06 Children Onsite Safety

**06.11 Physical Contact Policy**

Parley Community Pre-school believes that children need role models who show that physical contact is a good way to show care. These experiences empower them to be discriminatory and develop the warning sense of when an offer to touch is not right.  Without this they are vulnerable.

**Procedures**

* Parley Community Pre-school staff are encouraged to offer human contact *if and* *when the interaction is initiated by a child*. It may be a welcome hug from a child in the morning, a goodbye hug at the end of the day, or a lap to climb onto to enjoy an activity. As long as children are happy about contact and *initiate it themselves*, then contact is available. We count it as a privilege to be able to care for children with the love and warmth that helps to shape caring adults.
* The pre-school takes every possible measure to ensure that its pupils are protected from those who would do them harm. All staff are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service and have enhanced disclosures. Visitors to the group are accompanied at all times.
* Parley Community Pre-school cares for children from the age of 2 years to 4 years 11 months old. During their time at pre-school, inevitably there will be occasions when the staff will need to have physical contact with the children in our care. However, we are very aware of the need for clear boundaries for physical contact in order to protect everyone involved.
* Instances that would involve physical contact include the following: -

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| Reason for Contact | Acceptable Contact |
| Consoling and reassuring a child who is upset, possibly due to an accident or disagreement | Cuddling child, sitting child on adult knee. Tending to the area that is hurt. (Occasionally there is no alternative to picking a child up, but for Health & Safety reasons, this is a last resort.) |
| Child struggling to separate from a parent or carer | Occasionally, when separating a child from a parent /carer it is necessary to physically remove/transfer the child to a member of staff, with adult’s consent. |
| Toileting children who still require adult support | Lifting or supporting children onto the toilet.  Wiping bottoms following bowel movement if requested by the child. (Older children will be encouraged to do this for themselves.) Cleaning children if an accident occurred. |
| Changing the clothing of a child who may have soiled themselves or become wet during water play | Quickly undressing & redressing child – may involve removing underwear and replacing with clean clothes.  Cleaning soiled body parts with wet-wipes. Colleagues will always be made aware that child and staff-member have left the room to deal with soiling. |
| Restraining a child for their own protection or the protection of others (Behaviour Management) | Holding a child across their bodies, using gentle to firm pressure as necessary, until the child has calmed down sufficiently. There will always be more than one adult present. |
| Helping with dressing up clothes, adjusting clothing | General but brief contact with body |
| Holding hands, such as for reassurance, in circle games & role-play or for safety reasons | Gently holding hands |

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| Reason for Contact | Acceptable Contact |
| Children choosing to sit on adult’s knee during a pre-school routine (eg sharing a story, engaging in a tabletop activity) | Putting an arm loosely around the child, for support |
| Children celebrating an achievement | A brief “Well done” hug, a “High Five”, or a pat on the back, with a happy smile |
| Physical Play | Holding child around upper body, eg assisting them on bikes, stilts, helping them to jump, bounce, hop etc. Although the child may initiate such games and activities, there will be occasions when it may be adult-led. It is vital any contact must be on the child’s terms and with their willing participation. The adult must always be sensitive to the child’s feelings and body language. |

**Children with Special Needs**

* Staff who work with young children who have special needs, will realise that physical contact is sometimes necessary to assist a child in his or her daily activities. As such, staff must always be respectful of children's needs.
* Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of choice and control will be provided to them.