



## Intimate Care Policy

'Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.' (9.26 ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures). In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Brixworth CEVC Primary School is 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 our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

Toileting issues should not prevent any child from accessing education and should a child have toileting needs we will address this as part of our holistic education and development.

### **Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:**

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him/herself
3. Assisting with toileting issues
4. Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
5. Providing first aid assistance
6. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
7. Feeding a child
8. Providing oral care to a child
9. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided (In this instance, a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam.) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- Every child has a right to be safe
- Every child has the right to personal privacy
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent

### **Assisting a child to change his/her clothes**

This is more common in our Foundation Stage. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he/she has a toileting accident, gets wet outside or has vomit on his/her clothes etc.

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

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 changed. Adults who assist a child one to one are employees of the school and have DBS checks at the appropriate level.

### **Changing a child who has soiled him/herself**

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry this out themselves.
- Parents are to provide wipes, nappy sacks, plastic bags for soiled clothing and spare clothing.
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will assist the child as necessary. If the child shows any distress school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation and request they come to school.

- Soiled clothing will be placed in double plastic bags and returned to the parent/carer where facilities for sluicing are not available
- Staff will complete Intimate Care Record Form (appendix 2) each time intimate care is performed if the situation is ongoing.

### **Child protection/safeguarding Guidelines**

- Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary.
- Always check with the child first that they are happy for you to proceed
- If the child cannot clean themselves unsupported and are required to be cleaned in the first aid room, two members of staff will be present to wash and dry the child.
- A risk assessment must be carried out by the teacher and will include likelihood of false allegation risk.
- Written consent must be obtained by the parent (appendix 1)

### **Pastoral Care Procedures**

- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her
- Be responsive to any distress shown

### **Equipment Provision**

School is responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste. Parents should provide nappies/pull ups (if required) disposal bags and wipes.

### **Basic hygiene routines**

- Always wear protective disposable gloves and apron
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents

### **Providing comfort and support to a child**

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years.) Where this happens staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Head Teacher or Designated Safe Guard Lead.

## **Allergies**

- Staff will be made aware of any allergies the child may have to products, such as latex.

## **Swimming**

Selected Year 5 & 6 children participate in a swimming programme at Lings Forum, Weston Favell. Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their 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, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

Lings Forum has changing cubicles and a village style changing room. Children are free to choose where they change however if they need support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence.

## **School responsibilities**

All members of staff working with children are vetted by the local authority. This included references and criminal record checks.

Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy and other pastoral care policies of the school are involved in the intimate care of children.

Where anticipated that a child needs intimate care, arrangements will be agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child.

If a member of staff has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Head Teacher or Designated Safeguard Lead.

## **Guidelines for Good Practice**

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard the children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of 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 forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff.

1. **Involve the child in the intimate care.** Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done, and where possible, give choices. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. **Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.** Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child. Staff member should always inform a colleague that they are assisting a child. If a child needs support in the first aid room with the door closed, two members of staff must be present.
3. **Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.** As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.
4. **Be aware of your own limitations.** Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
5. **Promote positive self-esteem and body image.** Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.
6. **If you have any concerns, you must report them.** If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling report it immediately to the Head Teacher or Designated Safe Guard Lead.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Safeguard Lead. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

### **Working with Children of the Opposite Sex**

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman.

The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. not in view of other children.
- If the child appears to be distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguard Lead and make a written record;
- Parents must be informed about any concerns.

### **Communication with Children**

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress children may communicate using different methods – words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:

- Make eye contact at the child's level;
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- Wait for a response;
- Continue to explain to the child what is happening; and
- Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.



## INTIMATE CARE POLICY PARENTAL AGREEMENT FORM

I agree to support the Intimate Care Policy and practice of Brixworth CEVC Primary School.

Should it be necessary I give permission for my child to receive intimate care (e.g. help with changing or following toileting)

I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to be independent.

I understand that I will be informed discreetly should the occasion arise.

Signature of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A full copy of the Intimate Care Policy can be found on our school website:

[www.brixworthprimary.org.uk](http://www.brixworthprimary.org.uk)



