



Ecclesall Kids Club

1.5 a Use of positive touch

Here at Ecclesall Kids Club we recognise the importance of positive touch when a child is upset, especially for our younger children & children with SEND needs, who may not be able to express what comfort they need. There is strong, empirically backed evidence that the use of touch in the comforting of a child who is in an acute state of distress is very beneficial. Not to reach out to the child in such circumstances could also be re-traumatising. The damaging long-term effects of this have been extensively researched worldwide and are well documented. However, we recognise that in some instances touch may not be needed. As a child-centred club that takes very seriously its responsibilities to safeguard children and young people, we have a written policy to clarify when positive touch is to be used.

Positive touch for supporting emotional needs

To best support and care for our children here at Ecclesall Kids Club, staff will:

- Consider the age and stage of the child when considering what level of comfort they need. Older children may only need a slight hug to the side, where younger children may need to sit on a staff member's knee for a while. For older children, our staff will primarily use verbal communication to help support an upset child but if the child is very upset, staff will ask if they need a cuddle.
- All staff will verbalise their actions whenever touching a child.
- Positive touch will mostly involve extremities or the back i.e. hand, arm and shoulder.
- All staff to keep hands visible to other staff when a child is sat on them.
- No staff member works alone in order to safeguard our children and staff.
- All staff aim to use a 'no touch' strategy when children do not need it. If a child requires positive touch, staff will not give this for longer than the time it is needed (e.g. a child will be encouraged to sit on the floor rather than a staff members lap).

Positive touch as a preventative measure

- Positive touch can also be used when a child becomes emotionally dysregulated. To help calm them down before they become more distressed, hurt themselves or others.

Positive touch in play

- As playworkers, staff will get fully involved in games with the children. This may require touch, such as hand holding or taps on the shoulder during games such as tig.

Staff training

Staff are trained to use touch only when it is necessary in the scenarios mentioned above and only when non-physical means of are not enough. The training forms part of staff induction and will take place before staff have direct contact with children.



Staff will be provided with information regarding:

- Appropriate positive touch
- When to use positive touch
- When not to use positive touch
- What to do if they are unsure in any way about what is appropriate

This policy was adopted by: Ecclesall Kids Club	Date: 03/07/2024
reviewed:	Signed: <i>Ecclesall Kids Club Committee</i>