



En Pointe Theatre Arts Safe Touch Policy

En Pointe Theatre Arts Safe Touch Policy is set out in alignment with guidance from the Royal Academy of Dance and the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.

Physical contact within the dance setting is necessary in order to keep our dancers safe and help them achieve their full potential in relation to their dance technique. At times, teachers may need to use physical contact to correct dancers' posture and alignment alongside helping students fully understand the coordination and feeling behind a movement. It may also be necessary to utilise physical contact to comfort a student when they are feeling upset, to provide first aid, as positive reinforcement (such as a high five), or to help with a dancer's hair.

In the first instance, educators will always explain the movement verbally, and physical contact will be utilised only where absolutely necessary.

Good practice when using physical contact in the studio environment

When teaching children, young people, and vulnerable adults, it is good practice for teachers to:

- Always take care that any necessary physical contact is welcome and does not give cultural offence, fear of harm, or arouse sexual feelings or expectations;
- All touch should have a clear and legitimate purpose;
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect, and never touch a child in a way that would be considered indecent. Always put their welfare first;
- Ensure that the intention behind all physical contact is professional and unambiguous;

- When physical contact is made, this should be in response to their needs, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and ability (use your professional judgement at all times, and be sensitive to reactions or feelings);
- Physical contact which occurs regularly with an individual is likely to raise questions and be open to scrutiny;
- Physical contact should take place in an open environment, avoiding private unobserved situations;
- Open communication, with no secrets, should be encouraged;
- Recognise that not everyone is comfortable with physical contact. Always explain why it is necessary and what form it will take; (there is a physical contact waiver in our Terms and Conditions; please notify us if a dancer is uncomfortable with physical contact)
- Do not indulge in 'rough and tumble play' or allow physical or sexually provocative games;
- Always be prepared to report and explain your actions as a teacher, and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.

Safe touch

En Pointe Theatre Arts realises there are specific areas of the body which are safe to touch when providing corrections; these include dancers:

- Heads
- Arms
- Shoulders
- Scapula (shoulder blades)
- Tummy
- Hips
- Leg (thigh and Lower leg)
- Feet

Unsafe touch

En Pointe Theatre Arts strongly discourages its staff members, including volunteers, visitors, and assistants, from touching any of the following areas:

- Chest (Breast area)
- Pelvis (bum)
- Anywhere which could be misread as a sexual act

In the event of a concern

If you are concerned about any physical contact which has been made by a member of staff during a student's class or a teacher utilising physical contact has upset a student, please notify Danielle Emms through the following email danielle@enpointetheatrearts.co.uk. This will then be investigated in accordance with our safeguarding and child protection policy and followed up with appropriate disciplinary action as detailed in our disciplinary procedure.