

Bizzie Lizzies Nursery and Pre School.

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Pre school Ofsted URN – 2549120
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Appropriate Touch

Introduction

This policy outlines the nursery's approach to the use of appropriate touch with children in our care. We recognise that touch is an essential part of early years practice for building secure attachments, supporting emotional well-being, and meeting children's care needs. This policy ensures that all physical contact is safe, respectful, and consistent with safeguarding responsibilities under the **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)** statutory guidance, the **EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)**, and Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

Our Ethos

Our nursery ethos is rooted in care, respect, and nurturing relationships. We believe:

- Children should feel safe, secure, and valued.
- Comfort, reassurance, and affection are important for healthy development.

- Touch will always be **appropriate, proportionate, and in the child's best interests**.
- Children's consent, dignity, and autonomy will be respected at all times.

We recognise that some children may seek physical comfort such as a cuddle, while others may not. Both choices will be respected equally.

When Touch is Appropriate

Staff may use touch in the following contexts:

1. Comfort and Emotional Support

- Offering a cuddle when a child is upset, distressed, or seeking reassurance.
- Providing gentle physical reassurance (e.g., hand on shoulder, holding a hand) when needed.

2. Care Routines

- Nappy changing, toileting, washing, dressing, and other intimate care tasks in line with our **Intimate Care Policy**.
- Supporting children with feeding and personal hygiene.

3. Play and Learning

- Hand-holding during group activities, outdoor play, or when walking together for safety.
- Physical support when children are climbing, balancing, or engaging in physical activities.
- Appropriate contact in role play, music, movement, and sensory experiences.

4. Safety and Health

- Physically intervening to prevent harm (e.g., stopping a child from running into a road, separating children in conflict).
 - Administering first aid.
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When Touch is Not Appropriate

- Touch must never be secretive, forceful, or for the gratification of adults.

- Staff will not touch children if they indicate they do not want physical contact, unless it is necessary for their **safety or health**.
 - Rough play, or prolonged physical contact that could cause discomfort or misinterpretation is not permitted.
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Staff Practice and Training

- All staff receive training in **appropriate touch, intimate care, and safeguarding practice**.
 - Staff will always be mindful of **power dynamics**, cultural differences, and the child's wishes.
 - Where possible, intimate care will be conducted in a way that promotes independence and privacy while ensuring safeguarding (e.g., doors open but with respect for dignity).
 - Any physical intervention for safety reasons will be recorded and reported in line with our **Positive Handling Policy**.
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Safeguarding Considerations

- Staff will remain alert to how children respond to touch and will adapt practice to meet individual needs.
 - Any concerns about the nature of touch, whether by staff, peers, or visitors, will be treated as a **safeguarding concern** and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
 - This policy works alongside:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Intimate Care Policy
 - Positive Handling Policy
 - Code of Conduct for Staff
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Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes. Children's views will be considered in shaping our practice wherever possible.

