

7.2 Physical Contact and Physical handling Policy

Policy statement

Children at St Saviour's Pre-school need to form close bonds with key persons in order to develop and grow in confidence.

There are occasions when children need to be cuddled, encouraged, held and offered physical reassurance. Intimate care routines during the session are essential to meet children's basic needs. Whilst being mindful of Child Protection issues, we believe friendly, physical contact is central to warm, personal relationships and to the good quality care of young children. We believe that Early Years Practitioners are responsible for promoting the development of young children based on secure attachment and emotional security.

Procedures

Comforting

- If a child requires comforting as a result of an accident, or upset after parting from a parent, cuddles may be given.
- Occasionally, when a child is separating from his/her parent, it is necessary to physically support the transfer to the practitioner, with the adult's consent.
- Children are allowed to sit on an adult's knee, if doing so provides comfort or helps the child to settle, and he asks or agrees to this.
- Occasionally, there is no alternative to picking a child up, as a last resort, to prevent him harming himself or others, or to support him/her in being included in a group.
- Some activities instigated by the child himself, will be explained as not appropriate, eg kissing, etc

Physical contact in play situations

- Appropriate physical contact during play, such as piggy backs, catching children as part of a game, holding children around the upper body to assist with jumping, stilts etc. is acceptable as long as the child willingly participates. Staff will be guided by the STEPS guidelines on physical contact.

Physical handling in relation to Behaviour Management

- In line with our Behaviour Management Policy, all staff will help and support children in taking responsibility for their own behaviour, including:
 - Positive role-modelling
 - Planning challenging activities
 - Setting appropriate boundaries and expectations
 - Positive feedback
 - Positive handling or restraint must be kept to a minimum and **only** used to calm and de-escalate a situation.

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