasonable in the circumstances.
- g. The second baton strike to Child A was wholly unjustified.

#### *Use of Handcuffs*

82. The Panel found that keeping both Child A and B in handcuffs following the return to the police station was unnecessary, not reasonable and disproportionate. Child B remained in handcuffs until 20.37 and Child A until 21.12, some 1 hour 5 minutes and 1 hour 30 minutes respectively. By this point both Child A and B had been searched and found to be carrying sweets, but no weapons. Both appeared to be compliant from the CCTV from the police station. Both had been identified as children. They were in the confines of the police station and their parents had been called. The Panel determined that there was no justification in keeping the handcuffs on them for any extended period of time, as occurred here. It amounted to an excessive use of force.
83. For the reasons given above, the Panel determined the standards relating to use of force, authority, respect and control, orders and instructions, duties and responsibilities and discreditable conduct had all been breached.

#### *Honesty and Integrity*

84. The Panel noted what was said by the Officer in the aftermath of the arrests (*“ten people pointed you out and said that you were beating up children”* and *“report from about 15 different members of the public...two young black boys beating up children”*) and later that day (*“concerned member of the public stated there are 2 Somalian males beating up children on the jubilee line...10 other members of the public called me and told me the exact same information.”*) The Panel determined that this was an inaccurate exaggeration. However, in the circumstances the Panel did not consider it dishonest, as the Officer had heard the information over the tannoy and a number of members of the public had indicated there was a situation along the platform. There was a proper basis and foundation for his later exaggeration. While the Officer again repeated the error in his electronic notebook, he had done this without the benefit of reviewing his own body worn video or other CCTV. He had been trying to recall events earlier that day and had in effect repeated his earlier error from that day. Again the Panel found the record in his notebook was inaccurate but did not find it was dishonest. In all the circumstances the Panel determined that the standard of honesty and integrity had not been breached.

### **Approach to the Standards**

85. The Panel has considered the facts as relied upon within the Regulation 30 Notice and the facts found by the Panel as set out above.
86. For the reasons noted above, the Panel determined the following standards had been breached – Use of Force; Authority, Respect and

Courtesy; Orders and Instructions; Duties and Responsibilities; Discreditable Conduct.

87. The following standards were not breached: Honesty and Integrity; Equality and Diversity.

### **Gross Misconduct or Misconduct**

88. Having found breaches of the standards as set out above, the Panel has carefully considered whether the breaches amounted to gross misconduct or misconduct.<sup>3</sup>
89. We have again reminded ourselves of the full circumstances of this case and the breaches of the standard that we have found.
90. The Panel concluded that the facts and multiple breaches of the standards as set out above individually and collectively did amount to gross misconduct and were arguably so serious as to justify dismissal.
91. The Panel noted in particular his failure to properly investigate the matter once Child A and B were compliant; his failure to inform Child A and B they were under arrest; his failure to inform Child A and B why they had to get on the ground; the use of force; the level of force used, in particular the baton strike to Child B, the second baton strike to Child A and extended wearing of handcuffs. The Panel also noted PC Parsons' lack of insight and regret as to what had taken place.

### **Outcome**

#### *Preliminary Matters*

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<sup>3</sup> Under the 2020 Regulations, "misconduct" means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour not so serious as to justify disciplinary action" and "gross misconduct" means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour that is so serious as to justify dismissal";

92. An application was made by the AA to adduce a previous adverse finding against PC Parsons, namely a finding of gross misconduct by another Panel in relation to excess use of force (a spray). The incident took place in 2019, with the hearing in 2020. The finding was made, this Panel was told, in April 2020. The two year final written warning expired in April 2022.

93. 10.44 of the Home Office guidance provides that Panels should have regard to an officer's previous record of service, including previous disciplinary outcomes, unless they had been expunged. §15 of the Police Regulations 2003 provides that matters become expunged (§4 (B), (b) (i)) after a further 18 months, in other words in this case by October 2023.

94. The application by the AA to rely upon the adverse finding was rejected by the Panel. The Panel determined that it was not fair to the Officer to refer to his previous finding where the AA had not sought to adduce the matter during the hearing, which had been open to it. The Officer had not had the opportunity to comment upon the matter during his evidence. The excessive force related to a spray and not a baton, where different considerations may have been at issue. The Officer had deliberately not introduced any evidence relating to his character during the hearing to avoid his character becoming an issue between the parties. Furthermore, the Panel determined that pursuant to the HOG and 2003 regulations that the Panel should not have regard to it, in that the matter was now expunged and had been since October 2023. The Panel

indicated that it would put the matter out of its mind, as a professional panel was required to do, when considering the issue of outcome.

95. The Panel was supplied however with a record of service, which the Panel took into account.

#### *Guidance – College of Policing Guidance*

96. We have been reminded of and reviewed the latest version of College of Policing Guidance on outcomes in police misconduct proceedings ('the guidance')<sup>4</sup> and Regulation 42 of the BTP Conduct Regulations.

97. We have also considered the three-stage, structured approach in Fuglers LLP v SRA [2014] EWHC 179 (Admin) when assessing outcome, at paragraph 28.

98. *“There are three stages to the approach which should be adopted by a Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal in determining sanction. The first stage is to assess the seriousness of the misconduct. The second stage is to keep in mind the purpose for which sanctions are imposed by such a tribunal. The third stage is to choose the sanction which most appropriately fulfils that purpose for the seriousness of the conduct in question.”*

99. This three-stage approach is reflected in the guidance. As to the first stage (seriousness), the Guidance directs attention to four central reference points, as stated in Fuglers at paragraph 29 and now repeated in the Guidance at part 4:

- a. The officer’s culpability for the misconduct;
- b. The harm caused by the misconduct;

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<sup>4</sup> College of Policing’s ‘Guidance on outcomes in police misconduct proceedings’, 2022.

- c. The existence of any aggravating factors;
  - d. The existence of any mitigating factors.
100. As to the second stage, keep in mind the threefold purpose of the police conduct regime:
- a. maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the police service;
  - b. uphold high standards in policing and deter misconduct;
  - c. protect the public.
101. As set out at part 4 - *“The most important purpose of imposing disciplinary sanctions is to maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the policing profession as a whole. This dual objective must take precedence over the specific impact that the sanction has on the individual whose misconduct is being sanctioned”*.
102. As to the third stage, choosing the sanction which most appropriately fulfils that purpose, we have considered the entire range of the disciplinary sanctions open to us. We have reminded ourselves that the object of misconduct is not to punish Police Officers and that the Panel should consider less severe outcomes before more severe outcomes, choosing the least severe outcome which adequately addresses the issues identified while protecting the public interest. We have kept in mind the purpose of imposing sanctions and the need to choose a sanction which most appropriately fulfils that purpose for the seriousness of the conduct in question.

### **Matters Relevant to Outcome**

103. The Panel has considered again the full detail of this case and the entirety of the factual context. The Panel also took into account the Parties respective submissions.

104. The Panel noted that following a finding of gross misconduct it could impose a final written warning of between 2 – 5 years or dismissal without notice. We were advised that there was no written warning nor final written warning in force at the time of the severity assessment.

### **Culpability – General Observations**

105. The guidance provides that *“the more culpable or blameworthy the behaviour in question, the more serious the misconduct and the more severe the likely outcome. Conduct that is intentional, deliberate, targeted or planned will generally be more culpable than conduct that has unintended consequences, although the consequences of an officer’s actions will be relevant to the harm caused. Where harm is unintentional, culpability will be greater if the officer could reasonably have foreseen the risk of harm.”*

### **Harm**

106. In relation to reputational harm this *“will likely undermine public confidence in policing. Harm does not need to be suffered by a defined individual or group to undermine public confidence. Where an officer commits an act that would harm public confidence if the circumstances were known to the public, take this into account... How such behaviour would be, or has been, perceived by the public will be relevant, whether or not the*

*behaviour was known about at the time... A factor of the greatest importance is the impact of the misconduct on the standing and reputation of the profession as a whole..."*

## **Assessment**

107. The Panel considered the three stage approach in relation to the allegations and applied the CoP guidance set out above.
108. In relation to culpability, the Panel took into account all of the matters set out above, including that this was a fast moving situation and the initial information that the Officer had received. The conduct had not been planned or targeted. It was only deliberate in the widest sense of the word. The Panel accepted the force used was as a consequence of significant errors of judgment by PC Parsons, which as an experienced officer should not have occurred. However, the Panel determined that his culpability was at medium level because no force should have been used at all in the circumstances and the level of force used was on any view excessive. There was a foreseeable risk of harm by use of his baton. The Panel did not agree that communication and/or other methods had been exhausted before force was used. While the Panel accepted that other officers could have removed the handcuffs at the station, that as the main arresting officer with years of experience he should have ensured that this was done and his failure to do so resulted in children remaining in handcuffs for a wholly excessive period.
109. In relation to harm, the Panel noted that there would have been some physical harm to the Children but the Panel had not been presented with

any actual evidence of this. The Panel determined that the real harm was the harm done to the reputation of BTP, in that the use of excessive force by its Officers would harm its reputation, particularly where it involved children. The use of excessive force by Officers generally was a matter of national concern.

110. The Panel was anxious not to double count in relation to aggravating and mitigating factors, but noted the age of the children/ vulnerability and the lack of apparent insight and remorse demonstrated by the Officer during his evidence (although he did indicate today from his Counsel that he would reflect on the matter with care). The Panel also noted that this was a single incident occurring while on duty for a long period of time and that he had been generally acting in good faith.

## **Conclusion**

111. Having considered carefully all of the circumstances and in particular chapter 4 of the College of Policing Guidance we have concluded that the most appropriate outcome is a Final Written Warning for a period of 5 years.

112. We find that the above outcome is the most appropriate and lowest possible sanction possible in the circumstances of this case.

113. Accordingly, the Panel was satisfied that

- a. the breaches of the standards, as we have found, were nonetheless compatible with his continued service as a Police Officer of the British Transport Police and

- b. that the need to protect public confidence in and the reputation of the British Transport Police, the need to maintain high professional standards and the need to protect the public and officers and staff by preventing similar misconduct in the future is appropriately served by the outcome of a final written warning, for a period of 5 years.

**Cameron Brown KC (Chair),  
Superintendent Morgan (PPM)  
and  
Karen McArthur (IPM)**

**25 March 2026**

## Appeal Notice

You have a right of appeal to the Appropriate Authority, but may only appeal on the following grounds:

- The finding or disciplinary sanction imposed was unreasonable;
- There is critical new evidence that could not have reasonably have been considered at the misconduct hearing; or
- There was a serious breach of the procedures set out in the British Transport Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 or other unfairness which could have materially affected the finding or decision on disciplinary action

If you wish to appeal you must do so in writing to the British Transport Police Authority. Please email [btpa-enquiries@btp.police.uk](mailto:btpa-enquiries@btp.police.uk) within 10 working days of receipt of this letter. Your letter should state the grounds for appeal, whether you require a transcript of the hearing in whole or part and whether or not you consent to the appeal being dealt with without a hearing.

**In addition to the above, it is important you are aware that following the conclusion of this misconduct hearing which has resulted in a formal final written warning in accordance with the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for Vetting section 8.50.1<sup>1</sup>, PSD will undertake a review of your vetting clearance. The vetting review will take into consideration your suitability to retain your level of vetting clearance relevant to the substantive role you undertake. The result of this process could result in no change to your existing clearance level or potentially the removal of the vetting clearance which in turn may impact on your continued ability to continue in your role with BTP.**