

Personalised Learning College (PLC) High Needs Learners

Affectionate Behaviour Policy

Purpose

This policy supports learners in expressing affection in ways that are respectful, consensual, and appropriate for a professional learning environment. It reflects the maturity of college learners while promoting a culture of safety, inclusion, and mutual respect.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners across the college, including classrooms, common areas, and college-related events.

Core Values

- **Respect:** All affectionate behaviour must respect personal boundaries and the dignity of others.
- **Consent:** Affection must be mutual and never assumed.
- **Professionalism:** The college is a learning and working environment; behaviour should reflect that.
- **Inclusivity:** All learners, regardless of identity or background, should feel safe and included.

Acceptable Behaviour

Examples of appropriate affectionate behaviour in college include:

- Brief, consensual hugs with peers at the start of the day
- Friendly gestures (e.g. fist bumps, handshakes)
- Sitting together in social spaces
- Supportive verbal encouragement
- Respectful compliments

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following are not appropriate in college settings:

- Kissing or intimate physical contact in public spaces
- Prolonged or romantic touching (e.g. cuddling, sitting on laps)
- Behaviour that causes discomfort, embarrassment, or exclusion
- Any form of physical contact without clear consent
- Affectionate behaviour that disrupts learning or professional activities
- Online, social media or written messaging of an inappropriate nature

Consent and Boundaries

- Learners must actively seek and respect consent.
- Everyone has the right to say no to physical contact without explanation.
- Boundaries may vary between individuals and must be honoured.

Staff Role

- Staff will model respectful behaviour and intervene when necessary.
- Staff will support learners in understanding healthy relationships through tutorials, wellbeing programmes, and safeguarding support.
- Staff will treat incidents with discretion and a restorative approach.

Responding to Concerns

If affectionate behaviour breaches this policy:

- A restorative conversation will be held with the learner(s) involved.
- Support will be offered to anyone affected.

Support and Education

- Learners can access support through pastoral teams, Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies, safeguarding officers, or key staff.
- The college will provide education on healthy relationships, boundaries, and consent through PSHE, enrichment, and wellbeing programmes.

Review and Feedback

This policy will be reviewed annually with input from:

- Learner council and representatives
- Staff and safeguarding teams
- Anonymous learner feedback

Learners are invited to share their views at any time via the college's learner voice channels.