

<b>Policy/Procedure title</b>	APN 014 Positive Handling and Touch Policy
<b>Review cycle (*Please specify)</b>	Biennial
<b>Responsible department</b>	Science & Public Sector Services – Applewood Nursery
<b>Procedure *owner (*Overall responsibility)</b>	Head of Faculty – Science & Public Sector Services
<b>Responsible *person (if different to above)</b> *responsibility for communicating changes and staff training where appropriate	Nursery Manager
<b>Types of provision this procedure applies to: (delete as appropriate)</b>	Support Department
<b>Revision record</b>	
<b>Rev. no.</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>
0	10/04/2018
1	15/10/2020
2	20.2.2026
<b>Details and purpose of revision:</b>	
New Policy	
Biennial Review	
Review and update	

**Equality impact assessment**

Whenever a policy is reviewed or changed, its impact assessment also must be updated. The Equality Act 2010 seeks to simplify discrimination law and introduced statutory duties to promote equality whereby The College of West Anglia must, in the exercise of its functions, pay due regard to the need to promote equality in relation to the protected characteristics.

**Could any staff or students be adversely impacted by this policy/process? If yes give details and how this will be mitigated:**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Action and monitoring:</b>
20.2.26	Update and revision of policy

This procedure has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual Orientation and Disability. We will continue to monitor this procedure to ensure that it allows equal access and does not discriminate against any individual or group of people.

## Contents

1	Policy Statement.....	3
2	Procedures .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3	Behaviour.....	3
4	Physical Handling .....	3
5	Touch.....	4
6	Who can use restrictive physical intervention .....	4
7	How do we use touch.....	4
	Hugging .....	4
	Hand Holding.....	4
	Lap Sitting .....	5
	Carrying.....	5
	Please Note .....	5
12	Adults working at Applewood with Step On training.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## 1 Policy Statement

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community.

### Behaviour

At Applewood we aim to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour. We take into consideration the age and stage of development of the child.

We use a combination of positive behaviour approaches (see Behaviour Management Policy APN003) in partnership with the parent/carer, which include:

- Positive role modelling;
- Planning a range of interesting and challenging activities;
- Setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations;
- Providing positive feedback.

## 3 Physical Handling

There may be times when a child's behaviour presents challenges that may require physical handling.

There are different types of physical intervention.

- Positive Handling  
The positive use of touch is a normal part of human interaction. Touch might be appropriate in a range of situations:
  - Giving guidance to children, such as how to hold a paintbrush or when climbing;
  - Proving emotional support, such as placing an arm around a distressed child;
  - Physical care, such as first aid or toileting.

Physical intervention, as a behaviour strategy, is only used as a last resort if:

- Someone is injuring themselves or others;
- Someone is damaging property
- There is suspicion that, although injury or damage has not yet happened, there is an immediate risk of injury to self or others.

Applewood has a positive behaviour plan that is completed with parents. If required, staff will also complete a Record of Harm form for the parents/carers and seek guidance from Norfolk County Council.

We have plans in place to reduce the need for physical intervention which include completing behaviour plans where required for individual children, following a de-escalation script to help a child by talking and listening to them, and completing record of harm documents to monitor any harm caused, and to put strategies in place to meet individual needs. Should it become a regular occasion, there are incident forms for staff to complete. There should also be a review following the incident so that lessons can be learned to reduce the likelihood of recurrence in the future.

Staff should also use other protective measures, such as ensuring the environment is safe and appropriate staffing levels are provided. This duty of care also extends beyond the site boundaries, when staff have control or charge of children off site (e.g. on outings).

Where an individual child's behaviour means that they are likely to require physical restrictive handling, we will discuss this with the parents and set out a plan. This plan would specify the staff member(s) most appropriate and other methods to be used to support the child and maintain their physical and emotional health. Norfolk County Council would be contacted to assist with any plans.

These plans will be reviewed at least half termly and more often if there are major changes in the child's behaviours.

## 5 Touch

Touch is essential to provide sensitive and good quality care for the children Applewood support. Used in context, and with empathy, touch supports the development of our natural interactions with the children we care for. In play or for emotional reasons children of any age who are at early levels of development are likely to be quite tactile and physical.

We may choose to hold children for a variety of reasons, but in general terms we would normally do so due to their age, for comfort or reward. We may also need to physically touch, guide or prompt children if they require personal care, assistance with writing, eating, dressing, walking alongside busy roads, etc.

Staff must exercise appropriate care when using touch. There are some children for whom touch would be inappropriate such as those with a history of physical or sexual abuse. The setting's policy is not intended to imply that staff should no longer touch children.

We endeavour for Applewood staff to liaise with Norfolk County Council for strategies that may help.

**Physical Intervention** can include mechanical and environmental means such as highchairs, stair gates or locked doors. These may be appropriate ways of ensuring a child's safety.

**Restrictive physical intervention** is when a member of staff used physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will, reducing any risk to the child, other children or adults in the immediate area. In most cases this will be using the adult's body rather than mechanical or environmental methods.

Applewood Nursery follows positive behaviour strategies and does all it can to avoid using restrictive physical handling.

All Applewood staff have a duty of care towards the children in their setting. When children are in danger of hurting themselves, others or of causing significant damage to property, staff have a responsibility to intervene. In most cases this involves an attempt to divert the child to another activity or a simple instruction to "stop". However, if necessary, staff may use restrictive physical intervention.

When physical intervention is used, it is used within the principle of reasonable minimal force. Staff should use as little restrictive force as necessary to maintain safety. Staff should use this for as short a period as possible.

## 6 Who can use restrictive physical intervention

The Nursery Manager, Room Leads and the SENCO can use physical intervention. In an emergency, anyone can use restrictive physical intervention if it is consistent with the setting's policy.

## 7 How do we use touch

### Hugging

At Applewood Nursery, we encourage staff that are using touch to use appropriate hugs. Applewood accepts that, at times, young children need comforting although "front on" hugging is discouraged. For young and vulnerable children "hugging" is acceptable with the child is unsettled or distressed.

### Hand Holding

We recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is perfectly acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. At Applewood Nursery we would encourage all children to be independent, however we would take the hand of a child to give reassurance and to communicate security and comfort if this was deemed appropriate for the emotional well-being or safety of the child concerned.

#### Lap Sitting

In Bumblebees and Ladybirds, lap sitting is acceptable although not “front on”. In Grasshoppers we discourage lap sitting and encourage sitting next to the adult. Children with SEN can lap sit as they are unaware that this may not be appropriate.

#### Carrying

In Bumblebees carrying is acceptable due to the age of the child. In Ladybirds a child may be carried during passing from their parents/carer and during other times of the day, such as nappy changes and first aid. In Grasshoppers carrying is acceptable in emergencies.

#### Please Note

Although we have a touch policy and belief that contingent touch can be a positive experience for the children that we care for, this does not mean that we must touch children, and we realise that some children will not want to be touched and we respect this.

#### 8. Associated documents

APN016 Safeguarding policy

APN003 Positive behaviour policy