**Neatishead and Barton Pre-School**

**Appropriate Contact Policy**

Our pre-school believes that an appropriate level of adult physical contact is essential for the healthy emotional and social development of the children in our care. We aim to provide a secure, caring and nurturing environment that supports the children’s emotional and social development and will support them to establish considerate and caring relationships with other children and adults.

Methods:

Our staff will offer the appropriate level of physical contact for each individual child:

* When it is welcomed or requested by the child.
* To offer the child a sense of emotional well-being or security when they need to be comforted, reassured or calmed in anyway.
* To support the child’s emotional and social development in an appropriate manner and encourage a sense of positive self-esteem and confidence.
* To ensure that their safety or the safety of another person is protected.
* To prevent or remove any physical discomfort or emotional distress.

**Appropriate contact can be described as follows:**

Nurturing – This includes hand holding, lap sitting or carrying. When sitting on a member of staff’s lap, the child will sit side on with their legs together (i.e. not straddling). This type of contact is never made against the wishes of the child, whether expressed verbally or through body language or gesture. The intention is to offer comfort for a short time to a child when they are upset or distressed. It is also normal and healthy for children to express affection for their peers. Staff are always visible to the other members of staff when offering comfort to a child.

Safety and Guidance – Staff, who are qualified as first aiders may need to administer first aid to injuries. Guidance involves restraining children away from harmful situations, separating physically conflicting children or directing children by gently leading or guiding them.

Hygiene – This includes face and hand washing; nose wiping; assisting with bathroom duties appropriate to age and personal development of the child e.g. nappy changing or bottom wiping; assisting with or conducting necessary clothing changes. Staff sign when they have changed a child’s nappy/wet underwear. This is always done with another member of staff observing.

Discipline – Our staff never use physical punishment and we do not tolerate thumping, kicking or slapping between children please refer to our Behaviour policy for further information.

All staff overseeing any of the above duties will be subjected to DBS clearances.

Unwelcome touch, where a child indicates that touch from an adult is not welcome, perhaps by moving away or flinching to avoid, the staff member should apologise which demonstrates a respect for personal boundaries.

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure that all practice at Preschool is safe and appropriate. We should all expect to be observed by others and be prepared to discuss any concerns we have in a professional manner. Any member of staff who is concerned about another member of staff’s practice should discuss their concerns immediately with the manager and make a referral to the LADO.

**Links to other relevant policies**:

* Safeguarding policy

Signed on behalf of the Committee

Name of Signatory

Role of Signatory

Date

Date to be reviewed