



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT IN DANCE POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2023

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Physical Contact

Teaching classical ballet is a physical activity and appropriate physical contact between students and teachers in class is essential to ballet training. Teachers can make appropriate physical contact with a student to illustrate a concept or to adjust a student's alignment (especially with the younger students). In *pas de deux* classes, teachers will be demonstrating with students in ways which will involve supporting and lifting. In choreographic teaching, teachers demonstrate positions and movements to the students by moving parts of the students' bodies and by moving dancers in relation to each other: this often involves physical contact with students.

The appropriateness of physical contact within a class training session is explained to the students before the beginning of the session. Students have the right to request no physical contact from the teacher.

The Royal Ballet School recognises that such physical contact is a potentially complex area; and the School also fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding students and teachers and for protecting their welfare.

The following principles and procedures are in place to fulfil the School's obligations:

Contact by the teacher is made with particular awareness of the needs of each individual, to assist the dancer in correcting placement.

- a) All teachers will treat any physical contact with relevant sensitivity and care, and with due regard for the wishes of the student.
- b) Contact will not involve force or the use of any instrument.
- c) Teachers will be mindful of location and avoid situations where they are isolated with a student; all classes are held in studios and dance areas with windows.
- d) Students are encouraged to discuss any worries with either their student mentor, any member of staff or an Independent Listener.
- e) Both students and teachers are encouraged to report any concerns to the Head of Artistic Programmes & Performance, the Academic & Pastoral Principal or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

While all students will have received formal ballet training that will have involved such corrections, the techniques used by the teachers of the School may be different. These techniques are demonstrated to both parents and students before the students begin their formal training at the School.