



PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Common scenarios and how to keep yourself safe

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Karakia Tuwhera

E te whānau o PPTA Te Wehengarua

For this gathering of PPTA Te Wehengarua

Whāia te mātauranga kia mārama

Seek knowledge for understanding

Kia whai take ngā mahi katoa

Have purpose in all that you do

Tū māia, tū kaha

Stand tall, be strong

Aroha atu, aroha mai

Let us show respect

Tātou i a tātou katoa

For each other



Where can I find out about professional boundaries?

- Professional Standards and Code of Professional Responsibility
 - Including the 'Examples in Practice' document
- Teaching Council podcast episode
- School policies and staff handbook
- Specific PLD courses (e.g. Professional Insight)
- PCT or induction meetings
- Professional reading
 - This is useful for evidence against the teaching standards when you apply for full certification
- Peer review in mentoring meetings as issues arise
- Deans, house teachers, counsellor for pastoral professional boundaries



Teaching your whānau members

Involvement in sports groups or
community groups outside of school

Violence between students

School trips/camps

Staff parties

***Choose 1-2 areas and
discuss in pairs:***
**How could professional
boundaries be crossed
in these areas?**

Social media

Comforting distressed
students

Extra-curricular groups

Venting to colleagues

Prizes or gifts

Gatherings with friends
who you work with

Texts or topics studied in class

Example 1 – netball team

Max has been asked to coach a netball team at their school.

When Max meets with the students in their team, the students explain that their last coach had an Instagram group chat to let them and their parents know about game times or when practices were cancelled.

Sometimes the group chat conversation gets a bit off-topic between students, but Max doesn't engage in this and just posts about game times.

Max drives the team to an away game in the school van. Max is frustrated when a few of the students' parents don't come to pick them up from school afterwards and they have to wait around until the parents arrive.

Max invites parents who have Instagram to join the group chat so that there is another channel of communication. One of the parents asks in the group chat if their child and her friend can be dropped off in the school van after the next away game. Max thinks this is a great idea since this is one of the parents that they had to wait for last time.

The Head of Sport contacts Max, reporting that the mother of the friend who was dropped off at the student's house didn't want her daughter staying with that family. She has complained to the school.

What could Max have done differently?

“Sometimes the group chat conversation gets a bit off-topic between students, but Max doesn’t engage in this and just posts about game times.”

What are some other channels Max could have used?

What should Max have done when the conversation went ‘off-topic’?



“Max is frustrated when one of the students’ parents don’t come to pick them up from school afterwards and they have to wait around until the parents arrive.”

What should Max have done while waiting with the student?

What could Max have done if the parent didn’t arrive?



“One of the parents asks in the group chat if their child and her friend can be dropped off in the school van after the next away game. Max thinks this is a great idea since this is the parent that they had to wait for last time.”

How could Max be communicating with parents?

How could the Head of Sport help Max to manage the drop-offs?

Example 2 – community theatre

- Chris is a teacher active in a community theatre group and helps with lighting, backstage, sound and costumes. Students from another College are also involved. After a particularly good rehearsal Chris suggests they all attend a performance at another theatre to see how they stage a show. Chris buys tickets and drives the students to the show which is R18.
- The Principal of the students' college has contacted Chris's Principal demanding an investigation

What could Chris have done differently?

“Chris suggests they all attend a performance at another theatre to see how they stage a show ”

Has Chris broken any boundaries ?

How could Chris manage this situation?



“Chris buys tickets and drives the students to the show which is R18.”

What are the risks for Chris here?

How can they be managed?

Example 3 – disagreement over a book

Sam is teaching a Year 10 class about narrative structure and morals of stories. To do this, Sam is inviting students to critique the stereotypes found in fairytales. Sam invites students to research the original versions of fairytales to show students how shocking these stories used to be to scare children into following the moral messages.

Sam's HoD speaks to Sam after a department meeting about "ruining the children's innocence and love of stories". Sam thinks the critical lens that the students are starting to apply to the stories is important and Sam doesn't want to remove the 'shock factor'. Sam thinks that the HoD is bringing their conservative viewpoint into the discussion, so Sam rants to a colleague who has complained about the same thing in the past.

The Deputy Principal asks Sam to respond to a complaint from the HoD about "disrespecting my values" and "undermining my leadership".

What could Sam have done differently?

“Sam invites students to research the original versions of fairytales to show students how shocking these stories used to be to scare children into following the moral messages.”

How could Sam have taught this differently?



“Sam thinks that the HoD is bringing their conservative viewpoint into the discussion, so Sam rants to a colleague who has complained about the same thing in the past.”

How could Sam have addressed this with the HoD?

Was Sam out of line in speaking to a colleague about this if this colleague had previously spoken about the same thing?

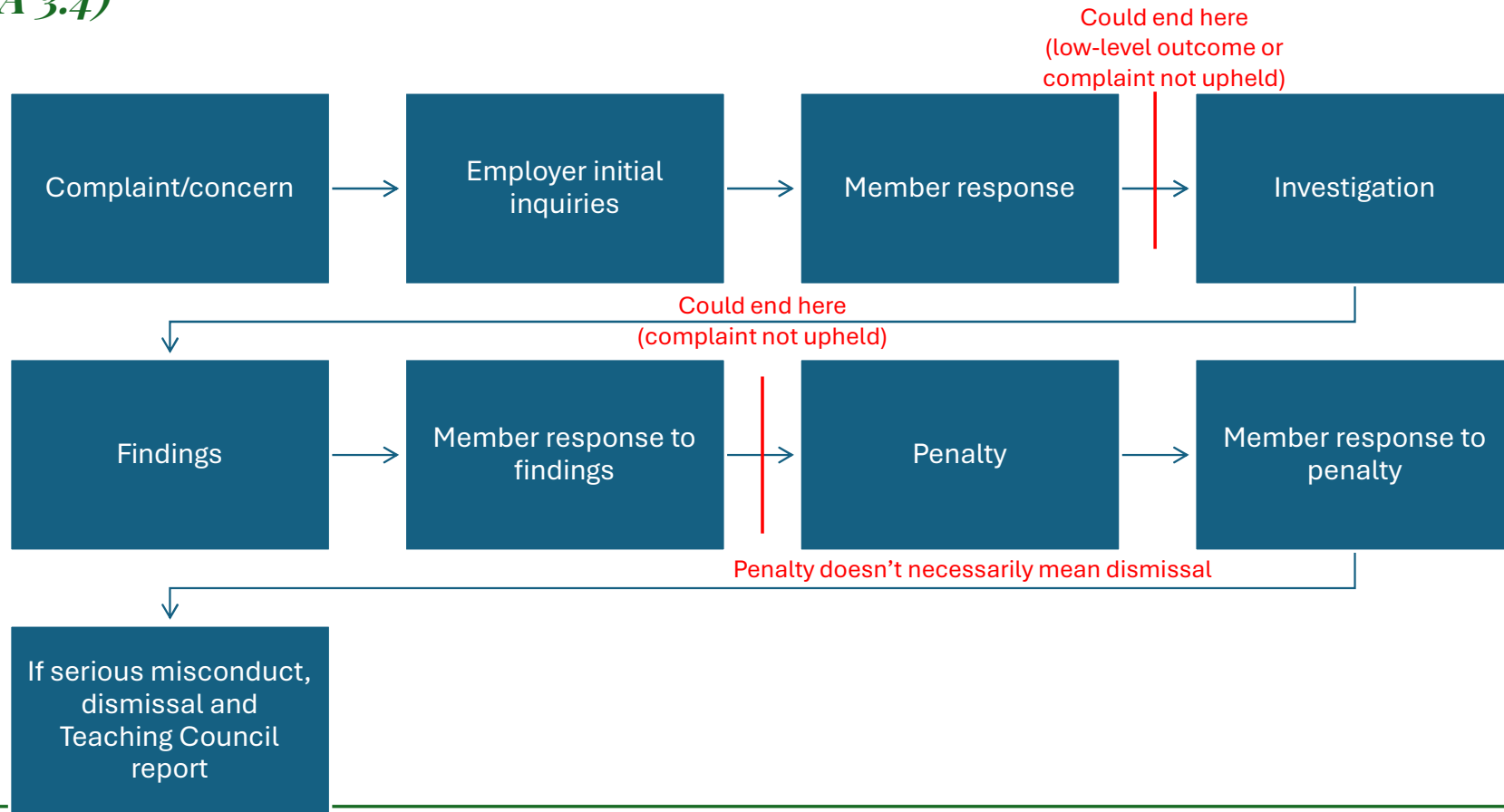
“The Deputy Principal asks Sam to respond to a complaint from the HoD about “disrespecting my values” and “undermining my leadership”.”

How should Sam respond?



Teacher Conduct and Discipline

(STCA 3.4)



Teacher Conduct and Discipline

(STCA 3.4)

- Employer (Principal) can make “initial inquiries” to figure out whether a process is needed
- Could be resolved informally if “the facts are clear and acknowledged”
- Must be informed of complaint (including who it’s from)
- Must be allowed to respond in writing (and/or verbally)
- Do not have to respond straight away
- Employer then needs to investigate before imposing any penalty
- Could be suspended/put on alternative duties during investigation if required by “the welfare and interests of any student attending the school or of any teacher at the school”
- Being directed on leave is akin to a suspension
- Must be allowed to respond to proposed penalty
- Can be dismissed without notice if serious misconduct

Clause 3.4.5

The following are examples of matters that may warrant disciplinary action. This is not an exhaustive list nor is it intended that every such matter listed here must always be treated as a disciplinary matter. Each case must be assessed on its individual merits.

- (a) Disobedience of lawful orders or instructions.
- (b) Negligence, carelessness or indolence in carrying out her/his duties as a teacher.
- (c) Gross inefficiency as a teacher.
- (d) Misuse or failure to take proper care of school property or equipment in her/his custody or charge.
- (e) Absence from duty without valid excuse.
- (f) Conduct in her/his capacity as a teacher or otherwise which is unbecoming to a member of the teaching service.



Teaching Council reports

- Serious misconduct must be reported by employer
- Competence issues must be reported (once employer has done own process)
- Criminal convictions that have a penalty of greater than 3 months imprisonment must be reported to the teacher to the Council
- Reports can come from:
 - Employer
 - Public (including colleagues/students)
 - Police/other agency
 - Self
 - Teaching Council can make own referral



Remember the 4Ps

Peer

- Talk to a trusted colleague if you feel you may have crossed a professional boundary
- Be mindful that the colleague could raise concerns with employer

Principal

- Front-foot any concerns: ask for advice from Principal if you're in a situation
- Be accountable: tell the Principal asap if something has happened

PPTA

- You do not have to respond to a complaint or concern 'on the spot'
- You can say that you are seeking advice and call your Field Officer
- If you can't get hold of your Field Officer, ask to reschedule

Police

- You do not need to speak in an interview with legal representation
- PPTA can arrange for you to have a legal representative at your interview (Note that legal advice may be limited to only this interview)

Karakia whakamutunga

Kua mutu ā mātou mahi

Mō tēnei wā

Manaakitia mai mātou katoa

Ō mātou hoa

Ō mātou whānau

Āio ki te Aorangi

Āio ki te whenua

Tihei Mauri Ora

Our work has finished

for the time being

Protect us all

Our friends

Our family

Peace to the universe

Peace to the land

Let there be life

