



Intimate Care Policy

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Intimate Care Policy

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or removal of wet/soiled clothing). A care plan will be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

Definition of intimate care

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which may involve staff touching parts of the child's body. Examples include care associated with toileting and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing.

Aims

The School aims to:

- treat children with sensitivity and respect, so that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- allow the child to care for him/herself as far as possible
- be aware of, and responsive to, the child's reactions
- ensure that staff have a high awareness of child protection issues and will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times

Strategies for dealing with intimate care issues

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. Wherever children can learn to assist in carrying out aspects of intimate care, they should be encouraged to do so. This practice fits into the school's personal and social development programme in terms of giving children life skills and developing their independence.

Explanations of what is happening are given in a straight forward and reassuring way to the individual child considering any religious and/or cultural sensitivities related to aspects of intimate care relevant to the individual.

Facilities, which afford privacy and modesty e.g. separate toilets, are provided and respect is given to a child's preference for a particular care and sequence of care.

Appropriate terminology for parts of the body and functions are used by staff, who encourage children to use these terms as appropriate.

Changing children who have wet or soiled themselves (EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2)

We have some very young children in our school who try hard to fit into our daily routines. However, as they get more and more engrossed in the activities provided, we understand that from time to time young children, especially in the EYFS and Years 1 and 2, will have accidents that require attention.

Staff should change children who have wet or soiled themselves in order to minimise discomfort and embarrassment. For the sake of clarity, parents are informed of the procedures that we follow:

- staff will change the wet or soiled clothing as soon after the accident as possible
- the changing will take place discretely in the toilet area
- staff will use disposable gloves
- antibacterial wipes will be used to ensure the child is clean
- wet or soiled clothing will be stored in a plastic bag to go home with the child

If a child becomes unduly distressed or embarrassed by the experience, the staff concerned should comfort and reassure him/her, talk through what they are doing and ensure that the change is completed swiftly. Every effort should be made to minimise embarrassment and discomfort.

It is not usually practicable from the point of view of staffing resources for there to be two members of staff involved with a child needing intimate care unless for health and safety reasons e.g. with a child who is ill or difficult to move or handle. The best interests of the child need to be considered in making such decisions. Whilst the presence of two people may be seen as providing protection against a possible allegation of abuse against a member of staff, it further erodes the privacy of the child.

The use of toilets

Parents should be encouraged to train their children at home as part of their daily routine, and school should reinforce these routines whilst avoiding any unnecessary physical contact. Where possible, staff should be mindful of respect for the personal dignity of the pupils when supervising, teaching or reinforcing toileting skills.

Parental rights and responsibilities

Ultimately it is parents, as the child's main carers who have responsibility for his/her health. They should give relevant information to the School about their child's medical condition, and any medication involved in treatment.

Cultural and religious sensitivities should be considered in relation to aspects of intimate care. These should be discussed with parents, and wherever possible, with the child. All staff involved in delivering intimate care should be made aware of these issues relating to individual children and taken into full account in practices.