Buxton Village Hall, Mill Street, Buxton, NR10 5JE

Tel: 01603 279468

 committee@buxtonpreschool.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1044583

Ofsted number: 253986

**Touch Policy**

All staff who come into contact with children in their work have a duty of care to safeguard them and promote their welfare.

All staff working at Buxton Preschool Playgroup know that inappropriate behaviour towards a child is unacceptable. However, it is unrealistic to suggest that staff should never touch a child, although physical contact to keep children safe and to stop them hurting themselves or others should be minimal.

Where a child needs a cuddle for comfort, staff will also use appropriate words to make them feel safe.

The positive use of touch is a normal human interaction and is appropriate in a range of

situations:

* Where a child needs a cuddle for comfort seeking to climb onto staffs laps, staff will encourage side sitting not straddle and staff will also use appropriate words to make them feel safe.
* Staff that are using touch for comfort or reward are encouraged to use a “Preschool hug” which is a side on hug where staff will put their hands on the childs shoulders to discourage ‘front on’ hugging and with the staffs hands on the childs shoulders limits the ability of the child to turn themselves onto staff. This can be carried out sitting or standing.
* Hand holding, we recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is perfectly acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. However at Buxton Preschool Playgroup we encourage children to be independent and would take the hand of a child to give reassurance and to communicate security and comfort if this was deemed appropriate for the emotional well being or safety of the child concerned.
* Giving guidance to children, such as how to hold equipment or support whilst climbing or balancing.
* Providing emotional support, ie calming a distressed child.
* Physical care, assisting with toileting, changing a nappy or dirty clothing.
* Providing first aid.

We understand younger children will need more physical contact than older preschool children and our day to day practice will be reflective of this.

All staff are aware that Buxton Preschool Playgroup believes physical contact is central to warm, personal relationships and to the good quality care of young children. We also believe that good quality practice encompasses a full understanding of safeguarding and this is reflected in our policy and practice.