



STAFF INTERACTIONS WITH PUPILS

Purpose and Scope

Turtle Mountain School Division is committed to providing safe, caring, respectful and inclusive school environments for its students, staff and community that foster and maintain respectful and responsible behaviours.

The purpose of this procedure is to safeguard students from harm, abuse, and exploitation while ensuring staff, coaches, and volunteers are aware of how they can protect themselves and students, as required by *The Public Schools Amendment Act (Safe Schools)*. This procedure establishes clear, professional boundaries for appropriate and inappropriate interactions between students and staff, both **on and off** school sites, and details procedures for identifying, preventing, reporting, and addressing violations.

Definitions

- **Staff/Staff Member:** All school and school division employees, including administration, teaching and support staff, as well as coaches, school volunteers, teacher candidates and practical candidates.
- **Interaction:** All forms of verbal, non-verbal, or digital communication or any form of contact between staff and students, whether intentional or unintentional, occurring at any time or place.
- **Boundaries:** Professional behaviour by staff members when interacting with students. Recognizing that staff hold a legal position of trust and power in relation to students in all circumstances, boundaries serve as critical guideposts for defining what is acceptable behaviour in the context of staff-pupil interactions.
- **Property/Properties:** Any physical, electronic, stationary, moveable or vehicular properties.
- **Rule of Two:** A practice of having two adults present during any interaction with a student(s), both during and outside of the school day, to protect the student(s) and themselves from potentially vulnerable situations.

Appropriate Interactions

Interactions between students and staff, both on and off school sites, must always be guided by professional ethics and the best interests of the student. Interactions are to be appropriate for the student's age and developmental level, respectful of the student's dignity, diversity, and personal boundaries, and transparent and observable to others (e.g., use the Rule of Two and/or an open-door policy). Staff must maintain and reinforce clear, professional boundaries at all times, both during and outside of school hours, and occur with parental consent when possible, in advance of student interactions taking place.

Recommended Best Practices

The following recommended best practices are intended to guide staff-student interactions on and off school property (including staff and student property), before and after the school day:

- Avoid inviting pupils to non-school/private property, unless supervisor and parental approvals are obtained in advance.
- Maintain transparency and avoid situations that could create perceptions of impropriety.

Cross Reference	Board Policy: 14 Safe and Respectful Schools Procedures: A-50 Protocol for TMSD Staff Concerning Child Protection and Child Abuse Disclosure B-30 Acceptable Student and Staff Use of Information and Communication Technology C-70 Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedure C-70 Violence Procedure Forms: Resources: ¹ Respect in Schools: https://www.respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-school Respect in Sport: https://www.respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-sport Commit 2 Kids: https://commit2kids.ca/en	
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- Use approved communication channels for all electronic interactions.
- Keep emotional attachments within professional boundaries.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact, excessive attention, or favouritism.

During the School Day and for School-Related Activities

While on school property or any other place where staff are responsible for students, staff shall be diligent in maintaining professional boundaries, and interactions shall be limited to those necessary for student learning, instruction, supervision, safety, and legitimate school business associated with their role.

Interactions Outside the School Day

Staff may have family/community interactions with pupils. It is strongly recommended to follow the above-noted 'Recommended Best Practices' for these situations, and to do so only with verifiable parental consent. Staff are encouraged to minimize communications outside the school day and copy parents/guardians on any electronic communication outside school hours, weekends, or breaks.

Inappropriate Interactions

Strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to termination of employment and referral to legal authorities. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following interactions:

- Inviting students to private property without required approvals.
- Sharing personal or sensitive information unrelated to instruction/school activity.
- Giving gifts of significant value or an intimate nature.
- Engaging in inappropriate social media use (refer to [Admin Procedure B-30 Acceptable Student and Staff Use of Information and Communication Technology](#)).
- Asking students to keep secrets or withholding information from parents/legal guardians.
- Making sexual or profane jokes and/or comments.
- Starting any romantic or sexual relationship with a pupil (**explicitly prohibited**).

Mandatory Training

Abuse prevention training equips staff with the knowledge and skills to recognize, prevent, and respond to inappropriate interactions and abuse. It reinforces professional boundaries, ensures compliance with provincial legislation, and promotes a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Procedures

- Training must be completed at least once every four years, as follows:
 - **Sexual Abuse Prevention Program:** All staff and volunteers (e.g., Respect in School).
 - **School Sport Abuse Prevention Program:** All coaches and sport volunteers (e.g., Respect in Sport).
- School Administration maintains records; Division HR monitors compliance and retains records for a minimum of 7 years.

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Reporting & Complaint Procedures

Reporting suspected inappropriate interactions is a legal and ethical obligation. It ensures student safety, transparency, and compliance with provincial law. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action and potential criminal liability under *The Public Schools Act*, *Criminal Code of Canada*, and *Child and Family Services Act*.

Procedures

- **Students and/or Parents/Legal Guardians:** Strongly encouraged to notify the Principal or Superintendent if they believe a staff member may have engaged or is engaging in interactions that violate this procedure.
- **Staff Members:**
 - Must immediately report any known or suspected inappropriate interactions or abuse to their supervisor, Principal, and/or Superintendent.
 - If a student's behaviour toward an adult is, or appears to be, of a sexual nature, the staff member must let the student know the behaviour is inappropriate and not allow it to continue.
 - Staff who are uncertain about whether specific interactions might violate this procedure, or who find themselves in a difficult situation related to boundaries, shall promptly consult with their supervisor, Principal, or Superintendent for clarification and guidance.
- Reports will lead to actions taken to ensure student safety, prompt investigation, and, if needed, involvement of external authorities. Parents/legal guardians may be notified based on legal and privacy rules.
- Violators face disciplinary action, while good faith complainants are protected.
- Failure to report may violate legal obligations and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Information Dissemination

School Administration must make this procedure publicly available at the start of each school year via: school website, student/parent handbook, and annual communication (email or newsletter).

Compliance & Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually and updated as required to comply with ministerial regulations under *The Public Schools Act*. All record-keeping will comply with FIPPA and PHIA.

Policy and Legislative References

- [The Public Schools Act Sections 47.1.1\(1\) to 47.1.1\(7\), 47.1.2\(1\)](#)
- [The Child and Family Services Act Part III, Sections 17, 18](#)
- [Criminal Code of Canada Sections 153, 273.1\(2\)\(c\), PARTS V and VIII](#)
- [Manitoba Regulation 37/2012 \(Reporting Bullying\)](#)
- [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport](#)
- [Coaching Association of Canada – “Rule of Two”](#)
- [Sport Manitoba – “Keeping Kids Safe”](#)
- MSBA Reference Guide: Staff Interactions with Students & Human Trafficking, Child Exploitation, & Non-Consensual Intimate Images in Manitoba Schools
[:https://www.mbschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Staff-Pupil-Interactions-Trafficking-Exploitation-Intimate-Images-Reference-Guides-Fall-2025.pdf](https://www.mbschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Staff-Pupil-Interactions-Trafficking-Exploitation-Intimate-Images-Reference-Guides-Fall-2025.pdf)

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