

Peer Massage Policy

To be reviewed Bi-Annually.

Policy Agreed February 2021. To be reviewed February 2023.



NB: This policy is in line with the school/centres most updated Covid Risk Assessment referenced on the home page of the school/centre website.

Coronavirus Restrictions during 2021 to 2022 or until Government restrictions have been lifted: It is quite clear that even if the current lockdown arrangements are changed in the near future there will still be restrictions with regard to social distancing, which would make it not only impracticable but also impossible for Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, and The Centre for Nurture to be able to conduct peer massage safely protecting the health and welfare of staff, children and their families. Safeguarding and health and safety in the context of a global pandemic takes priority over all other considerations. Therefore, we **will not** be undertaking peer massage during a national lockdown and/or high tier COVID-19 restrictions, (e.g. Tier 4 and Tier 3) and when COVID-19 and other virus variants of concern are circulating in the community.

When COVID-19 restrictions are lowered and it is deemed safe to do so, we will resume peer massage adhering to this policy.

The School Policy for the Everton Peer Massage Programme reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body.

The Everton Peer Massage Programme (EPMP) is based upon the ethos, principles and protocols of the International Massage in Schools Programme (MISP) and has been adapted to suit the needs of younger children.

The mission of the Massage in Schools Programme is “to provide high quality and professional training to all teachers and caring adults willing to bring nurturing touch into schools.” Currently there are trained MISP instructors on the staff team and all Early Years Educators receive in-house guidance and support on the use of the programme.

“The vision of the Massage in Schools Programme is that every child attending school experiences positive and nurturing touch every day.....everywhere.”

EPMP is part of our approach to promoting the physical, social, spiritual, mental and emotional wellbeing of all children and staff.

EPMP is a programme of positive touch and clothed peer massage. The children learn a simple massage sequence which is given by the children to each other, working in pairs. The children wear their normal clothes and give massage to each other on the back, shoulders, arms and hands.

We are committed to developing the language of choice and children choose to take part or not by giving verbal consent to their peer when asked “can I massage you please?”. The session takes about ten minutes and children who are not in a pair can sit and watch, make the shapes in the air, or massage a cushion if appropriate. Each child should always be able to see the other children during the massage.

The MISP instructors regularly update the skills of the Early Years Educators in the EPMP and have a programme of planned observations. This is to ensure that the features of best practice are promoted and that the integrity of the set strokes is not compromised over time.

Peer observations and feedback is also encouraged.

The MISP instructors are members of MISA.

The Baby Massage Programme (Devised and supported by Sylvie Hetu) introduces positive touch to our families.

Parents and carers are also invited to take part in familiarisation sessions for EPMP which are run by the in-house MISP instructors.

Aspects of the EPMP (in accordance with MISP Ethos and Principles.

1. The daily routine of the massage strokes: this programme should not be changed unless by individual children as they receive it.
2. The inclusion of touch and movement as part of the learning experience. This creative aspect needs to be additional to, not instead of, the agreed programme.

Aims.

- To promote the wellbeing of children in the knowledge that nurturing touch is a basic need and a powerful tool to help children develop into healthy adults.
- To give children the chance to experience nurturing touch at school in a safe and creative way.
- To promote an ethos of respect for self and others, as children request permission to massage and say “thank you” at the end.
- To encourage children to use their voice. Those who do not wish to join in can observe or do an air massage.
- To develop positive communication. Children are encouraged to express their preferences regarding the strokes. They can say what they like or dislike and how much pressure and at what pace the massage should be done for them.
- To encourage children to feel relaxed and calm throughout and after the massage session and to understand that this is a positive way to start their learning day.

Objectives.

- To improve focus and concentration.
- To improve co-operation.
- To increase a stronger sense of self and higher self-esteem and confidence.
- To reduce rough play and aggressive behaviour.
- To promote a calm atmosphere.
- To encourage empathy and respect.

- To enable children to recognise the difference between good and bad touch and develop a language for that.
- To engage in a common experience.
- To encourage and develop imagination.
- To improve communication.
- To start the day “learning ready”.
- To enhance learning opportunities,

Partnership with Parents and Families.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and families.

- A letter is sent home explaining about MISP and to gain parental consent for children to participate.
- Workshops for parents in order to raise awareness are offered.
- The children are encouraged to share the programme at home with family members.

Our MISP instructors are happy to speak with individual parents/carers about the policy and the programme.

Other Related Policies:

- The Behaviour Policy
- The Care and Control Policy
- The PSED Policy.
- The Staying Safe Policy.
- www.messageinschoolsassociation.org.uk
- www.messageinschool.com

Policy review

This policy was reviewed by a group of seven Governors on behalf of the Curriculum, Children and Family Committee on Wednesday 10th February 2021 and ratified online by the Governing Body in February 2021.