

APPENDIX B: Best Practice Policy

National Piping Centre - Best Practice Policy – 2021

As a bagpipe instructor at the National Piping Centre, or as a National Piping Centre first aider, some physical contact may be deemed necessary between NPC staff and students. Physical contact may be required to administer first-aid and in some circumstances, safe touch is sometimes essential to aid effective teaching and learning i.e. encouraging good hand/finger position on the practice chanter, correct posture, etc. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any necessary physical contact between a NPC staff member, volunteer, and freelance staff with another person is managed appropriately and in accordance with best practice.

Good Practice

- Please assume responsibility for your working environment. Ensure you are in an open/visible environment avoiding private unobserved situations. It is suggested that students should sit nearest the main exit (door) in a teaching room.
- If you feel vulnerable in your working environment, please inform your the Director of Piping and/or the Director of Administration manager:
Principal of the National Piping Centre (Senior Designated Child Protection Contact) – Finlay MacDonald
Director of Administration (Senior Designated Child Protection Contact) – Alberto Laidlaw
Designated Child Protection Contacts) Steven Blake and Margaret Dunn
- Any physical contact must be professional and unambiguous.
- Any physical contact must be direct and necessary, with student permission sought and granted.
- Any student has the right to refuse any ‘hands-on’ tuition. Treat all students equally, with respect and dignity.

Practices to be avoided

- Avoid spending time alone with students away from others unless essential and in one to one situations extreme care should be exercised.
- Avoid physical contact which could easily be misconstrued i.e. A comforting hug, arm/hand on shoulder, close proximity when looking at jotter/screen.
- Avoid prolonged touch, which lasts beyond the necessary time required to carry out the teaching/instruction involved.

Practices never to be sanctioned

- Allowing or engaging in horseplay, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a student.
- Failing to act on and record any allegations made by a student.

Incidents that must be reported and recorded

If any of the following occur when working as a staff member of the National Piping Centre, it should immediately be reported to the DCPC(s) and Principal and please refer to the 'Concern Procedure' flowchart, which can be found on the Network/All staff Shared/Concern Procedure

- If a student is injured or hurt in any way.
- If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a student attempts to touch you in an inappropriate manner.
- If a student makes any inappropriate or sexual advances towards you.

Transporting Children and Young People

In certain situations staff may agree to transport children. This should be approved by management. Wherever possible and practical, it is advised that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles with at least one adult additional to the driver. Where a member of staff's own vehicle is used, they should ensure that they are insured for the purpose and wherever possible children should be in the back seat.

Online platforms

All NPC staff using online platforms to engage in lessons, meetings or any other work related business should continue to follow the current NPC 'Best Practice Policy'. Some of the guidance included is to ensure sensible precautions to protect yourself and pupils/customers from potential safeguarding complications:

- **Stay professional during a call**
Establish a serious and professional manner when teaching online or holding a meeting online. Emphasise to the customer or to the students and their parents that video calling apps are for lessons only and not for other contact, e.g. sharing photos or general messaging.
- **Lesson observation & recording (add to booking page)**
The National Piping Centre recommends that a parent or career is present at the beginning of any online call if the person is under 16 years old and that the adult should remain within earshot of the call until it has ended.
- **Being mindful of your online profile**
Before teaching online, protect yourself from accidental inappropriate contact with your students by restricting your profile on each video calling app you use, so that it does not automatically accept contact requests and cannot be viewed by students. Your user profiles should feature a business-like profile picture.
- Encourage your students to restrict their own profiles so that they can only receive calls from known contacts. It may be possible to avoid the need for students to have profiles at all by sending them email invites to a live video call once you have set this up. Either way of working can be made safeguarding compliant.

Online Platform Guidance for handling pre-recorded content & live online tuition:

- Ensure you have consent from parents to be conducting lessons on a one-to-one basis via video conference. Ideally this will be traceable such as consent given via email with an agreement as to which platform and account or phone number will be used to make the connection. A lesson booking for an online lesson, by a parent or career, acts as a consent for the online lesson to take place.
- Ensure that you use the account of an adult to make the connection with children below the age of 16, for example the adult's skype account or mobile number for facetime or Whatsapp. Whilst we do not recommend any applications in particular we do require that you ensure adequate privacy and security to any online teaching. This means that when any services accessed via a link such as Zoom you must ensure the meetings are password protected and that this information is communicated only to the relevant parents privately. (Add to booking form)

- Consider what will be visible in the background. For example, posters or materials playing on screens in the background need to be age appropriate. I would recommend taking care to minimise any personal items.
- Make the call from a room such as a living room, study or dining room, not from a bedroom. Ask parents to make a room available for the lesson that is not the child's bedroom. (add to booking form)
- Discuss with parents whether or not they are going to record the lesson and only allow this if you are willing to agree to the lesson being recorded. The NPC does not recommend recording lessons and this is only permitted following explicit parental consent given in writing prior to the lesson. After you have passed the recording on to the parents and/or pupil you are required to then delete the recording from any personal devices. (add to Book Form)
- Ensure the settings for each call reduce the risk of uninvited people joining the session , for example by 'locking' the call once all parties are present.
- Ensure any recordings submitted to TNPC are stored securely in accordance with the data protection protocols we operate within.
- Ensure participants are aware they can keep their camera switched off for the duration of any sessions.
- Ensure any pre-recorded content uploaded to YouTube is marked as 'made for kids'

Specific Zoom Settings:

Under your settings tab (in your browser, where more options appear, rather than in the app), ensure the following are selected:

- Un-tick 'Allow participants to join the meeting before the host arrives'. You don't want the children to be in the classroom without their teacher.
- Tick 'Mute participants upon entry'. It is much easier to start the session with everyone muted so there isn't a big cacophony of sound at the beginning.
- Un-tick 'Allow meeting participants to send a message visible to all participants' and 'Allow meeting participants to send a private 1:1 message to another participant'. Tick 'Prevent participants from saving chat' – this will help safeguard you against any unnecessary/unhelpful chat between pupils during the session.
- Enable the waiting room. This means you can let everyone join the meeting in one block rather than individually. You may want to enable an audible notification if someone enters the waiting room so you know to let any latecomers in.
- As Zoom only lets you record to your computer or your personal Zoom cloud, it is advisable not to record the meeting for safeguarding reasons.
- Allow participants to rename themselves'. If the participant doesn't have a Zoom account, their Zoom name may appear on the screen as the type of device they are using (e.g. iPhone, Galaxy). If they are on their parent's device, it might show their parent's name. It can be helpful therefore to allow participants to rename themselves, although this might take some managing to ensure they don't abuse it.
- Breakout rooms can be helpful for small group discussions, but they won't be able to play music together in time (due to latency) so this option might not be too useful in practical music sessions.
- Virtual backgrounds can be useful if you want to cover up what is behind you on the video image, or if you need to display an image behind you such as a company logo or a photo relating to the content of the session. If you are using Zoom on a tablet, the green screen function works well against any clear background (it doesn't need to be green). If you are using it on a computer, you will need a green screen behind you.

- Any communication via E-mail with pupils should be for educational purposes only.
- A teacher can be vulnerable to unintended misuse of electronic communication. Email, texting and social media encourage casual dialogue and very often, innocent actions can easily be misconstrued or manipulated. A member of staff should never share information with pupils in any environment that they would not willingly or appropriately share in a school-related setting.
- Unless staff have already established relationships with a pupil(s) through friendships with parents or with their own children, they should not have contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a personal friendship or relationship.
- Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be attracted to/infatuated by a member of staff. Staff should also be aware that such circumstance can carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made.
- Any sexual behaviour with, or towards a child or young person, is both inappropriate and illegal and could constitute a 'Breach of Trust' offence.
- In circumstances where you or a member of staff's relationship with, or feelings towards, a child or young person are at risk of being construed as unprofessional behaviour, you should seek advice and support from the Principal of the NPC/DCPC(s) so that appropriate action can be taken.
- If it seems that a young person is becoming inappropriately attached to you or to another member of staff, you should share your concerns and seek advice from the Principal of the NPC/DCPC(s)

Guidelines to minimising risk when using electronic communication and social networking.

As a teacher you should:

- Always maintain a formal and courteous and professional tone in communicating with pupils and ensure that professional boundaries are maintained.
- Only use official channels of communication e.g. work e-mail addresses and be aware of and comply with employers policies and guidance.
- Do not exchange private text, phone numbers, personal e-mail addresses or photos of a personal nature with pupils.
- Firmly decline student-initiated 'friend' requests from pupils and do not instigate any yourself. Use your own discretion when dealing with friend requests from parents. It is acceptable to decline these invitations and remind parents of more formal channels which they can discuss their child's education.
- Operate online in a way in which would not call into question your position as a professional.
- Realise that pupils will be naturally curious about your personal life outside of work and may try to find out more about you.
- Manage your privacy setting and keep them under review. These are particularly important with regard to photos, and remember that no privacy mechanism is 100% guaranteed.
- Ensure your settings prohibit others from tagging you in any photos or updates without your permission and you can ask others to remove any undesirable content related to you.
- Consider that conversations held online may not be private. Be aware of who may have access to what you post.
- Assume that information you post can be accessed and altered.
- Do not discuss pupils, colleagues, parents or carers online or criticise your employer or others within the National Piping Centre community.
- Respect pupil privacy and confidentiality at all times.

- Use strong passwords and change them regularly. Protect your mobile phone/smart phone/tablet computer with a PIN, especially when at work to protect access to its content and potential misuse.
- If you are the victim of cyberbullying or uncomfortable with comments, photos or posts made by pupils of or about you, bring the matter to the attention of your employer using the proper procedures.

If you understand the content of this policy document, please sign and date below to indicate your intention to follow this practice throughout your work at the NPC:

Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____