



**Luston & Shobdon Primary Community Primary Schools
Federation including Luston Nursery**

Safe Touch policy

Approved by: FGB **Date:** 24 Nov 2025

Last reviewed: November 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

The aim of the Safe Touch policy is to ensure that all staff carry out safe, confident and dignified practice when using appropriate, necessary and/or planned touch. All staff will be able to physically guide, touch or prompt children in an appropriate way at appropriate times however, generally staff should not be instigating touch, only responding to a need.

Why do we use touch?: We may need to prompt or touch children for a variety of reasons and used in context and with empathy, touch supports the development of our natural interactions that of affection and warmth. It can be key to developing fundamental social behavioural and attention skills and offering, when needed, physical support. Touch is generally needed for safety, comfort, personal care or assistance with for example: writing, eating, dressing etc.

Hand-holding in EYFS and KS1: Some EYFS and KS1 children get comfort from holding hands with an adult. This is acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. If the hand hold is being used by an adult as a method of control to move children, this can become a restraint. We do not hold any child's hand in KS2 unless that are very poorly or have had an accident. In such a case, two members of staff would be present.

Hugging in EYFS and KS1: Some children need a hug if they are feeling poorly or sad. The hug received would be a 'school hug'. This is a quick sideways-on hug, with the adult by putting their hands on the child's shoulder. This discourages 'front on' hugging and limits the child's ability to turn themselves into you. This can be done standing or sitting. Any children hugging at the front should be discouraged and reminded about the 'school hug'. We do not hug any child in KS2 unless they are very poorly or had an accident. If a 'school hug' is deemed necessary, this should be a quick action. A pat on the shoulder, top of the back or a high five could be used to show encouragement and support.

Kissing: We never kiss a child, unless it is our own child.

Lap-sitting: We actively discourage lap-sitting in the classroom. Children should be taught to seek comfort/attention through other means, for example the school hug or hand hold. If a child attempts to sit on your lap, explain to them that this is not what we do here and ask them to sit next to you, if it is appropriate. If a child has been in crisis or distressed and has needed a hug, please share such information with a member of the ELSA, Thrive or Leadership Team.

Emergency Situations: All staff have a 'Duty of Care' towards the children in their care in the Federation. Therefore, if a child is likely to be at risk if you do not physically intervene in an emergency situation, you must take action. The action that is taken will be dependent on the dynamic risk assessment that is made by the member of the team at that moment in time.

Positive Handling: if a child needs any form of restraint/positive handling then a positive handling hold would be used. The Leadership Team would be informed and the incident recorded and reported to parents/carers. Any child who needs to be

positively held would have a positive handling plan written which would be signed by a member of the Leadership Team. The Positive Handling policy is displayed on the Federation website.

Thrive Touch: The Federation is a Thrive supporting environment. Thrive practitioners work with children who need social and emotional support. If a child is emotional or lacking in confidence our trained Thrive practitioner may give a 'school hug' to a child. This touch would only take in place in a public space.

This policy was ratified by our Governors and disseminated to all staff.