

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

Complaints Against Staff Involving Sexual Abuse:

Once a helping agency is involved, the following procedures will be followed and will be in line with those set out in the Primary Teachers' Collective Employment Contract-Part 10, Primary Principals Contract-Part 8, Support Staff Collective Employment Contract-Part 7.

- 1 The principal will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- 2 Both will then inform the staff member who will be advised to seek legal and/or union representation.
- 3 The school will inform the union.
- 4 The staff member will be suspended on full pay once an investigation has begun. (In line with Primary Teachers' Collective Employment contract-Part 10, Primary Principals Contract-Part 8, Support Staff Collective Employment Contract-Part 7)
Counsellors can be made available to any staff.

The Following Practices Must Be Observed by Teachers

Education outside the classroom

- Ensure that preparation for events outside the classroom includes clear information to parents, caregivers and students regarding supervision, medical treatment, sleeping arrangements, washing/bathing.
- Ensure parent helpers are informed of their responsibilities and how to handle situations so that their integrity is not compromised.
- Ensure that whatever the situation you are not alone with a student. (An exception would be in an emergency when someone has gone for help).

Medical Conditions

- We must have staff members specially trained in first aid and a comprehensive first aid kit.
- Ensure the person in charge of First Aid is aware of students with allergies or medical conditions and what is necessary to assist the student.
- For minor injuries or abrasions attend to the student immediately in the same way a responsible parent or caregiver would and in the presence of other students or another staff member.
- Ensure where possible another staff member or witnesses are present when assisting or comforting a student who is seriously injured. Only qualified First Aiders should examine the student. Immediately contact a person, caregiver, doctor or the ambulance service.
- The administration of medicine should be the responsibility of the students' parents, caregiver, staff member with first aid responsibility or doctor.
- Only administer medicine in life-threatening situations when you and another staff member have been consulted by a parent, or caregiver and you have accepted responsibility in accordance with school policy. Make sure you have the necessary knowledge to administer the medicine and do so in the presence of another person. Keep a written record. Contact the student's parent, caregiver or doctor immediately in an emergency.
 - Note: Wear disposable gloves when giving first aid.

Restraint of Students

- Learn to use anger management and classroom skills to isolate and restrict students from injuring themselves. Only when a student could injure themselves or hurt others should they be restrained. Where possible inform senior staff.
- Learn appropriate ways to restrain students. Involve the Principal and contact support agencies, e.g. Group Special Education Services staff.

Searching of Students

- Do not body search students as this could lead to allegations of physical or indecent assault.
- If it is necessary to undertake a search of property because you suspect theft, drugs or dangerous weapons, contact the Principal or Senior Staff before any further action is taken. Further action may involve Police or Caregivers.

Toileting

- This is not a regular job expected of all teaching or support staff, but may happen from time to time e.g. accidents, stomach upsets.
- Only trained support staff ideally should take on these tasks.
- Where students require assistance, involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies such as public health nurses, Group Special Education Service.

Being alone with a Student

- Avoid situations where you are alone with a student, including pupil monitors / helpers.

Counselling a Student

- When you are counselling a student ensure that the place is not closed off from other people seeing into the room.
- Parents and caregivers must be advised that a student is receiving 1:1 learning such as special reading programmes.

Transporting a Student

- Staff should avoid transporting a student on their own at all times. Permission should be gained from parents before transporting unless in an emergency situation.

Physical Education

- Physical contact can occur in assisting movement and safety in gymnastics or teaching positional skills in coaching sports or when dancing or teaching swimming.
- Use careful professional judgement regarding physical contact with students in all these circumstances.
- Students will change and dress themselves.
- Ensure the on going programmes are known to parents and caregivers.