

Appendix G

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Guidance

There are a number of principles that should be followed when the activity involves physical contact. Physical contact during golf should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- Develop golf skills or techniques.
- Treat an injury.
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.
- Meet the requirements of the sport.

The adult should seek to explain to the child the nature and reason for the physical contact reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.

Parents/guardians will be informed about physical contact through the Sussex Golf Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened. Contact should not involve touching parts of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment. Any physical contact should always take place only in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

Specific Situations

Physical Punishment:

In the golfing environment any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is particularly important that adults understand this, both to protect their own position as well as the overall reputation of the organisation in which they are involved.

Contact as part of coaching:

Golf may require coaches to come into physical contact with children from time to time in the course of their coaching. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

It should be recognised that physical contact between an adult and a child that may occur during legitimate teaching or coaching may be misconstrued or misunderstood by a pupil, parent or observer. Touching young participants, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised. As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children. It is particularly unwise to attribute frequent touching to their teaching or coaching style or as a way of relating to young participants.

Responding to distress and success:

There may be occasions where a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comforting, such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A child or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time.