



Intimate care Policy

Approved by:	The LGB		
Responsible department:	Leadership team		
Last review date:	April 2024	Last reviewed by:	AJM & ST
Last updated:	April 2024	Last updated by:	AJM & ST
Next review due:			

Introduction

There are times when a child may require a change of clothes whilst at school. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines and procedures for providing the intimate care of all children, including procedures for staff changing or supporting the changing of children in these circumstances.

These guidelines and procedures apply to changing a child in a range of circumstances, for example:

- When a child has wet or soiled themselves due to having not reached continence as part of a specific medical condition or global developmental delay.
- When a child has vomited or is wet or soiled themselves.
- When a child has become dirty or wet from involvement in play activities, for example, painting or water play.
- When a child requires support and assistance changing for physical activities. These guidelines are designed to promote good practice and safeguard children and practitioners. These apply to everyone involved with the intimate care of children within the EYFS.

Aims:

- To include all young children in activities regardless of their ability to manage their own personal care.
- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose role includes intimate care.
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into consideration.
- That no child is discriminated against, in line with the Equalities Act 2010.

Definition of Intimate Care:

‘Care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demands direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the sexual parts of the body’.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified as relevant include:

- dressing and undressing (underwear).
- helping someone use a toilet.
- cleaning / wiping / washing intimate parts of the body.
- application of medical treatment, other than to arms, face and legs below the knee.

Definition of Personal Care:

‘Although it may involve touching another person, it is less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal presentation’.

Personal care tasks specifically identified as relevant include:

- feeding
- administering oral medication
- hair care
- dressing and undressing (clothing)
- washing non-intimate body parts
- prompting to go to the toilet.

Children’s intimate care needs cannot be seen in isolation or separated from other aspects of their lives. Encouraging them to participate in their own intimate or personal care should therefore be part of a general approach towards facilitating participation in daily life.

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Staff involved with intimate care of pupils need to be sensitive to individual needs. Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation.

Working with parents

- Partnership with parents is a vital principle in any educational setting and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious or cultural sensitivities.
- Prior permission must be obtained from parents before Intimate care procedures are carried out (See Appendix A).
- Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with Individual Health Care plans and any other plans that identify the need to support of intimate care.
- Exchanging information with parents is essential through personal contact, telephone or correspondence. However, information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in home/schoolbooks or in any other way as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and staff member. Recording equipment such as mobile phones or cameras must not be taken into areas where intimate care is carried out.

Care Plans

Where a pupil has particular needs (eg wearing nappies or pull-ups regularly or has continence difficulties which are more frequent than the odd 'accident', staff will work with parents/carers (and health visitors/school nurse, if appropriate) to set out a care plan to ensure that the child is able to attend daily.

The school SENCO will be part of this process.

The written care plan will include:

- Who will change the child including back-up arrangements in case of staff absence or turnover,
- Where changing will take place,
- What resources and equipment will be used (cleansing agents used or cream to be applied?) and clarification of who is responsible (parent or school) for the provision of the resources and equipment,
- How the product, if used will be disposed of, or how wet or soiled clothes will be kept until they can be returned to the parent/carer,
- What infection control measures are in place,
- What the staff member will do if the child is unduly distressed by the experience or if the staff member notices marks or injuries,
- Training requirements for staff,
- Arrangements for school trips and outings,
- Care plan review arrangements.

Personal Care Procedures

The staff in our EYFS will follow agreed procedures when attending to the care or continence needs of any pupil within the setting, whether this be a child with a care plan agreement or a child who has had an occasional 'accident'.

Child Protection

The normal process of changing continence or wet/soiled clothes should not raise child protection concerns, and there are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the changing process to ensure that abuse does not take place. Few settings/schools will have the staffing resources to provide two members of staff for changing and DBS checks are carried out to ensure the safety of children with staff employed in our school. If there is known risk of false allegation by a child then a single practitioner will not undertake changing. A student on placement will not change a child unsupervised.

Wherever possible, the same member of staff will be allowed to change named children. This reduces the risk to the child and promotes their dignity. The care plan will outline back up or contingency measures in the event that the named member of staff is not available.

Safeguarding

At school we will:

- ensure staff are familiar with school's safeguarding policy including the section on allegations against staff,
- ensure another member of staff is present at all times during the intimate care of a child i.e. changing of a nappy,
- ensure all staff are up to date with their safeguarding training,
- Should staff observe any unusual markings, discolorations or swelling, including the genital area, these will be reported immediately, following school policies and procedures.
- if, during the intimate care of a child, staff accidentally hurt them, the child will be reassured, ensuring their safety and the incident reported immediately to the senior leaders.

Health and Safety:

This should include:

- staff to wear disposable gloves whilst changing a child,
- soiled clothing or underwear to be disposed of appropriately,
- toilet areas to be left clean,
- hot water and soap available to wash hands as soon as changing is done,
- paper towels are available to dry hands.

Monitoring and Review

- The headteacher and the SENCO will take responsibility for monitoring that agreed procedures are being followed and are meeting the needs of children and families.
- It is the headteacher and SENCO's responsibility to ensure that all practitioners follow the school policy.
- Any concerns that staff have about child protection issues will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and subsequently the headteacher for further referral if appropriate.
- This policy runs alongside other school policies, particularly Safeguarding Children, SEND, and Health and Safety.

Environmental Advice

The school ensures that toilet facilities are easily accessible and well maintained to promote children's awareness of good hygiene practices and developing independence.