**5d** **Physical Contact**

**Policy Statement**

We recognise that as a pre-school providing care and education for young children there will be times when we need to have close physical contact with the children in our care. We also recognise that appropriate physical contact with children forms a vital part of their healthy emotional development. However, in order to safeguard the children and our staff we set clear boundaries for appropriate physical contact.

**Procedures**

* The safeguarding of our children is of paramount importance and
  + all staff, volunteers and student placements have an enhanced criminal records check through the Criminal Records Bureau
  + visitors to the pre-school are not left alone with a child.
* Physical contact will be appropriate when changing children’s nappies. We have a separate nappy changing and toilet training policy in place. See 4.5 nappy changing and toilet training policy for more details.
* Physical contact may be appropriate when assisting children with toileting and personal care. The aim of physical contact in these circumstances is teaching the skills necessary to carry out the tasks independently.
* Physical contact may be appropriate when assisting children with the development of other skills, for example holding them on a scooter or whilst descending a slide.
* Physical contact will often be the most appropriate way to comfort and reassure a distressed child. Appropriate physical contact in these circumstances may include cuddling, sitting the child on an adult's lap, putting arms around a child or hand holding. Staff do not, however, kiss children.
* With the consent of the child’s parents or carers it may be appropriate to physically remove a child from the parent or carer, for example for the parent to be able to leave.
* Physical contact can be an appropriate part of normal play at pre-school. Games may involve, among other things, catching, carrying and holding hands.
* When it is necessary or appropriate to lift or carry children we use proper techniques to protect both ourselves and the children, for example, avoiding carrying children on our hips.
* We recognise that for many different reasons some children are much happier with physical contact than other children. We aim to learn about the preferences of all the children in our care and to be responsive to these. We are sensitive to non-verbal communication, recognising that many young children will communicate their preferences in this way.
* We believe that physical contact is a normal and positive part of the daily routine and that by providing ongoing examples of appropriate physical contact children learn to differentiate between good and bad physical contact which will assist them in protecting themselves and making the right choices throughout their lives.

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woolston Community Pre-School held on**

**3 October 2016.**

**Latest Review December 2023**

**Role on committee: Nominated person**

Signed by

Date

Name of Signatory:

**Woolston Preschool manager**

Name Gemma Woodward

Date

Signature