



## The Trinity Partnership Behaviour Policy

# Behaviour Policy Positive Touch Addendum

|                         |                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Date written:           | May 2022                                           |
| Date ratified by Trust: | May 2022 Anna Fisher,<br>Jon Steeden, and Jo Brown |
|                         | (Headteacher)Date of                               |
| next review:            | May 2023                                           |



## **The Trinity Partnership Behaviour Policy**

### **Positive Touch Addendum**

Touch not only promotes a child's social and emotional development but is also a highly effective and powerful method of non-verbal communication, is key to the development of healthy relationships and a method of stress relief. It can be used to:

- Show acceptance
- Provide reassurance
- Demonstrate affection
- Calm and provide comfort
- Emphasise the spoken word
- Provide sensory stimulation
- Engage in personal care routines
- Deliver various therapy programmes
- Offer an alternative to spoken communication
- Remove a child from danger or keep a child safe

When appropriate touch is not encouraged, as often happens, then all touch has the potential to become sexualised. Children don't learn to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch. They miss out on a whole range of valuable touch experiences – friendly, nurturing, reassuring, comforting and healing. We should be instilling a sense of what appropriate touch is.

Members of staff in a caring school recognise physical contact as an important part of child development and guidance. They understand that physical contact may be communication and they recognise the importance and significance of non-verbal communication and respond appropriately. This should always be done in a developmentally appropriate way and should a child shun the comfort offered through touch, the child's wishes will be respected by the member of staff dealing with the situation.

Therapeutic touch is used in situations where children are distressed. In these situations research has shown that it would be unkind or increase the child's distress if touch was not employed. When children are very distressed they often ignore information provided by their senses for example they may no longer see or no longer hear. When a child is distressed touch can be the only means of maintaining a connection with the child.

#### **Examples of appropriate touch may include the following:**

- Respecting the personal privacy and personal space of children.
- Responses affecting the safety and well being of the child (eg holding the hand of a child while crossing the street, using a STEPS hold when a pupil becomes a danger to themselves or others).
- Responses supporting social and emotional development such as hugs



## The Trinity Partnership Behaviour Policy

- (sideon to avoid full-body contact), reassuring touches on the shoulder, back rubs
- Touch for health and hygiene, personal care

Where a pupil requires intimate personal care, staff should ensure that the pupil is comfortable with the staff member attending to their needs. A pupil's privacy and dignity should always be preserved. (See Intimate Care Policy)

### **Examples of inappropriate touch include:**

- Satisfaction of adult needs rather than that of the pupil
- Coercion or other forms of exploitation of the pupil's lack of knowledge
- Violation of laws against sexual contact between adults and children
- Forced kisses, corporal punishment, slapping, striking or pinching, tickling for prolonged periods, fondling or molestation.

It is vital that staff should always consider the pupil's gender, race, disability, and age when using touch as individuals may be used to experiencing different levels or types of touch. An individual's history may also influence who represents a 'safe' adult to them. In addition, some individuals may be used to differing levels of touch as part of their cultural upbringing. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that all practice at Duchy School is safe, sensitive and appropriate.