



Yarraville Special Developmental School  
No. 9278

**TOUCH POLICY**

Yarraville SDS Principal: Ashwini Sharma

School Council President: Kim Mace

**Certification**

School Council President Signed *J.ilee* Date *28/11/2017*  
Principal Signed *Sharma* Date *28/11/2017*

This policy ratified at School Council meeting 28/11/2017



*Yarraville Special Developmental School*  
*Excellence In Learning*

## **TOUCH POLICY**

### **RATIONALE:**

Everyone has the right to feel safe at school.

At Yarraville SDS there are times when school staff need to touch and handle students in order to intervene in dangerous situations, to assist with mobility, health / hygiene and self-care and to provide emotional support.

At times students will be appropriately touching other students in play, in assisting with mobility, in greeting each other and in teaching / learning experiences.

### **ELEMENTS OF THIS POLICY INCLUDE:**

1. Health / Hygiene Management
2. Mobility Assistance
3. Teaching / Learning Activities eg. Physical Education, Swimming, Physiotherapy etc.
4. Emotional Support

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- As far as possible student privacy will be respected and staff / students will deal in a sensitive manner with personal management issues.
- Staff should wear personal protective equipment eg. Disposable gloves and boots when toileting, showering, nappy changing, first aid administration where contact with body fluids is possible / likely.
- It is desirable that two staff members are present for assisting during showering, toileting and nappy change, though it is recognised that situations will arise where this staffing arrangement may not be possible.
- For staff and / or student health and safety, staff may need to restrict the movement of a student whilst engaged in some of these activities. This will be achieved by physically holding or appropriate devices eg. arm splints, foot orthosis, toilet seats, wheel chairs, walkers. Advice from Specialists eg. Physio, OT and Parent consultation will be sought.

#### **1. Health / Hygiene Management and Self-Care Assistance**

Staff at Yarraville SDS are expected to engage as required in these following activities as a part of student management and / or teaching learning experiences.

- Showering / Washing / Teeth Cleaning / Manicure.

- Toileting / Nappy changing
- Menstrual management.
- Changing / dressing.
- Medical / First Aid.
- Administration of Medication (refer to Medication Authority).
- Feeding eg. Tube feeding

## **2. Mobility Assistance**

A significant number of students at Yarraville SDS require assistance with mobility in order to enable them to function within the school and community.

While mobility assistance is predominantly provided by staff, there will be occasions when other students provide peer assistance.

This assistance may be in the form of:

- Directional guiding through light touch eg. Elbow, shoulder, foot touch, physical, gestures, hip.
- Assistance with motor planning eg. Physical movement of limbs through range of motion by a staff member
- Whole of body support eg. Swimming, physical education program, toileting, transfers, loss of balance / control, bike riding, scooting eg. Stepping up / down, seizures.

## **3. Teaching / Learning Activities eg. Physical Education, Swimming, Physiotherapy etc.**

Much alike as is highlighted in Mobility Assistance, aspects of teaching and learning with respect to practical activities require some form of physical assistance in order for the student to understand a movement and/or movement patterns. The assistance provided is specific to the students undertaking the activity and/or the activity that is being undertaken. The assistance that may be required include:

- Directional guiding through light touch e.g. Elbow, shoulder, foot touch, physical gestures, hip.
- Assistance with motor planning e.g. Physical movement of limbs through a range of motion by staff member
- Whole body support e.g. Swimming, transfers, loss of balance / control, bike riding, scooting, stepping up /down.

It should be acknowledged that the assistance that is provided from the staff member to the student should be with the least amount of body area of both parties touching; as well as in the least intrusive way possible. Proper execution of assisting students should be thought out before lessons where possible.

## **4. Emotional Support**

There will be occasions when students require emotional support. This may be initiated by student action or by staff in response to a student action.

This support may be in the form of light touch / patting generally on the arm, back or head, through to a hug (student request).

**REFERENCES:**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/15Principals.pdf>

**EVALUATION:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.