



Appropriate Physical Contact Info Blast for Childminding Services

Childminders must ensure that appropriate physical contact is an **integral part of their service's policies and procedures** to keep children safe from harm. Physical contact is an **essential part of child development** and is also key in supporting children who are having difficulties with **emotional regulation**.

This requires working in a way that is **child centred**, where the needs of the child are at the centre of all practices at all times. It is crucial that children are treated with respect and that their right to privacy and dignity is promoted at all times.

Physical contact can be required in numerous situations, many of which are associated with **intimate care**. Examples can include, but are not limited to:

- Support with toileting
- Nappy changing
- Dressing/undressing
- Applying sun cream/topical creams etc.
- Support with eating
- Emotional regulation

The situations outlined above, along with many other situations, may require varying levels of support depending on the child and it is important that children, parents and carers understand when physical contact is required and when it's not.

When children are upset, comfort should be provided in whatever way the child requests, such as a hug or other form of appropriate physical contact.

The level of support children require can depend on many factors, including, but not limited to:

- The child's **age and stage of development**
- The child's needs
- The Childminding services' **Code of Behaviour**. If children seek physical contact, this should be provided, consistent with the Code of Behaviour

Physical Contact Should:

- Be child initiated
- Be in response to a request or need
- Be communicated to parents/carers
- **Support children's independence**

Practice Involving Physical Contact Should Be:

- Agreed with and understood by parents/guardians and where appropriate, children
- Communicated to, understood by and agreed with all stakeholders
- Outlined/referred to in all relevant policies and procedures

Children should be made aware of their right to privacy and dignity. Consent for physical contact should be sought from parents and from the child.