As a registered childminder, I am very aware that each child has differing needs. Some children like to be affectionate and show their emotions through hugs, kisses, etc. Others are not so tactile. I am also aware that the level of contact necessary for caring for the physical and emotional needs of a baby, for example, will be very different to what is appropriate for an older child.

In my setting, physical contact is necessary for the following reasons:

* **Comfort and Nurturing:** This kind of physical contact will be required daily to meet the physical and emotional needs of younger children and babies, as well as occasionally (by request) for older children.
* **Intimate Care:** This involves managing personal hygiene for babies and aiding young children to perform tasks they cannot do independently (e.g. changing nappies, wiping noses/bottoms/faces, dressing and undressing, washing hands, replacing hair accessories). This may also apply for some older children, if appropriate.
* **Physical Intervention:** At times, the need may arise for me to intervene physically in a situation, in order to keep a child from harming themselves, others or causing damage to property. If children are fighting, they will be separated. I will always use the minimum force necessary. Any such incidents will be recorded and parents will need to sign to say they have seen my report.

All of the aspects above can be discussed in more detail on request, if you have personal preferences as to what level of contact you feel is appropriate for your child.

**Consent**

Physical contact between children, such as holding hands, kissing (on the hand, head or cheek) and hugging, is a natural way for them to express their affection for each other. These kinds of physical contact are welcome in my setting, but I encourage all children to ask before touching others and to respect the other person's response.

I also follow this practice myself and make sure that before making physical contact with a child for any of the reasons stated above, I ask their permission and, or explain what I am doing. Unless absolutely necessary for a child’s wellbeing, I would never do anything that they felt uncomfortable with.