

Advice Sheet 3

APPROPRIATE MOVEMENT IN CLASSROOM FOR TEACHER AND PUPIL

A: Adult Movement

It can be better not to move too much around the classroom when trying to attract attention at the start of a lesson – too much movement here can distract the pupils. If beginning a lesson, take a reasonably central position where everyone can see and hear you and you are able to make eye-contact with all pupils.

When pupils are on-task, it is appropriate and probably essential to move around the classroom calmly, quietly and unobtrusively to keep pupils on task through a range of techniques (gestures, hurdle help, etc.) This is what is known as proximity control – by being 'on the pitch' as the pupils are working (as opposed to being 'in the stands' at your own desk or talking to another adult in the room) it is easier to monitor and support the ongoing work that the pupils are undertaking.

B: Pupil Movement

This is something each teacher must set up a routine for, based on our own level of comfort with pupils moving around the classroom. Our approach can vary from 'extremely strict' where no-one moves without permission, to allowing pupils to move freely for specified tasks. What we may need to do is to specify what these tasks are. Using the following examples, assess what your own preference might be:

<i>Classroom movement for pupils</i>	<i>Not allowed at all</i>	<i>Must ask for permission first</i>	<i>Allowed to move freely</i>
Putting litter in the bin / paring a pencil			
Opening a window			
Getting a drink / something to eat			
Washing hands			
Getting a library book			
Consulting with a class colleague			
Borrowing a ruler / Tippex / pen etc.			
Getting a folder / copy from locker / basket			
Collecting work from the printer			
Using the bathroom			

We may need to vary our approach depending on the age of pupils, level of responsibility of the class, class size, subject being taught and other factors. It's vital to communicate to pupils what is allowed / not allowed. We also need to make clear to pupils that if they are permitted to move around the classroom to undertake specific tasks, that they do so without interfering with the work / learning / property / space of other pupils or of staff, or making hurtful comments about anyone or anything, either audibly or whispered to another pupil.