

Ormesby Village Infant and Junior Schools Federation

Touch Policy – 2025

Reward and Comfort

- Our ‘safe touch’ policy means that we may choose to hold children for a variety of reasons, but generally we normally do so for comfort and reward. We encourage staff to use a ‘school hug’. This is a sideways hug, with an adult putting their hands on the child’s shoulders. This ensures we discourage ‘front on’ hugging as the adult’s hands on the shoulders limits the ability of the child to turn themselves onto the adult.
- We recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is acceptable when it is the child’s choice. We encourage the use of the ‘school hand-hold’. This is done by the adult holding their arm out and the child is encouraged to wrap their hand around the adult’s lower arm. The adult’s other hand can then be placed over the child’s for a little extra security if required.
- At our school we discourage lap-sitting. Children need to be taught to seek comfort and attention through other means, for example the school hand-hold or hug. If a child attempts to sit on an adult’s lap we explain that this is not what we do in this school and we ask them to sit next to us. If a child is in such distress that they hold an adult in a way which is not described above, we will always log the event and inform a senior member of staff.
- We realise that while touch can be a very positive experience for the children in our school, some will not want to be touched and we always respect this.

Restrictive touch

- Staff have a ‘duty of care’ towards the children in the school. Therefore if a child is likely to be at risk of harm without physical intervention in an emergency situation staff must take action. This action will be dependent on the dynamic risk assessment made at that moment in time and will subsequently be recorded and reported to parents.
- All members of staff are aware of the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers and understand that all forms of corporal punishment are illegal. Staff only intervene physically to restrain children if a child is in danger of hurting him/herself/other children/other adults or seriously

disrupting a lesson so that effective teaching and learning cannot take place. The actions we take are in line with government guidelines and follow Norfolk’s ‘Step On’ and ‘Step Up’ training strategies. There are Step On and Up Lead Professionals within the Federation. This means we only intervene physically when absolutely reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Staff may use ‘mitten hands,’ ‘open or closed palms’ – i.e. with the fingers together as if wearing mittens – to guide and escort a child from one place to another.

- Where restraint might be necessary this is detailed in a plan and shared with parents/carers. Parents do not have to agree to such restraint but they must be shown the plan and be told why staff consider such action necessary.
- The school will take seriously any allegation of abuse by a pupil in respect of an adult working in the school. In such cases the school will investigate the allegation properly with regard to safeguarding policies and make consultations/referrals to Children’s Services if necessary.
- If an accusation is upheld disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with DfE guidance.
- If an accusation is found to be malicious or unsubstantiated the Headteacher will determine whether sanctions need to be imposed on the child or the matter reported to the police. In either case staff will be properly supported by the school and Children’s Services and procedures followed correctly.

Repair, Reflect and Restore

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Date policy agreed	Review date
September 2025	September 2026

Signed: Chair of Governors L. Gardiner