

St Marychurch Pre-school

Physical intervention policy

Statement of intent

Our setting believes that children flourish best when their personal, socially and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour

Aim

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to take into account feelings and needs of others

Methods

If a child is hurt or distressed adults will respond in a sympathetic and appropriate manner for a child who is of pre-school age. This may include offering physical comfort in the form of a cuddle, sitting the child on the adult's knee, removing the child, with an adult, to a quiet space for the child to calm down.

It is recognised that some children when hurt or distressed dislike physical comfort. Adults will be aware of this and will not further distress a child by offering unwanted physical contact. In consultation with the parents the best way of assisting the child in such a situation will be adopted.

At times the most appropriate and effective way of teaching a child a new skill may involve 'physical prompting'. Examples of this are: placing an adult hand over a child's hand when teaching them to hold a pencil, using a guiding hand on the child's back to reinforce understanding of an instruction such as 'coat on' 'wash hands' to indicate in which direction they need to go.

Some children may need support to enable them to explore activities within the playroom, so may hold adults hand to go to a new activity.

Physical intervention intended to prevent injury to the child or other children/adult

DFES guidelines (circular 10/98 and taking into account the Education Act 1996 section 550a) identify that a physical intervention can be used as a last resort in circumstances where:

- Good classroom order is at risk
- The child is at risk of harming/injuring themselves
- The child is at risk of harming/injuring others

To manage a child’s behaviour distraction, redirection, ignoring negative behaviours and positive engagement will be employed before physical intervention. Physical intervention intended to control or restrain will only be used as a last resort and in very exceptional circumstances.

Any physical intervention deemed essential will use the minimum of force over the shortest period of time. These may include:

- Physically interposing between two children
- Blocking a child’s path if they are intent on hurting another child
- Deflecting a hand or foot, or other body part that is intended to make contact with another child or adult
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of their back
- Moving a child, who is refusing to leave an area, by picking him up and taking him to the appropriate place (for example from ‘inside’ to ‘outside’). Moving a child to a quiet area, with the support of an adult, when his behaviour is disturbing the activities of others within the room.

After each session an incidents involving control or restraint will be recorded in the child’s file and discussed with the parent. At the weekly planning meetings strategies to be adopted to manage a child’s behaviour and promote improved behaviour patterns will be discussed in detail to ensure consistency between adults.

Signed.....

Position.....

Dated.....

Review date.....

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating, caring, happy Pre-school where all children and their families are welcome. We provide a curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage using individual children’s interest and needs.

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Physical intervention Policy for children with additional needs

Occasionally children with additional needs may need help with a new skill which may involve the adult in ‘physical prompting’ such as placing an adult hand over a child’s hand in order to introduce the PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), or a child will be supportively picked up and carried to a different area to be introduced to a new activity.

For a child who dislikes physical contact, it has been found useful to use a lap strap when they are sitting in a chair. This acts as a visual and physical prompt, to encourage the child to sit briefly and engage in an activity. Our experiences suggests that the children often find this calming, in the same way that they are often calmed when strapped into a car seat or push chair, and their ability to focus and attend improves. Under no circumstances is the strap used as a restraint or punishment. If a child showed distress at having the strap put on them it would not be used.

Signed.....

Position.....

Dated.....

Review date.....

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