

SECONDARY SCHOOL Code of Conduct

**SAFER
SPACES**
IN MUSIC EDUCATION
AOTEAROA

For Classroom and Itinerant Music Teachers

01

Teaching Spaces

Open and observable spaces can help keep everyone safe.

- Practice rooms must be public spaces. They must not be in isolated locations in the school and should be within the music department near staff offices and classrooms.
- Staff offices and practice rooms must be visible work spaces with windows with (at least) a window in the door. Your school's Health and Safety funding may be an appropriate avenue to enable this.
- When a teacher is interacting with a student one-to-one, they must ensure wherever possible that the space is not closed off from other people.
- In practice rooms, teachers must ensure that they and their student/s are visible through the door window.
- If the location of the lesson changes (for example the teacher is obliged to move to a less public location) another staff member and parents must be informed.
- Teachers taking un-timetabled lessons with a student in a practice room, classroom or office must ensure that a colleague is aware they are in there with the student.
- Teachers should avoid having one-to-one discussions with students in closed off spaces.

02

Touching Guidelines for Instrumental and Singing Teachers

- There is rarely a need to touch a student when teaching them to play or sing. Teachers should model and develop good verbal instructions, videos, diagrams etc, rather than use touch to teach.
- Touching should only be used where verbal direction and modeling has not worked. It must be directly related to the skill being taught. The student must be asked if this is OK and have freely given consent.

03

Material or Conversations of an Intimate and/or Sexual Nature

- An appropriate response depends on the student's developmental stage. Teachers must not engage in conversations/communications with students about sexual behaviour or intimate relationships.
- It is important that teachers respond professionally and appropriately, without hesitation, to sexual behaviour from students. Sexual behaviour includes questions, touch, conversations, flirting/suggestive talk, as well as overt interest in sexuality and/or relationships.

04

Social Media

- Teachers must not engage one-to-one with students online
- All online communication must be cc-d to the parent/caregiver.
- Texting or phoning is permissible during out-of-school events, but only for practical reasons such as venues or transport and must be cc.ed in to the Parent / Caregiver
- Personal, suggestive, or inappropriate texts, messages or emails must not be replied to, even to tell the student to desist. A senior staff member must be informed immediately who will talk to the student and arrange a discussion about a way forward.

05

Interactions Outside School

- Teachers must avoid being alone with a student in a vehicle. If this is unavoidable, the student must sit in the back seat and another staff member must be informed (E.g., phoned during the car journey) A senior staff member must be told.
- Teachers must not be on their own with students in social settings e.g; when their families are friends or at concerts. A senior staff member must be told in either case.

06

Professional Boundaries

- Teachers are not counsellors and should avoid taking on that role.
- Teachers must take particular care with students who seek out or seem to need physical contact. It is important not to hug or cuddle a student even if they are upset. Teachers should sit/stand alongside the student and mirror their body language.
- There are cultural contexts where hugging or kissing on the cheek is accepted practice. It is important that the student has given consent to any physical contact.
- Teachers must avoid conversations with students about the teacher's private life.
- Teachers must not give gifts to students.
- Teachers may accept gifts from students in some *professional* circumstances, when given to them as a teacher (e.g. as a thank you at the end of the year, or after a production.) In those cases a teacher should let a senior staff member know when they have received gifts from students. Teachers must not accept *personal* gifts from students (eg birthday, St Valentines Day).

For more information & resources:

www.saferspaces.nz

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