



Appropriate Touch Policy

Stalybridge Music Academy utilises an 'appropriate touch' policy rather than a 'no touch' policy as we believe that sometimes when teaching a musical instrument a demonstrating touch will show far more ably where finger placement and strength of pressure should be rather than a thousand words. Supportive and appropriate touching helps promote a strong teacher-student bond, promotes trust and facilitates learning and growth. It is vital to ensure that safeguarding techniques are utilised to maintain child safety and to minimise the risk of allegations being levied at staff.

This policy was developed to teach those who have for children under their care and responsibility how to protect themselves from misinterpretations of their physical contact with children, how to ensure that everyone is kept as safe as possible from compromising the safeguarding of child and mentor/ tutor. This policy outlines touches and situations that should be avoided if at all possible.

1. Nurturing touch is very important to developing a sound relationship with youth. Children should be touched appropriately on faces, hands, shoulders, head and thighs. Never touch a child in the area which should normally be covered by a bathing suit.
2. The following actions are considered unduly harsh punishment and are forbidden.
 - a. Verbal abuse
 - b. Rough handling
 - c. Shoving
 - d. Hair pulling
 - e. Shaking
 - f. Slapping
 - g. Spanking
 - h. Biting
 - i. Pinching
 - j. Hitting
 - k. Requiring a child to do anything that is demeaning to their character (hazing)
 - l. Requiring a child to say anything that is demeaning to their character
 - m. Tutors should never tickle children-it is over stimulating and is considered to be a deceptive device that may lead to more inappropriate touching. (fondling).
 - n. Tutors should never allow a child to stand between their legs when seated. Gently guide the child to your side. You may still speak eye to eye and comfort the child or talk quietly with them at your side when necessary.
 - o. Holding school age and older children on your lap is not appropriate. Holding a preschooler or toddler on your lap is appropriate for short time spans when comfort is needed.
 - p. All activities and practices should be scheduled so that all children are within view at all times .



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- q. Never kiss a child: Never let a child kiss you on the lips.
 - r. If anything happens that you believe may put you at risk of accusation by anyone, please do not keep this a secret!
 - s. The Safeguarding Lead should be informed and appropriate action (if deemed necessary) will be discussed with you.
 - t. Never take a single child to an area where they may not be observed by others.
 - u. First Aid should be administered as gently and respectfully as possible. Always ask for assistance if the child needs to be removed from a playing area.
 - v. Never take a child into a bathroom alone. If the child is too young to handle their own personal care needs, a parent or other adult assuming responsibility should be present at games and practices. (If a parent or other adult resuming responsibility is not present, another parent or adult must be present with you at all times while attending to a child, for your protection as well as the child's).
3. The child's rights should be respected at all times. In all work with children and young people staff should encourage children/young people to have a positive image of their own body.
 - a. No one should ever undertake a task unless they know how to do it. Just because staff or volunteers have done something with their own child, it must not be assumed that they can do it with a child or young person attending Stalybridge Music Academy.
 4. Any touch which is intended as "help" (e.g. helping a child with toileting needs) is to be as enabling and empowering as possible and the child should be permitted to do as much by themselves as possible.
 5. Children and young people must always be consulted about their views regarding touch and physical contact.
 - a. Their understanding and acceptance of touch needs to be explicit.
 - b. Staff and volunteers should check their practice by asking the child, particularly a child they haven't previously cared for, e.g. "Is it ok to do it this way?" "Can you do this?" Involve the child/young person as far as possible in their own intimate care and if the child or young person is able to help, give them every opportunity to do so.
 - c. It is important to avoid doing things that the child or young person can do alone.
 - d. If a child is fully dependent on you, talk with them about what you are doing and give them choices wherever possible.
 - e. Respect should be given for personal/ familial belief systems and requirements.
 - f. This can be helped by checking with them, their carers and the individual care information. If they want to change something they have been used to, it is important to let all those who are involved in their care know about the changes.
 - g. Every child and young person is to be treated with dignity and respect.



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- h. Privacy should be appropriate to the child's age, gender and situation.
- i. Privacy is an important issue.
- j. Children have a right to privacy and the members of staff need to recognise that right and take steps to ensure this is upheld.
- k. It is important to ensure that e.g. changing clothes is done in a safe and respectful manner. Identified places for changing are therefore helpful.
- l. Disabled children face barriers to their needs being met effectively, e.g. as a consequence of attitudes towards disability and varying levels of communication skills and awareness. As such, all staff and volunteers involved with the intimate care needs of disabled children need to be: sensitive to the child's individual needs and their methods of communication, aware that many children express their wishes and feelings through behaviour.

Any incidents involving touch which may be deemed inappropriate should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead who may ask for a Student Incident Form to be completed by the reporting member of staff.