



EduDiverse

Positive Touch Policy



Positive Touch Policy

Introduction & Purpose

This policy is the Positive Touch Policy for EduDiverse which applies to anyone working on behalf of EduDiverse including paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of all children and young people by actively promoting awareness, good practise and sound procedures.

Policy Principles & Values

There can be positive physical contact between staff and students. This is not physical contact that, in any way, seeks to establish authority over a student, but that which provides comfort; eases distress and signals care as would be expected between good parents and their children. Touch can be an important part of care and can give welcome reassurance or comfort to the student

Procedures

Staff must bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued and must therefore conduct themselves accordingly.

Staff should therefore respond to students in a way that gives expression to any appropriate level of care, and to provide comfort to ease a student's distress whilst at the same time protecting against the physical contact being misinterpreted by the student.

If any staff member, at any time, thinks that an action may have been misinterpreted, or may lead to a complaint, they need to feel confident to self-report so that the matter can be recorded fully, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead can assist any debrief with the student and their parents which may be necessary.

Any form of physical contact that a reasonable person would judge to be a conscious, self-aware, reasonable and a justifiable act is acceptable. Staff are advised to ensure their actions are acceptable to the student.

A high proportion of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties may have experienced sexual and/or physical abuse. Staff need to ensure that any physical contact is not misinterpreted.

If, at any time, a student demonstrates verbally or otherwise that he, or she, is not comfortable with physical contact, staff should respect this.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the staff member and in any way that may be considered indecent, or represent a misuse of authority.

Staff need to be aware that different cultural factors may apply.

Age and maturity factors should be considered in deciding appropriate physical contact.



Where a staff member feels that it would be inappropriate to respond to a student seeking physical contact, the reasons for denying this should be explained to the student, and the student should be comforted verbally as necessary

The issue of personal contact in general, should be raised in interviews and induction training for staff and discussed in staff development and supervision

Students should be given advice and guidance with regard to socially appropriate/inappropriate times/places/situations to seek physical comfort where necessary.

Any personal care or restrictive physical intervention should be carried out in line with the student's individual learning plan and risk assessment which are approved by parents and management

This policy was last reviewed on:

Date: 10/01/2023

Signed: James Ranson (DSL)