



DRAFT

Touch Policy

At Edwinstree Middle School, we have a Touch Policy. This supports staff to understand the situations in which staff may touch pupils and the situations when they may not. This means that as a member of staff you are able to touch or prompt children in appropriate ways at appropriate times, which are outlined in the policy. Regardless of age, physical intervention should not provide intimacy within a transient relationship.

In which situations you may or may not touch a child?

- Lap sitting - **May not**
- Physically separating a child from their parent - **May not**
- Carrying - **May not**
- Hand holding - **May not**
- Physically comforting a child - **Yes you may if you use the protective hug described in the Touch Policy.**
- Steering guiding or escorting a child **Only** if trained through the Herts STEPs programme. Currently this is JGT and WEE
- Restraining a child (restrictive physical intervention) **May Not.**

What is a protective hug?

It requires staff to place their fingers and thumb together in a closed mitten position. The hand should remain in a mitten to avoid the possibility of gripping. The pictures below exemplify this.



- Fingers and thumb together
- The hand should remain in a mitten to avoid the possibility of gripping. Gripping hands can result in bruising consistent with poor practice.

For some students, as outlined in a plan, specific staff may be asked to use 'offering an arm' as a strategy to guide students. To complete this, staff need to place their hip forwards and head away, stand sideways and offer the arm. Students accept the invitation and then the member of staff draws the elbow in for extra security. An example picture is given below:



Please note: although we have a Touch Policy, and believe that contingent touch in some circumstances, can be a positive experience for the children that we care for, this does not mean that you have to touch children, and it should be recognised that some will not want to be touched. Please respect this.

If you have any questions or would like a further discussion regarding this policy please speak to your Line Manager at the earliest opportunity.