

**Christ Church CE School  
Physical Contact Policy  
Autumn 2016**



Christ Church CE School  
Redhill Street  
Regent's Park  
NW1 4BD

## Christ Church C of E Primary School

### Mission Statement

**The Christian Faith is at the heart of our school community. At Christ Church we care for each other and learn together.**

Christ Church is a small, caring school which is committed to a broad, balanced curriculum and to a continual raising of standards. We aim to contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical needs of every individual.

We are a Church of England school, with a strong commitment to the teaching of Christianity whilst supporting a multi-faith approach to the curriculum. We recognise, value and celebrate the rich cultural diversity that exists in our school.

The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in our positive, disciplined and calm atmosphere. We believe that effective learning takes place when children work in a purposeful and stimulating environment that supports a wide range of learning styles. Mutual respect between adults and children promotes excellent behaviour and well developed social skills. With this approach we seek to achieve high academic standards.

We aim to cater for each individual, taking particular account of any specific needs or abilities. We endeavour to ensure that all our children fulfil their potential and, within this context, we emphasise health and safety, enjoyment and achievement and the beginnings of responsibility for themselves and others. These skills will be carried forward to the next phase of education and throughout life.

The whole school community is committed to a collective responsibility for the implementation of the values inherent in this statement.

# **Our School Aims - Every Child Matters**

## **The Ethos of the School**

The school aims to provide a positive, disciplined, purposeful environment, within a Christian context. We aim to teach children to be caring, to exhibit good behaviour and appropriate social skills and to begin to take responsibility for themselves and others.

## **The Values of the School**

The School aims to value every child and to contribute to the Spiritual, Moral, Cultural, Mental and Physical well being of our whole school community. We value the diversity of our community and we aim to promote the health and safety of everyone.

## **The Standards of the School**

The School aims to teach a balanced Curriculum and to ensure that each child fulfils his or her potential. We aim to provide teaching and learning of a high standard. We believe that this is achieved when pupils are highly motivated, enjoy coming to school, and are appropriately challenged.

## Christ Church C of E Primary School

**Date of policy:** Autumn 2016

**Review date:** Autumn 2018

Because of the nature of the children in our care, their age, maturity and backgrounds, we endeavour to support children in a variety of different ways.

We wish to help children feel wanted and valued at all times in the school.

Many of our children either do not understand, or are still learning to understand the appropriateness of physical contact. Children look to us for approval and are testing out responses all the time.

It is often appropriate for children to be given some physical contact and comfort, but this must always be offered with the following caution:

1. Always ensure there are other adults or responsible children around.
2. Never show favour to individual children.
3. Never touch a child in the area between the waist and mid-thigh or near the chest.\*\*
4. Never touch a child in a way that could be mis-interpreted as being anything other than friendly appropriate adult-child support.
5. Where a child tries to get closer than appropriate, the message should always be along the lines of, "I like you and I enjoy being with you, but I would rather you held my arm/hand like this".
6. Some very active children sometimes calm down and focus on a lesson when having a gentle stroke e.g. on the back of the hand. In this case such a support mechanism must be written into the child's passport.
7. Cuddles should be short and side by side.
8. Never kiss a child.
9. A child should only sit on an adult's knee for a short time and for a specific reason such as following an injury, and not too close to the body. If a child may need to sit on a member of staff's knee for longer term support, this must be written into the child's passport.
10. Tickling is not appropriate.
11. For children within Foundation Stage, appropriate relationships are still being established, and there is a greater need for a more nurturing environment where it may be more appropriate for closer physical contact during some activities. The above cautions still apply, except that sitting on a knee, or longer cuddles may be more acceptable until the child is established and confident in school.
12. Where children require help with changing or toileting, the dignity of the child must be maintained at all times (See Intimate Care policy). Great care must be taken to ensure that all physical contact is specifically and only for the purpose of the operation being carried out.

\*\*Exceptions would be made in a physical intervention using only Team Teach approaches with trained staff - See Restraint policy.

Appropriate touches include:

- Hand shakes
- Shoulder hugs
- Holding hands during playtimes or outings
- Guiding children using "Caring Hands"
- Team Teach approaches for trained staff only

### **Children's response to touch**

Staff must always be aware that all children interpret and react to touch in different ways. Some children are over-demonstrative and try to demand a great deal of affection and physical contact, whilst others shy away from or have a dislike of physical contact. We must never assume that a child will accept a touch that is meant as a friendly gesture.

There may be children in our care who have backgrounds where there has been inappropriate physical contact, or even emotional, physical or sexual abuse. These children will be confused about adult-child contact and will need very sensitive support and care. Wherever there is physical contact, this must be seriously considered.

### **Child Protection**

Wherever a member of staff feels uncomfortable about the way in which a child is using or abusing physical contact, this must be immediately discussed with a Senior member of staff and recorded on a Cause for Concern form. This may need to be taken further into the Child Protection arena.

Further details are available from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Paula Walker) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Lorraine Puttick).

Staff must be careful not to make a child feel rejected if they have been over-demonstrative physically. Refer to No. 5 above.

Where children make impulsive emotional approaches such as "I love you", never reject or let down, but always respond positively by such as, "That must mean that you like me a lot, and I like you as well. I am especially pleased with you when you do your best work...". If this type of approach becomes inappropriate, or regular, seek advice from a senior member of staff.

### **Emergency procedures for physical intervention**

Although the school has a general policy of 'No Physical Contact' there may be the occasional time when all other avenues have been explored.

Teachers have a 'duty of care' to all pupils. If a pupil is becoming a danger to him/her self or others, there is a process to follow. The first line of approach will be verbal, using a variety of de-escalation techniques, interventions and instructions.

Where these have not worked, there may be the need to intervene physically to stop someone putting themselves or others in danger (See Restraint policy). Examples of these could be:

- A child running towards a busy road
- An angry child about to hurt someone
- A serious fight
- A child damaging school property

Where this might happen the intervention must be using minimal force, and only enough to stop the incident.

Regard must be made to The Education Act 1996 (Circular 10/98).

The child(ren) must be made aware of what is going to happen if the situation does not stop.

In an escalating or dangerous situation, reasonable, calm and considered responses could be:

- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding, pushing or pulling away from the incident
- Leading by the arm
- Guiding pupil away with hand in centre of the back

Such an incident must be reported fully in writing to the headteacher at the first opportunity, preferably the same day and never more than 24 hours after the incident.