



# Intimate Care Policy

Last reviewed in: March 2020

Accepted by Trustees in: October 2021

Due for next review in: October 2023

## Introduction

This policy represents the agreed principles for intimate care throughout the school. This policy has been agreed by staff and trustees. The purpose of this policy is:

- to safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- to ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- to safeguard adults undertaking intimate care
- to raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- to inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered
- to ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate care of their children.

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child is allowed to exercise choice and is encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body.

Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self esteem. Parents/carers and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care are dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

## Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is one of the following:

- supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing
- providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- cleaning a pupil who has soiled/wet him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell.

### **Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed, particularly in the Early Years. Staff always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

### **Providing comfort or support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in the Early Years). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child-initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this must be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. Any such incident must be reported and diarised.

## **Medical procedures**

See Administration of Medicines Policy

## **Soiling/wetting**

Intimate care for soiling/wetting is only given to a child after the parents/carers have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents/carers who have children in the Early Years may sign a permission form so that the Early Years staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling themselves.

If a parent does not give consent, the school will contact the parents/carers or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent/carer arrives.

Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent/carer to arrive; an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed. If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, we will seek to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself.

If the parents/carers and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Head Teacher will be consulted. If put in an impossible situation where the child is at risk, staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

When touching a child, staff are always aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and respect the child's wishes and feelings.

### **If a child needs to be cleaned, staff make sure that:**

- protective gloves and aprons are worn
- the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- all spills of vomit, blood, urine or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- any soiling/wetting that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- soiled/wet clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

## **Hygiene**

All staff are familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, and follow basic hygiene procedures access protective, disposable gloves and aprons.

## **Protection of Staff**

Members of staff have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These include:

- gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable

- allow the child a choice in the sequence of care<sup>i</sup>
- be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

## Safeguards for Children

All staff have enhanced DBS clearance. Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school.

Volunteers do not carry out intimate care procedures. Students only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

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