

Vision:

Achievement for All.

Mission:

To fulfil this through developing every child's personality, abilities and talents to the full, to be the best they can be.

Sandgate School is committed to reflecting the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child in its policies and practice. The rights of the child considered to be especially relevant to this policy include:

Right 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Right 12: Respect for the views of the child.

Right 16: Right to privacy.

Right 23: Children with a disability.

Right 28: Right to education.

Right 29: Goals of education.

Right 31: Leisure, play and culture.

Right 34: Sexual exploitation.

Equality Impact

This policy recognises that all children require different levels of physical support at different times and that staff will treat children with dignity and professionalism regardless of this level of need.

Rationale

Touch is essential in order to provide sensitive, good quality teaching and care for the children and young people who learn at Sandgate School. Used in context, and with knowledge and understanding of its purpose, touch supports the development of our pupils throughout our curriculum.

Staff may have concerns and fears about the use of touch for various reasons. This policy sets out to clarify the reasons and conditions for touch so that it is a positive and helpful experience.

In order for touch to have a positive impact for our pupils, the adults at Sandgate School have the responsibility to;

- Have a positive regard towards pupils, asking permission to touch and showing respect.
- Be open at all times about touch; have awareness of appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Discuss and review approaches within class teams periodically
- Communicate their intentions when touch is involved
- Model appropriate touch
- Report any concerns about touch to the DSL or Deputies
- Have an awareness of gender, age and cultural appropriateness
- Give a range of touch experiences to our pupils- therapeutic, academic and social
- Be aware of individual needs and behaviour to keep touch a positive and helpful experience.

Author

Rib Williams

Date Adopted by School:

April 2016,

Review Dates:

January 2020, September 2021, Feb 2022, October 2024

Date for Next Review:

October 2026

Reasons for touching

The following are examples of the reasons for touch but this is not an exhaustive list of all possible reasons.

For education

Hand over hand, changing for swimming/hydro, swimming lesson, Tac Pac, putting equipment on for the lesson (bibs, harness, costume), story time, moving into equipment, outdoor and adventure activities, and physical education.

For communication

Signing, touch cues, massage, hand shaking, touching shoulder, and hand over hand.

For play

Chasing and catching, pushing on a swing, hand games, singing action songs/rhymes.

For therapy

Chest therapy, therapy programmes, helping pupils in and out of equipment, hydro therapy, aroma therapy, foot spa, putting on splints, manicure, pedicure, hoisting.

For care (Health Care Plan needed*, parent consent needed **,intimate care plan needed*, moving and handling plan needed****)**

Chest therapy**, dressing and undressing, wiping nose, cleaning face, cleaning teeth, brushing hair, feeding tube*, stoma care*, toileting***, showering***, washing hands, putting creams on genitals**, cutting nails**, cleaning nails, hoisting****, fitting slings/lap belt****, harness****, handling belt****, putting on sun cream**.

For medical and nursing care (Health Care Plan needed*)

Giving medication*, epipen*, midazolam*, first aid, blood sugar testing*.

For emotional support

Help hug, pat on shoulder, touch of hand.

For physical support

Balancing, walking/guided walking by holding hand, moving head, Sherborne movement, physical education.

For protection (Positive Behaviour Plan needed***)**

Road safety, Physical intervention to support behaviour*****, water safety, putting seat belts on, putting helmets on, fitting lap belts, harness, outdoor and adventure activities.

Assessment, recording and reporting.

Each pupil will have a touch audit, (Appendix 1) highlighting expected touch experiences. The touch audit will run alongside all pupils' profile and any risk assessment and together with some pupils' Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) and/or Health Care Plan.

Implementation

Staff need to be clear and open about why they are using touch and be able to explain their practice.

There must be clarity and transparency in issues of touch. The use of touch should be discussed openly and regularly between staff.

As far as possible, the young person involved should consent to any touch given and staff should be sensitive to any verbal and non-verbal communication they give that might indicate touch is not wanted. This is particularly pertinent for children and young people with profound physical needs, who experience high levels of touch. It should always be considered by staff that for touch to provide positive experiences it should be consensual.

Staff need to make a judgement about when and where they give touch and the type of touch they give and receive from children and young people at Sandgate School. Staff need to consider how their touch may be interpreted by others.

People of any age can want and need physical support/touch. At Sandgate School we believe that it is important to balance age, gender and cultural differences and appropriateness with the developmental age and emotional and communication needs of the individual.

The young people we support should be given opportunities to touch each other while interacting and playing as would happen naturally for any child or young person. Attention should always be given to ensure that both parties are happy with this. Similarly, children and young people who experience a majority of touch which is physical support for example, should also be given touch for other positive purposes such as emotional support.

Staff should be sensitive to any changes in the young person's behaviour (over excitement or negative reactions) that might indicate the need to reduce or withdraw touch.

Staff must be aware of potential hazards in respect of sexual issues. Staff must be sensitive to the danger of touch being misunderstood and triggering sexual arousal and must be alert to all feedback signals from the person they are working with.

The young people we support may occasionally inadvertently touch intimate parts of a member of staff's body when there is no sexual intent or understanding. The member of staff should withdraw without giving significant negative feedback in this situation and the incident should be discretely discussed and recorded if necessary on CPoms.

It is never appropriate for staff to touch a young person's intimate body areas except as part of intimate or medical care. When this is necessary, an Intimate Care Plan will be in place. (Intimate body parts are the chest area and stomach area down to the groin).

Sometimes the young people we support do deliberately touch intimate parts of a member of staff or other pupils or themselves. In this situation staff need to follow the Positive Behaviour Support Plan and the incident should be logged on CPoms. If this is a new behaviour and there is not a current Positive Behaviour Support Plan, one will be written by the class teacher with the support of SLT if needed, for discussion with, and agreement by, parents.

Having other staff around is an effective way of safeguarding for staff and pupils however there are times when staff are on their own with a pupil either through an incidental moment, intimate care or a planned activity. It is good practice to inform other staff on these occasions.

If staff are in any doubt about issues concerning appropriate touch or observe any practice that causes concern they should discuss this with the class teacher or SLT.

Contra-indicators

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If a child is required to move, e.g. to sit down, move to another chair, staff should always request this before providing any physical prompt. Children should not be moved by the wrist (the exception would be to prevent a dangerous situation). If it is considered necessary to support a child's movement through a 'caring C' rather than a gentle proximal guide, this should be indicated within a PBSP. Staff should ensure that a 'caring C' does not become a 'closed O'.

Support for staff


If staff, at any level, are unsure of appropriate touch, this can be discussed with:

- The class teacher
- Any member of the Senior Leadership team

Review of the Policy.

This policy will be reviewed biennially or sooner if research or legislation requires.

Appendix 1

		TOUCH AUDIT NAME:	
		DATE:	(review annually or more often if appropriate)
Reasons for Touching	Applicable	N/A	Comments/notes (if needed)
For education			
Hand over hand			
Changing for swimming/hydro, swimming lesson			
Tac Pac			
Putting equipment on for the lesson (bibs, harness, costume)			
Story time,			
Moving into equipment			
Sherborne			
Outdoor and adventure activities			
Physical education			
For communication			
Signing			
Touch cues,			
Hand shaking,			
Touching shoulder			
Stroking cheek			
High five			
For play			
Chasing and catching			
Pushing on a swing			
Hand games			
Singing action songs/rhymes			
For therapy			

Chest therapy			
therapy programmes			
putting pupils in and out of equipment			
aroma therapy			
foot spa			
putting on splints/AFO			
manicure			
pedicure			
hoisting			
fitting slings/lap belt			
harness			
<u>For care (*Health Care Plan needed, **parent consent needed, intimate care plan needed***)</u>			
Feeding peg*/mouth			
dressing and undressing			
Toileting***			
Showering***			
washing hands			
putting creams on genitals**			
wiping nose			
cleaning face			
cleaning teeth			
brushing hair			
cutting nails/ cleaning nails**			
<u>For medical and nursing care (* Health Care Plan needed,)</u>			
Giving medication**, epipen*, midazolam*			
First aid,			
<u>For emotional support</u>			
Hug			
Pat on shoulder/,arm			
Hand shake			
<u>For physical support</u>			
Balancing			
Walking/guided walking by holding hand			
Moving head			
<u>For protection (***) Behaviour Support Plan needed)</u>			
Road safety			
Team teach***			
Water safety			
Putting seat belts on			
Putting helmets on			
Fitting lap belts, harness			