St Mary's CE Primary Academy Preschool
Physical Contact and Physical Handling

Staff at St Mary's Pre-School form close bonds through the nature of their work with children. Children need contact with familiar, consistent carers to ensure they can grow confidently, feeling self-assured. At times children need to be cuddled, encouraged, held and offered physical reassurance. Intimate care routines throughout the day are

We believe friendly physical contact is central to warm, personal relationships and to the good quality care of young children. Good quality practice in early years encompasses a full understanding of child protection. However, early years practitioners are also responsible for promoting the development of young children, based on secure attachment and emotional security. The behaviour of all practitioners needs to support children as they grow as individuals and learn to value themselves.

Acceptable Comforting

- If a child requires comforting (following an accident or on parents' departure or when noticeably tired), and if in the short-term cuddles will help, these will be given. Children will be asked if they would like a cuddle.
- 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.
- Sitting a child on an adult's knee is often a way of giving comfort or calming a child, this will be done on the child's request or with their consent.
- Occasionally there is no alternative to picking a child up, but for health and safety reasons this must be a 'last resort'.
- Other activities, often instigated by the children themselves, we will explain are not appropriate. This includes any form of kissing on cheek, forehead or lips.

Physical Contact in Play

Tickling, catching a child as part of an agreed game, or holding a child around upper body, e.g. assisting them on bikes, stilts, helping them to jump, bounce, hop etc. are acceptable physical contacts that staff may from time to time engage in during play.

Although such games and activities may be initiated by the child, 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 will always be sensitive to the child's feelings and body language as they may not always communicate verbally.

All staff are trained and give due consideration to the EYFS, safeguarding, first aid and physical handling when assisting children in their play.

Toiletting and nappy changes

We may need to change children's nappies at pre-school. Our changing area is within the disabled toilet and another member of staff will be informed if a child is going to be changed. The adult changing the nappy will ensure that the door to the disabled toilet is open and the nappy change is recorded on the chart. Appropriate touch is used to clean the nappy area and apply cream if necessary.

We may also need to support children who are learning to use the toilet. It may be necessary to lift and support a child on the toilet. Younger children may need their bottoms wiped, although older children will be encouraged to do this themselves. The adult will NEVER touch a child's 'private parts'.

There are occasions when a child may need their clothing changed. This may be due to toileting accidents or spillages. The adult will inform other members of staff that they are changing the child. It may be necessary to wipe the child with a baby wipe but this will always be done in an appropriate manner. The change will be recorded on the chart.