POLICY FOR PHYSICAL CONTACT.

At Stepping Stones, we believe that children often need physical contact and enjoy the feeling of being close to another person. But we also recognize that we need to respect their individual rights and have therefore documented the times and situations where these physical contacts may take place.

Because we recognize that children often find it difficult to settle or may need a cuddle the staff will comfort and cuddle your child as appropriate.

All staff within the setting have completed enhanced C.R.B checks and have been cleared for close contact with young children. All new staff or visiting people are never left alone with any child until these checks have been completed. As the pre-school is mainly based in one large room no member of staff is ever in the room on their own.

**During session times.**

If a child asks for a cuddle, then the member of staff will oblige but if the child looks unhappy and is noticed by the staff then they will be asked if they would like a cuddle- it will not be presumed.

Staff will encourage the child to participate in the activities available but will support the child's need for emotional support for as long as they need it.

This support will also take place when an accident/ incident occurs as staff feel that this is an important part in the "healing process".

If a child approaches an adult during the session but the adult is already engaged with another child, then the adult will hold their hand to reassure them that it is their turn next.

If the child exhibits undesirable behaviour the adult will ask them to rectify their actions i.e. pick up the toys they have thrown. If the child refuses the adult will use the "hand on hand" technique to assist the child to conform with the rules.

**During nappy or clothing changes.**

The changing room is only big enough for one adult and one child and therefore the member of staff who is doing the changing will inform other staff where they are going, ensuring that adequate staffing is left in the main room.

The staff member will encourage the child to help as much as possible and will reassure the child whilst changing them.

Once the child has been changed their name, date and the person changing them will be recorded in the nappy book. (any creams applied from the child's own bag will be recorded at the same time)
Toileting.

Every child will be encouraged to be independent in the toilet but sometimes the child may need assistance with clothing or cleaning. In this case the staff will assist the child and will help to clean their bottom after using the toilet but once again they will inform other staff where they are going and with whom.

Boys will be encouraged to handle their own genitals during toilet training and staff will not assist them with physical contact.

Both sexes when starting toilet training will be physically supported by staff when sitting on the toilet as they are not the correct height for this age group.

Visits outside the setting

Staff will encourage children to hold hands whilst outside the setting and will also take their lead by using hand holding to keep the group together. If a child gets tired or falls over whilst outside the staff member will pick the child up and carry them, whilst monitoring the rest of the group.