



## Physical contact between students policy

Date adopted: 5 May 2016

Next review date: May 2019

### Policy Version Control

Policy prepared by	Principal
Responsible committee	Governing Body
Date approved by committee	
Date ratified by LGB (if required)	
Description of changes from the model policy (if any)	.1.

## Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make it clear to students and parents, how the academy will deal with incidents where there is physical contact between students, in order that there is no misunderstanding or surprise.

Physical Contact between students and staff is covered by a separate policy that defines the circumstances under which physical contact between staff and students is authorised and appropriate.

## Principles

1. Appropriate physical contact is seen as a healthy part of young people growing up. We define appropriate physical contact as that which is:
  - a. Consented to by both parties involved
  - b. Is suited to the time and setting
  - c. Does not cause physical damage to either party
  - d. Does not encourage or promote violence
  - e. Is not sexual in nature.
  
2. Physical violence between students has considerable danger attached to it. Serious or permanent injury can result ***so it is an expectation on all members of the academy community to act in ways that reduce the chances of physical violence and / or reduce the seriousness of it.***
  - a. Intent:

If any student becomes aware that another student intends to cause or start physical violence against someone, it is ***their responsibility*** to take action to try to prevent such violence from taking place, either directly or by reporting the intention to a member of staff. Failure to do so could result in sanctions being used. Students who incite others to violence even if they do not take part, may, particularly if there is a serious injury, also receive a sanction.
  - b. Self-defence:

Any person is allowed to use reasonable force in self-defence, however, it may be that the most effective form of self-defence is to avoid using force. Any student faced with violence or the threat of violence should attempt their own protection using the following actions in order of preference:
    - i. Walking away from a potential conflict
    - ii. Seeking help from the nearest adult
    - iii. Calling for assistance
    - iv. Blocking, holding, pushing or shielding
    - v. Using the minimum force required to protect oneself

The following should never be used in school as self-defence

    - vi. The use of weapons
    - vii. Pre-emptive action (I thought he was going to hit me so I hit him first)
    - viii. Blows to the head
    - ix. Kicking, head butting or kneeing
- c. Sanctions:

The sanctions applied to students who are involved in physical violence will range from a recorded reprimand to permanent exclusion. In deciding the level of consequence, the following factors will be considered:

  - i. Intent and knowledge – did the student set out with the intention of physical violence?
  - ii. Age and emotional maturity of the student.
  - iii. Age, size, special educational needs and maturity differences between the parties.

- iv. The type of violence involved.
- v. The extent of any injuries.
- vi. Background factors such as history of bullying.
- vii. The extent to which both parties consented to the action.
- viii. Whether or not the student has been punished for a similar event in the past.

The following actions will always result in a period of exclusion

- ix. The use or threat of weapons.
- x. Blows to the head.
- xi. Kicking, head butting or kneeling.
- xii. Actions that require one or both parties to receive medical attention.
- xiii. Inciting someone from outside the school to violence against another member of the academy community.

3. Sexual contact between students is never appropriate on the academy premises. Because the majority of students in this school are below the age of consent, ***it is also likely that any sexual contact (even if consented to) is illegal.*** Sexual contact is defined as:

- i. Touching of any intimate parts of the body.
- ii. Touching parts of the body very close to intimate parts of the body.
- iii. Touching the clothing close to intimate parts of the body.
- iv. Actions which result in a breach of modesty or exposure (even if direct contact has not been made).

a. Sanctions:

The sanctions applied to students who are involved in sexual contact will range from a reprimand to permanent exclusion. In deciding the level of consequence, the following factors will be considered:

- i. The age, special educational need and emotional maturity of the students involved.
- ii. The nature of the contact.
- iii. The extent of consent to the contact (and the extent to which the person is judged sufficiently able to give consent).
- iv. Background factors such as a history of harassment.
- v. Whether or not the student has received a sanction for a similar incident in the past.

In some situations, the academy will be obliged under child protection legislation and policy to report incidents of sexual contact to the Police and /or Social Services.

## Summary

### Friendly Contact

Type of Contact	Outside school in uniform	Break, lunch, before and after school	Between lessons	In lessons, assemblies etc.
Handshake	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pat on the back or similar	✓	✓	✓	✓
Holding hands	✓	✓	☹	☹
'Peck on the cheek'	✓	✓	☹	☹
Greeting hug	✓	✓	☹	☹
Unsupervised contact sport such as Rugby	☹	☹	☹	☹
Play fighting	☹	☹	☹	☹
Mouth-mouth kissing (snogging)	☐	☹	☹	☹
Romantic embrace	☐	☹	☹	☹
Intimate body contact	✖✖	✖✖	✖✖	✖✖

### Unfriendly Contact

Type of Contact	In self-defence	Not in self-defence
Push, block, hold or shield	✓	✖
Intimate body contact	✖	✖✖✖
Slap	✖	✖✖
Punch to body	✖	✖✖
Punch to head or sensitive parts of the body	✖✖	✖✖✖
Kick / knee / elbow	✖✖	✖✖✖
Kick to head / head butt / any impact on vital functions	✖✖✖	✖✖✖
Threat with implement / weapon	✖✖	✖✖✖
Use of implement / weapon	✖✖✖	✖✖✖

- ☹ Unacceptable
- ✖ Serious, likely to result in exclusion
- ✖✖ Very serious, likely to result in 1 to 10 days of exclusion
- ✖✖✖ Extremely serious, likely to result in permanent exclusion / police action
- ☐ Only acceptable in appropriate places ✖ Possibly less serious if accidental