



# TOUCH POLICY

2024-2025

MAT Board Approval:	October 2023
Last Review:	October 2024
Next Review:	Autumn 2025
Member of Staff Responsible:	Mrs V Shelley

*This policy is a guidance document, providing a framework for each individual DoWMAT academy*

## Our Vision

‘To Love, To Learn, To Serve’ sums up the DoWMAT’s vision for those who come together to create the MAT, enabling all to flourish both as individuals and in community with each other; living life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

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## Our Values

### To Love

The New Testament sums up the entire law as a call to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Galatians 5:14). The Bible teaches that we are only able to love because God first loved us (1 John 4:10). This love is expected to characterise the way in which the DoWMAT operates, makes decisions, builds relationships, and carries out its day-to-day business: each person putting the needs of others before their own, with a commitment to the flourishing of all. The exposition of love in 1 Corinthians 13 reminds us that love is patient, kind, forgiving, generous, humble, trusting, respectful, hopeful, resilient and enduring. Those who learn and work in the DoWMAT, and all who come into contact with it, can expect to experience that love in the way that they are treated.



### To Learn



The DoWMAT is a Christian learning community that is committed to enabling all to live a life of freedom and transformation as a result of the hope and wisdom that learning brings. Learning is at the heart of the Church of England’s vision for and commitment to education. Growing in wisdom is celebrated in the Bible and all are exhorted to listen, to seek guidance, to acquire knowledge and to learn discretion (Proverbs 1: 1-6), largely through human relationships and interactions. Jesus’ teaching, as summed up in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), describes human beings who are learning to live a life that is characterised by humility, compassion, mercy, righteousness and peace. The learning that takes place within the DoWMAT is expected to be recognisably rooted in these godly characteristics and focused upon enabling the holistic development of people who are made in the image of God.

### To Serve

Service and servant leadership, was a striking feature of the way in which Jesus lived his life. The example he gave to his disciples in washing their feet (John 13:1-17) provides us with a role model for the way in which we should seek to live in community with others. Putting the needs of others before our own, supporting people in their growth and development as holistic human beings, enabling people’s gifts and talents to come to the fore as a result of our service to them are all defining characteristics of the way in which the DoWMAT operates. In serving others and meeting their needs through generosity of spirit, we manifest God’s grace and love for others (1 Peter 4:8-11).



These core values underpin all aspects of our Trust as we strive to make a positive difference to the lives of all DoWMAT pupils whilst they are at school and in later life. Through these values, we can be sure our community is one of hope; a place of transformation and trust, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

**OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS | COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS | STRONG SYSTEMS | CONFIDENT LEARNERS**

At our school, we have a touch policy. This means that as a member of staff you are able to physically guide, touch or prompt children in an appropriate way at appropriate times. However, generally staff should not be instigating touch only responding to a need.

### **WHY DO WE USE TOUCH?**

We may need to prompt or touch children for a variety of reasons, but in general times we would normally do so for either safety, comfort or personal care: assistance with writing, eating, dressing etc.

### **HOW DO WE TOUCH?**

#### **Handholding in EYFS/KS1**

At Martley CE Primary School in EYFS and KS1 children sometimes get comfort from holding hands with an adult. This is acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. If the hand hold is being used by an adult as a method of control to move children, this can become a restraint. We do not hold any child's hand in KS2 unless they are very poorly or had an accident. In these cases, two staff members should be present.

#### **Hugging in EYFS/KS1**

At Martley CE Primary School in EYFS and KS1 children when poorly or sad may need a hug. This should always be a 'school hug'. This is a quick sideways-on hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child's shoulders. This discourages 'front on' hugging and limits the child's ability to turn themselves into you. This can be done standing or sitting. Any child hugging at the front should be discouraged immediately. We do not hug any child in KS2 unless they are very poorly or had an accident. If a 'school hug' is deemed necessary, this should be quick and discouraged. Instead for encouragement we might give a child a pat on the top of the back or a high five.

#### **Kissing**

We never kiss a child at Martley CE Primary School unless it is our own child.

#### **Lap-Sitting**

We actively discourage lap-sitting. Children should be taught to seek comfort/attention through other means, for example the school hug or hand-hold. If a child attempts to sit on your lap, explain to them that this is not what we do here and ask them to sit next to you if it is appropriate.

At times if a child is in crisis or distress and has held you by the front the Headteacher or DSL should be informed.

### **Emergency Situations**

Staff have a 'Duty of Care' towards the children in their care at Martley CE Primary School. Therefore, if a child is likely to be at risk if you do not physically intervene in an emergency situation, you must take action. The action you take will be dependent on the dynamic risk assessment that you make at that moment in time.

### **Carrying**

We do not carry any child unless there has been an accident and the child needs to be immediately lifted to safety or to go to hospital.

### **Positive Handling**

If a child needs any form of restraint/positive handling at Martley CE Primary School, a positive handling hold should be used. The Headteacher should be informed and the incident written down and reported to parents. Only members of staff with up-to-date Team Tech training will be able to conduct positive handling. All children needing to be positively held should have a positive handling plan written which should be signed by the Headteacher and the parent.

Parents/Carers will be made aware of this policy when their child is admitted to this school.

### **Thrive Touch**

At Martley CE Primary School we have a Thrive practitioner who works with children needing social and emotional support. If a child is emotional or lacking in confidence our Thrive practitioner might give a 'school hug' to a child in EYFS, KS1 or KS2. This touch should only take place in a public space and not in the Thrive room.

If you have any questions or would like further discussion regarding this policy please speak to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

### Document History

Date	Author	Summary Changes	Approved by
22.10.2024	M Spence V Shelley	Annual Review	QE Committee