



## ST ALOYSIUS' COLLEGE

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# Physical Contact and Safe Touch Policy

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### **Physical Contact and Safe Touch Policy**

Across both curricular and co-curricular activities within St Aloysius College, some physical contact may be deemed necessary between staff and students. Physical contact may be required to assist an injured pupil, administer first-aid and in rare circumstances, safe touch is sometimes essential to aid effective teaching and learning i.e. awareness of correct muscle usage, correct posture, correct line and breathing techniques. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any necessary physical contact between staff and pupils is managed appropriately and in accordance with best practice.

### **Good Practice**

- Please assume responsibility for your working environment. Ensure you are in an open/visible environment avoiding private unobserved situations.
- If you feel vulnerable in your working environment, please inform the College Safeguarding Officer and your line manager.
- Any physical contact must be professional and unambiguous.
- Any physical contact must be direct and necessary, with student permission sought and granted.
- Any student has the right to refuse any 'hands-on' tuition. □ Treat all students equally, with respect and dignity.

### **Practices to be avoided**

- Avoid spending time alone with students away from others save in essential one to one situations when extreme care should be exercised.
- Avoid physical contact which could easily be misconstrued i.e. A comforting hug, arm/hand on shoulder, close proximity when looking at jotter/screen.
- Avoid prolonged touch, which lasts beyond the necessary time required to carry out the teaching/instruction involved.

### **Pupil to pupil contact**

- Where pupils are engaged in an activity which requires physical contact with their peers (i.e. supporting during sport, drama performance) staff responsible should ensure the contact is appropriate.
- Pupils should never be forced or feel pressured to take part in an activity where physical contact is likely to occur.
- Pupils should be given clear guidelines before the activity begins about the need for clear and appropriate contact. Advice given to pupils should take into account the Good Practice listed above.

### **Practices never to be sanctioned**

- Allowing or engaging in horseplay, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a student.
- Failing to act on and record any allegations made by a student.

### **Incidents that must be reported and recorded**

If any of the following occur during or in the context of a St Aloysius' College event or activity, it should immediately be reported to the designated Safeguarding Officer:

- If a student is injured or hurt in any way.
- If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a student attempts to touch you in an inappropriate manner.
- If a student makes any inappropriate or sexual advances towards you.

### **Subject Specific Advice**

See Appendices for specific guidance and links to advice from professional bodies relating to school activities where physical contact is most likely to occur.

### **Auxiliary Staff/temporary staff**

Department Heads must ensure that any visiting teachers or coaches are made aware of their duty to adhere to the College Physical Contact and Safe Touch Policy.

College staff responsible for bringing any visitor into the College is responsible for making the visitor aware of the Physical Contact and Safe Touch Policy.

### **Physical Restraint**

It is important that staff make no physical response to a child's misbehaviour or insolence that could be construed as aggressive or a form of punishment.

Restraint should involve only the minimum force necessary to protect children at imminent risk of harming themselves or others, or inflicting significant damage to property. Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort. Colleagues should, where possible, be summoned to witness and assist if necessary.

The most likely incident requiring physical intervention is a fight between pupils. If pupils do not respond to the arrival of a teacher or to verbal instructions, a teacher who pulls them apart and, using reasonable force, restrains them from renewing the affray, would not be considered to have used punishment (s.48A(3) *Education (Scotland) Act 1980*). Teachers should always assess the risk to their own safety before deciding to intervene.

Under the provisions of the *Children (Scotland) Act 1995*, it would be considered unjustifiable to use physical restraint to prevent a child leaving the classroom, or indeed the school premises, unless the age and maturity of the child indicated a clear danger in doing so. It is unlikely that there would ever be circumstances which would justify the physical obstruction of a Senior School pupil (although the situation should, of course, immediately be referred to senior staff).

Any situation which requires physical restraint should be reported to the College Safeguarding Officer immediately. A clear record of the incident must be written up and submitted on the same day.

Policy Owner: *Ryan Ferrie*

Policy updated or created: *08/10/2014 – updated 21/02/2015*

Policy reviewed: June 2016

This policy will be annually reviewed by: *Ryan Ferrie*



## APPENDIX 1

### Kindergarten– Safe Touch Policy

In St. Aloysius' Kindergarten, we believe that Safe Touch is a very important part of our work with children. The importance of touch should not be underestimated as it can:

- Demonstrate affection
- Show Acceptance
- Emphasise the spoken word
- Provide reassurance
- Offer an alternative to spoken communication
- Ensure safety and wellbeing

Therefore in line with the whole school Child Protection Policy sections 31 and 32 and based on guidelines from SCIS on Child Protection:

“It would be impossible to lay down ridged rules about what is and is not permissible... Common-sense is a good guide, but it must be informed common sense.”

#### **Points to remember**

Staff should always consider and abide by the following points when carrying out their duties:

Where a pupil requires intimate personal care, staff should ensure that the pupil is comfortable with the staff member attending to their needs. Other staff should always be around to monitor events and the child's privacy and dignity should always be preserved. Appropriate physical contact is made in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact will occur most often with younger pupils.

Where a child presents a danger to themselves or to others it will at times be necessary for staff to use means of physical intervention. At such times staff should always take care to explain what they are doing and that the actions taken are for safety reasons. As the situation deescalates, touch can be appropriately used to move from a situation of control to one of care.

#### **Activities that require physical contact**

Teaching in areas such as sports, drama, outdoor activities or specific subjects such as PE or Music may require physical contact with children. Such activities should be carried out in accordance with the College Physical Contact and Safe Touch Policy.

**Children and young people in distress**

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact, e.g. after a fall, separation from parent etc.

**Intimate Care**

Some job responsibilities necessitate intimate physical contact, for example toileting, changing a child. The nature, circumstances and context of such contact should comply with professional codes of practice which is regularly reviewed.

**Behaviour Management**

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed. Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan should be drawn up and agreed by all parties.

Appendix added by: Marie Forbes



## APPENDIX 2

### St Aloysius Rugby – Safe Touch Policy

**For further clarification and guidance please follow this link to Scottish rugby:**

[http://www.scottishrugby.org/sites/default/files/editor/docs/club\\_rugby\\_welfare\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.scottishrugby.org/sites/default/files/editor/docs/club_rugby_welfare_handbook.pdf)

### PHYSICAL CONTACT

All forms of physical contact should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a culture of dignity and respect for all children. Children should be encouraged to express their views on physical contact.

In the first instance, coaching techniques should be delivered by demonstration (either by the coach or an athlete who can display the technique being taught). Educational instruction should be clearly explained with a description of how it is proposed to handle or have contact with the child before doing so. This should be accompanied by asking if the child is comfortable. Manual support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances.

Rugby is a contact sport and the Are You Ready to Play Rugby policies, including Rugby Ready courses, age-band regulations and age-grade law variations, aim to reduce mis-matches in physical maturity and thereby reduce the incidence of injury. In general, large mismatches in ability and physical stature should be avoided and common sense exercised when supervising matches and training. Adults and children should not take part in contact training or matches together, even for the purposes of demonstration. Adults should not hold contact shields or pads for young players during training drills.

If it is necessary to help a child with personal tasks e.g. toileting or changing, the child and parents/carers should be encouraged to express a preference regarding the support and should be encouraged to speak out about methods of support with which they are uncomfortable. Staff/volunteers should work with parents/carers and children to develop practiced routines for personal care so that parents/carers and children know what to expect.

Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained e.g. coaching contact rugby techniques, or providing manual assistance for a child with a physical disability.

## Rugby Physical Contact Scenarios (Not Exhaustive)

Activity	Detail	Measures
Scrum:	Teaching boys how to get in to the correct scrum position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When teaching scrum technique there will be times where the coach has to guide the pupil in to the correct position or support him.</li> <li>For safety purposes when 2 players are scrumming against each other or 2 teams, the coach may need to support boys if they are unstable. As this is a constantly changing situation there may not be time to tell boys you are going to touch them. We should inform them this may happen before.</li> </ul>
	Showing correct bindings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He will also have to show bindings/grip around the waist or through the legs.</li> <li>The coach should keep contact to a minimum and ask permission to touch if required. They should explain first what is about to happen and use boys as demonstration as a rule.</li> </ul>
	building it up to a 8 v 8 scrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate scrum position and routine</li> <li>Contact may be required to support scrum. Inform the boys that you may need to grab/support them at any point for safety reasons before commencing.</li> </ul>
Tackle:	Tackle technique demonstration on knees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When demonstrating correct technique contact must be made with arms around waist and the head must be placed in the correct position (which is around the tackled players backside area) the phrases used by governing body is “cheek to cheek &amp; eye to thigh” This can be explained prior to demonstration however does involve contact around sensitive areas.</li> <li>The coach should preferably use two players to demonstrate or if doing it himself only simulate the position with minimal contact for as brief a time as possible.</li> <li>A coach should never tackle a child as they may injure them accidentally.</li> </ul>
Lineout	Showing correct lifting technique	<p>□ When demonstration correct technique for line out-lifting, the coach may have to place hands on the thighs of the jumper or the buttocks depending if they are demonstrating the front or rear lift. The technique requires to support a player in the air by cupping the gluteal muscles of the backside. The coach must explain what is happening before starting and where possible use competent boys to demonstrate.</p>
	Dynamic lineout lifting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain and demonstrate in advance intended activity.</li> <li>For safety to support players in the air the coach may require to support/stop from falling the jumper. This will be reactive depending on situation and the</li> </ul>

		coach may require to catch a falling player, hands may grab anywhere. Again explain this procedure and safety aspect before the exercise.
First Aid	Various scenarios	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid 1:1 where possible <input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact <input type="checkbox"/> When there is an accident a member of staff takes the boy to first aid room and treats the wound or calls emergency services & parents. Always keep the door open and try not to block the exit path of pupil.
Gum shield moulding	At times we are required to mould gum shields at Millerston which require boiling water.	<input type="checkbox"/> The boy is required to be there but it is not always possible to have other members of staff or pupils present. Try to avoid being in a room 1 to 1 and keep door open.
Strength and conditioning:	Squatting	<input type="checkbox"/> When doing heavy squatting the squatter will require assistance when maxing out. There will be boys on either side to support, however for player safety the best supporting position is to be directly behind the lifter with your arms round them, ready to support by lifting the squatters arms and chest upwards. Explain this support structure prior to the lift starting.
	Chin Ups	<input type="checkbox"/> When doing chin ups some assistance may be required from coach to help complete reps. This is applied by placing hands on shorts/ hips and in effect reduces the weight of the pupil so they can complete exercise. Explain before starting and grab shorts not body.







## APPENDIX 3

### **Instrumental Tuition/Music Department – Safe Touch Policy**

As with all policies relating to the Safeguarding of young people, the basis of the physical contact policy and procedures should always be rooted in an approach of common sense and appropriateness. All one-on-one lessons should take place in an appropriately sized room with a glass panel on the door. Doors should never be locked from the inside.

#### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Physical contact between tutors and young people in an instrumental lesson should be kept to a minimum and only used when educationally necessary and appropriate. Any contact should respect the wishes and feelings of the young person and should be introduced in the context of the lesson. It is essential that permission is sought from the young person prior to contact being made and that the young person is fully aware of the educational reasons for the contact.

Any physical contact should be educationally relevant, brisk and business-like. Expressions of praise or comfort such as a hug should not be made physically.

In a situation where young people with additional needs require a greater level of physical contact, advice and support from parents/carers should be sought.

Tutors should never take on duties out with their capabilities or for which they have not received training e.g. manual handling, first aid.

Tutors should keep up to date with Safeguarding policy, both within the College and at a National level.



**Instrumental Tuition Physical Contact Scenarios (Not exhaustive)**

Scenario	Measures
Adjustment of hand position (e.g. piano)	In the first instance try verbal instruction and/or demonstration  Ask and explain in advance of contact  Move confidently and briskly  Avoid hesitation
Posture correction	In the first instance try verbal instruction and/or demonstration  Ask and explain in advance of contact  Keep physical contact to a minimum
Demonstration of diaphragmatic breathing	In the first instance try verbal instruction and/or demonstration  Explain physiology clearly prior to contact  Ask permission before making contact

Appendix added by: Paul Christie



## APPENDIX 3

### Outdoor Education – Safe Touch Policy

#### Outdoor Education Physical Contact Scenarios (Not Exhaustive)

Activity	Detail	Measures
Climbing	Putting on a climbing harness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Layout harness on floor, for children to stand in and pull up themselves.</li><li>• Demonstrate how to tighten harness buckles and see if children are able to do this. If not, ask if they would like help with tightening their waist belt, if yes, show them how to tighten with the aim of enabling to do so themselves next time.</li><li>• Harness leg loops are easier to tighten, and pupils can often tighten their own, if not the case follow same procedure as waist belt.</li></ul>
	Putting on a helmet - chin strap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate how to tighten/ adjust.</li><li>• Ask if they would like help prior helping</li><li>• Adjust helmet off the head (possible, but can be time consuming!)</li></ul>

	Spotting ( non-climber, Being in a position to prevent an awkward fall of a climber that is being spotted, if safe to do so)	<input type="checkbox"/> This is standard practice within climbing, in particular bouldering (climbing at relative low level without ropes) or when climber is on steep low section of wall that could result in a swing. <input type="checkbox"/> Never be in a 1:1 situation while bouldering or climbing.
	Tightening a screw gate karabiner - There may be occasions where a pupil is not in a position to tighten a screw gate, for example: belaying (where both hands are needed to hold the rope) on this occasion an instructor may tighten the gate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure of Pre climb checks, to allow pupils to tighten their own karabiner. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission beforehand and by pulling rope away from body to avoid a need for physical contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Asking the pupil to pass you the attached karabiner, avoids bodily contact.
	Screw gate has jammed and a pupil needs assistance in unscrewing the gate, from harness.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission beforehand and by pulling rope away from body to avoid a need for physical contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Asking the pupil to pass you the attached karabiner, avoids bodily contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Alternatively, harness can be removed by pupil, if safe to do so.
	Crag Fast (Pupil frozen with fear, unable to proceed up or willing to go down, and is holding onto prevent a simple lower) another similar scenario would be if a climber has got themselves stuck, in for example a crack.	<input type="checkbox"/> Talking down or constructive peer pressure to encourage back down. Last resort, qualified instructor aids up rope, via a safeguarding procedure and attached a sling to stuck climber, in the event of crag fast, reassures but eventually pulls climber down, involving close contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Often reassurance around shoulders or top of back is required.
	Abseiling	<input type="checkbox"/> Reassurance around shoulders or top of back is required to aid initial start of abseil for novices.
	Tightening of buoyancy aid	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate how to tighten harness buckles and see if children are able to do this.

Kayaking/ Canoeing		<input type="checkbox"/> If not, ask if they would like help with tightening their buoyancy aid, if yes, show them how to tighten with the aim of enabling to do so themselves next time.
	Adjusting Foot rests of Kayak - Sometimes it is easier to visually see where a child's feet are within an enclosed kayak to enable the instructor to adjust the foot rests (difficult)	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to gauge an accurate understanding of footrest position to avoid child being in kayak and your head looking down the cockpit of a kayak. If <input type="checkbox"/> this is not possible, explain what you are doing beforehand and ask permission to check. <input type="checkbox"/> Note - visual check, should be possible without the need for physical contact. However it is a scenario that could have potential for misinterpretation of actions, and therefore has been included.
	Fitting a spray deck (can be difficult and novices often need help)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before helping
	Kayak or canoe rescue of submerged person/s (often needs assistance with returning to boat)	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear instructions in advance, try to only aid by holding onto shoulder straps of buoyancy aid.

Team Building Exercises	Spotting on activities that involve a level of height.	<input type="checkbox"/> See spotting climbing
	Some activities may involve physical contact, such as holding hands or close proximity of bodies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Never 1:1 scenario <input type="checkbox"/> Explain in advance intended activity.
Skiing	Chair Lift or cable car	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid 1:1 (although, this cannot always be guaranteed, due to external circumstances. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep hands visible and in front at all times
First Aid	Various scenarios	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid 1:1 <input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact
Hypothermic Casualty	Remote circumstance – This is an extreme circumstance that could arise, due to a number of scenarios, that could keep the group stationary and in an environment that could induce hypothermia. May involve grouping of individuals including staff in extreme circumstances.	<input type="checkbox"/> Have a form of group shelter when in remote environments (more than 30 mins from a vehicle) <input type="checkbox"/> Explain in advance intended activity.

Appendix added by: Des Bagshaw





### APPENDIX 3

#### St Aloysius Hockey – Safe Touch Policy

##### Hockey Contact Scenarios (Not Exhaustive)

Activity	Detail	Measures
General Information	In all scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid 1:1 in situations</li><li>• Give clear instructions in advance</li><li>• Ask permission before any form of contact</li><li>• Keep hands visible</li></ul>
Hockey Teaching	While showing the correct grip on stick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk through how to grip your hockey stick while the pupil does it themselves.</li><li>• A visual check, should be possible without the need for physical contact.</li><li>• If adjustments need to be made then talk them through with the pupil.</li><li>• Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a hand position</li></ul>

	<p>Guiding pupils into the correct position to perform a skill</p> <p>Guiding pupils into the correct position on the pitch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk through the correct position you would like the player to be in.</li> <li>• A visual check, should be possible without the need for physical contact.</li> <li>• If adjustments need to be made then talk them through with the pupil.</li> <li>• Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a position</li> </ul>
First Aid	General first aid	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a position
	Asthma, reassurance on shoulders to help the pupil control and clam down their breathing	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a position
	Helping to move an injured pupil, dealing with injuries, ice, tape, cleaning wounds.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a position
Fitness sessions	<p>Fitness</p> <p>Showing the correct body position in exercises.</p> <p>Supporting in weights sessions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk through the correct position you would like the player to be in. <input type="checkbox"/> A visual check, should be possible without the need for physical contact. <input type="checkbox"/> If adjustments need to be made then talk them through with the pupil. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask permission before any form of contact if you wish to adjust a position

For further recommendations see: <http://www.scottish-hockey.org.uk/media/30555/ethics%20manual%20-%20final%20aug%202011.pdf>

