ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Sunny Brow Nursery School

where children grow

Touch Policy

Reviewed October 2026
Next review October 2028

FSA FOREST SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Silver Eco-Schools Silver Award

LEADING ASPECT AWARD

Ofsted Outstanding Provider

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SUNNY BROW NURSERY SCHOOL
TOUCH POLICY
With reference to "Rochdale Care, Control, and Physical Intervention Policy

STATEMENT

Sunny Brow Nursery School is committed to the best quality and highest standards of safeguarding for children. Our Touch Policy should be read with regard to the following:

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education settings.
- Rochdale Care, Control and Physical Intervention Policy.

Our staff are aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact with pupils. This policy offers advice and guidance on physical contact other than the direct use of force. It was stated for the first time in November 2007 by DCSF that, "no school should have a policy of no physical contact." There are circumstances in which physical contact is necessary in order to meet the emotional, safety and care needs of our children. Research has established that physical contact is important in developing relationships, providing reassurance and neurological development. **The paramount consideration is the welfare of the child.** This policy is intended to safeguard the welfare of the child and protect staff by describing the circumstances in which physical contact may be necessary, and how we can act safely and preserve the pupil's dignity.

There are 5 guiding principles:

- The welfare of the child comes first and takes precedence;
- We comfort children who are in need of comfort;
- We care for children who cannot care for themselves;
- We hold children to keep them and others safe;
- We endeavour to maintain dignity for children and staff

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To ensure safeguarding of children is paramount at all times
- To create, maintain and monitor a physically and emotionally secure environment for children and adults
- To maintain close working links with Rochdale's Care and Control guidance, ensuring all physical touch and any related documentation, policies and monitoring complies with the latest agreed best practice.
- To ensure that all physical touch is reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- To ensure that all children in distress receive appropriate comfort including physical touch if appropriate.
- To ensure that any touch is conducted in view of at least one other member of staff and that staff are made aware of their own personal risk assessment when working with children.
- To ensure any allegation or complaint is dealt with in line with our complaints policy, child protection policy and procedures, with due regard for the law and its processes.
- To ensure children are aware of their rights to refuse the offer of touch as a physical response to distress and ensure staff use appropriate touch in line with the child's own wishes and feelings of security.

TERMINOLOGY TO PRACTICE

Duty of care; the duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of the pupils involved in any activity or interaction for which that individual or organisation is responsible.

In this school; any person in control or in charge of, or working with pupils in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally to owe them a duty of care.

Touch; there are occasions when touch is a response to trauma, distress and human emotional need that would comfort, protect and enhance secure relationships.

In this school; we believe to deny a child physical reassurance is contra the needs of the child. For some children a physical response may be an essential way of communicating if there is little or no spoken language or a sensory impairment. Some physical contact may be necessary with young pupils and those with SEND. Staff may need to have physical contact with children to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching, to give first aid, to congratulate a pupil or to comfort a child in distress.

Appropriate touch; this is not invasive, humiliating, nor should it cause physical or emotional discomfort. Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority.

In this school, we have agreed places for appropriate touch in order to comfort or congratulate a child: Back, arms, top of head, shoulders and hands. Children need to

be educated in what constitutes appropriate touch so that they can recognise the difference between appropriate and inappropriate.

Hugging;

At this school, we encourage staff the are using touch for comfort or reward to use a sideways hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child's shoulders. This can be done either by standing or sitting. A very young, particularly distressed child may initiate a hug in which case the child may be held close for comfort for a very short time. Staff are to be aware of the hold and encourage child to sit/stand alongside as soon as possible.

Hand holding;

We recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This perfectly acceptable when the hand is compliant. However, if the handholding is being used by adult as a method of control to move children, this can become a restraint.

Lap sitting;

At our school we actively discourage lap-sitting. It may be used minimally as a distraction technique or as a comforter, child to be returned to sit or stand alongside as soon as possible. Children are taught to seek comfort /attention through other means, for example a hand hold or hug.