

## Holistic Care for the Young Child Policy

It is my belief (and that of the Alliance for Children Network) that children have a right to feel safe and secure in their environment. Life long Trust principles are based on these practices. When a child is so distraught that they are unable to be comforted by a carer then it is not in the child's best interests that separation from the parent is continued.

My policy is clear that the opportunity for a child to be separated from their parent must be a happy healthy one. I have worked with hundreds of children over my many years of teaching. There are very few children who are not able to adapt to the separation. Those who do not adapt are; a) not yet ready for that separation, or b) not ready to adapt to a particular environment, which may include the carer themselves. These terms may arise repeatedly from time to time over the years of separating from a parent.

A very lively environment with many children, some also needing additional settling support, is not appropriate for a child who is experiencing a high level of separation anxiety. A suitable time in that child's development and the appropriate environment for that child's current needs is the goal to meet in external- to -family care.

I do not offer a business of traumatizing children so that parents can get on with their lives. I work in increments of time. When the child is known to me and has established some rapport with me the parent may leave for a pre-agreed time period. Like a "peek-a-boo" game, the child learns that the parent disappears and then reappears again. A child may cry for a few minutes after which time they are able to be distracted and engage in the surroundings. (10 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes of crying is considered feasible. If a child is still inconsolable after 30 minutes it is considered unfeasible for them to be kept in a public situation)

If the child disconnects from the environment, is not consolable by the carer, or becomes hysterical, then parental support is mandatory. A child needs to know and feel that "all will be well " because the parent is available. My duty is firstly to the child and children in my care.

Continuous frantic calling out for an absent parent also traumatizes the other children. It alerts fear in them and there is a domino effect of terror. THIS is not my idea of a healthy happy environment for children to learn and grow in. I would always want a child to know that their parent will come for them if they need them. The other children expect that too. This is a duty of care. I would assume all parents would want their child to know that too.

If a parent does not value the carer's methods then it is a mis-match of relationship. If a child continues to be distraught at the parents "disappearance " it is further proof that the child is not ready for this separation and is traumatized. That is exactly the scenario to avoid . These processes can leave life long scars if not done sensitively. I will not participate in such an outcome.

I am not just participating in growing children. I am supporting the growth of healthy happy adolescents, and adults and elderly. Clearly I have developed a reliable relationship with many families based on these policies.