

## ALTON COLLEGE NURSERY

### RESTRAINT AND PHYSICAL HANDLING POLICY

This policy was written as a guide for staff, students and parents to set clear guidelines about restraint and physical handling of children. For the purpose of this policy the term restraint means holding or securing a child in one place using a variety of means.

In respect of physical handling there are a range of situations where this is appropriate:- giving guidance to children (show how to hold a paint brush or how to climb) - Providing emotional support to a child (giving a child a hug, comfort when needed) - Physical care (such as- toileting or first aid). Staff must exercise appropriate care when using touch and must be aware that some children may find touch distressing (those with a history of physical or sexual abuse). The policy is not intended to imply that staff should not touch appropriately but to issue some guidelines to safeguard the children.

We need to have a set policy in place in order that there are no misconceptions or misunderstandings about when it is appropriate and inappropriate to restrain children. There are mechanical and environmental means of restraining a child such as high chairs, stair gates or locked doors. As a childcare provider we have a health and safety responsibility for the children in our care and we recognise that there may be occasions where it is necessary for the children to be restrained in order to prevent harm to themselves or others.

- Babies and toddlers using high chairs will be secured safely using the seat belts supplied. These can be adjusted to fit the child snugly. This will stop the child from being able to wriggle out of the high chair, over the shoulder straps are also used.
- Parents are asked for written permission for their child to be strapped in to the chair.
- As the children progresses from high chair to table for snack and lunch we have a table height high chair, we use these for children to experience the social aspect of meal times but still be safe whilst eating.
- These chairs are used for safety if the child is unsteady on a big chair and also if the child keeps getting up from the table whilst eating. For health and safety reasons (choking) children are not allowed to walk around Nursery eating food. Parents are asked for their written permission and preference as to whether they wish their child to go in an up to the table high chair or for the child's food and drink to be removed.
- Children using a buggy or prams should always be safely fastened in using the arm and legs harnesses supplied. These will be adjusted to suit each individual child.
- All safety equipment should be checked at each use to ensure that it is still fit for the intended purpose. All breakages or wear and tear should be reported to the nursery manager in order that repairs can be made.
- The responsibility for ensuring that children are safely restrained lies with the individual member of staff dealing with the use of high chairs or buggies at that time. If in doubt, then equipment should not be used and the nursery manager should be informed.
- Students using equipment should be overseen by a member of staff in order to ensure safety is maintained. New students should be shown how to safely use equipment before working with the children.

Restrictive physical intervention to children is when a member of staff uses physical force to restrict a child's movement against his or her will. A child should never be physically restrained by a member of staff other than for the reasons stated below. Discretion must be used in cases where staff assess that a child is in danger of harming themselves or others, and this should only be done when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Nursery promotes positive behaviour and staff will do their best to divert the child's attention to another activity however the staff do have a duty of care to all children in the Nursery and when a child is in danger of hurting themselves, others or property, they have the responsibility to intervene. If staff have to use physical interventions they will do so with reasonable minimal force for as short a time as possible. Any staff having to restrain/ calm a child should do so with the help of another staff member and a record of the event should be recorded on in the incident book.

- The use of restrictive interventions is to restore safety for both the child and the children around them.
- There are some situations that will be made worse by trying to restrain the child, the staff should assess the situation and act accordingly. In this instance other measures should be taken to ensure safety and make the area safe for everyone.

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