

INTIMATE CARE POLICY 22-23

Reviewed: March 2022
Next review: March 2023
Ratified: 7.4.22
Signed A.M.Boyd HT
C Barclay COG

Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. **Staff will follow strict hygiene measures.**

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues.

We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given.

Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training as needed for specific pupils with statements/disabilities) and are fully aware of best practice.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible, one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's care plan.

The Protection of Children

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness, etc she/he will immediately report concerns to a designated person for child protection.

If a child becomes stressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Child Protection Procedures for details).

Changing Facilities

Children who have long-term incontinence will require specially adapted facilities. The dignity and privacy of the child should be of paramount concern.

Girls are provided with sanitary products which are stored discretely in the Upper Key Stage 2 toilets.

Equipment Provision

The school is responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin, non-allergic wipes, and liners to dispose of any waste.

Health and Safety

Staff should wear a plastic apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste.

Special Needs

Children with special needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and Support Plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the children, those with parental responsibility and the school should be easily understood and recorded. Parents of pupils with regular soiling/wetting will be encouraged to leave a change of clothes in school for the use of their child. Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought with regular reviews of arrangements.

Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children needs to exercise caution in the use of physical contact.

The exception is that staff will work in "limited touch" cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, will be

of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well intentional contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of “limited touch” will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child’s needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child’s view, physical contact may be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations, wherever possible.

Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property.

In such cases only the minimum amount of restraint should be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control.

In all cases of restraint the incident must be recorded and reported. (MIR Report and Positive Handling Book).

Under no circumstances would it be permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment, to modify behaviour, or to make a pupil comply with an instruction.

Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgment will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil’s distress.

First Aid and Intimate Care

The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet./soiled clothing) another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between the school, those with parental responsibility and the child concerned should be reviewed regularly. The child’s views must also actively be sought. A letter of agreement will be required between school and those with parental responsibility. (See attached)

Physical Education and Other Skills Coaching

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.

Staff should be aware of the limits within such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.

Showers/Changing Clothes

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people, with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Out of School Visits, Clubs, etc.

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more formal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with their school's policy and all LA guidance regarding out of school activities.

To ensure pupil's safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on field trips, holidays, etc. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

Equipment to use when changing a child

- Plastic aprons
- Gloves
- Non-allergic wet wipes
- Plastic bag for soiled underwear/clothes
- Separate soil bin
- Alcohol gel

Record of incident

A Record is kept in a file in the medical room.

A record is kept in each EYFS classroom and in preschool.

- Form attached
- Note to be sent home

Record sheet 1:

Dear Parent,

Your child currently soils/wets regularly.

We will support your child in developing independence in changing/cleaning themselves.

Attached is our Intimate Care Policy for you to read. Please sign and return the slip.

Yours sincerely,

Child's Name _____

I have read the Intimate Care Policy and agree to my child being supported to develop independence in changing/cleaning themselves.

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

Record sheet 2:

Dear Parent,

Your child _____ soiled/wet him/herself today.

he/she changed their clothes independently
he/she changed their clothes with adult support
he/she was changed by an adult

In accordance with our policy the incident has been recorded.
In your child's bag you will find soiled/wet clothes. Would you kindly return the school's clothes loaned to your child after they have been washed.

Thank you.

Record sheet 3:

Record of Intimate Care

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Date	Time started	Time finished	Procedure	Staff signature	Second signature