

Acceptable physical contact

Staff may need to physically support students.

The following situations involving physical contact to support students happen in schools every day:

- Temporary physical contact, such as an open hand on the arm, back or shoulders to remove a student from a situation to a safer place.
- Supporting a student to move them to another location, or help them to get in a vehicle or use the stairs.
- The practice of harness restraint, when keeping a student and others safe in a moving vehicle, or when recommended by a physiotherapist or occupational therapist for safety or body positioning.
- Younger students, especially in their first year of school, sometimes need additional help. For example, you may “shepherd” a group of younger students from one place to another.
- Staff may hold the hand of a young student who is happy to have their hand held for a short time.
- Staff may pick a student up to comfort them.
- Assisting a student with toileting, including changing a nappy.

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