



'HANDS ON' CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

This Policy includes the Junior School and Senior School

Links to other policies:

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy; Staff Code of Conduct

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and it may, in some circumstances be proper or necessary to touch a pupil. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper and necessary:

- Holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line to guide them
- When comforting a distressed pupil
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or physical techniques during vocational classes
- To give first aid/medical investigation/treatment by medical staff

The following guidelines are in place to assist staff who may be working with pupils in a one-to-one situation.

Code of Conduct during One-to-One lessons, tutorials and meetings

With pupils of either sex, especially during adolescent years, the following guidelines apply:

- Leave the door of the room open.
- Keep a clear distance between pupil and staff.
- Invite another pupil to attend if you suspect the situation may become emotionally charged.
- End the conversation if there are signals of emotional dependence.
- Report any ambiguous behaviour by a pupil to the Director of Studies or other SLT member.
- Keep notes of the content of interviews with dates and outcomes.
- Pass the pupil on to another member of staff if any signs from the pupil make the member of staff uneasy.

During training and teaching and particularly for the performing arts, some physical contact may occur between staff and pupils. It may be necessary to physically guide

a pupil towards becoming aware of correct muscle actions, breathing techniques and postural issues.

“Hands On” Guidelines

At the start of each term, and for all new pupils, a general question should be asked to check for permission to touch if contact is necessary during classes. Opportunity should be given for any child to refuse permission (some home circumstances may have given the child an unfortunate experience). If contact during a class needs to be detailed and close to the front of the torso, a relaxed “May I?” should be asked when approaching a child.

- The intention behind all physical contact is professional and unambiguous.
- Any touching that occurs is clear, direct and necessary.
- Any pupil has the right to refuse to have “hands on” feedback at any time.
- Consideration will be given to the age of the pupil and the vulnerability of the adolescent years.
- If teachers are in close physical proximity of a pupil, it is advised to have several other pupils around, or another adult.
- All physical touching is to enhance the training.

Contact under any circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment.

Reviewed by Deborah Frost (Assistant Principal), September 2020

Next Review Date: September 2021