



Intimate Care Policy

Ratified:

Chair, Board of Governors:

Renewal Date:

Intimate Care Policy

The Intimate Care Policy has been developed in line with the Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children, SBNI Procedures Manual online Dec 2017 and Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools-A Guide for Schools DE 2017(updated Sep 2019, Aug 2020, Sep 2023

Introduction

Willowbridge 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 children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children have been developed to safeguard children and staff.

They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Intimate care may involve washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself), that most children can carry out for themselves, but with which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

Intimate care may also involve help with drinking, eating, dressing, menstrual care, supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care and toileting. Help may also be needed with changing colostomy bags and other such equipment. It may also require the administration of an insulin injection, epipen or rectal medication.

In most cases intimate care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of equipment associated with the process. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent will undertake the procedure. Any additional training will be provided by the school.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Assistance in Dressing/undressing
- Toileting

March 2020. (reviewed Mar 23) (reviewed Dec 23)

- Changing or washing a child who has soiled him/herself
- Menstrual Care
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Aims

The aims of this document and associated guidance are:

- To provide reassurance to staff and parent/s
- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into account.

Principles

This document embraces the principles of The Children (N.I.) Order 1995, Cooperating to Safeguard Children 2017.

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual
- Every child has the right to remain healthy
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs
- Every child has the right to information and support that will enable him or her to make informed and appropriate choices
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs
- Every child (and parent) has the right to information and procedures for any complaint or queries he or she may have regarding intimate care

Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection) and are fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities are to be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist.

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 procedures will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. 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

catered for by one trained adult, unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented such as moving and handling.

Intimate care arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Working with Parents

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any school and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Parents have the responsibility to advise staff of the Intimate care needs of their child and staff have the responsibility to work in partnership with children and their parents. 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 religions/cultural sensitivities. **Permission will be obtained from parents for Intimate Care procedures to be carried out (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).** This will include involvement with PLP's, Health Care Plans and any other plans that identify the need for Intimate Care where appropriate. Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood, and met. Exchanging information with parents is essential through face-to-face contact, telephone, or written correspondence. Staff need to be aware that recording information in written form may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and named staff member.

Intimate Care Plan and Procedures

Where a routine procedure is required intimate care procedures should be agreed in discussion with the child (where appropriate), parents and relevant health personnel. Intimate Care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by parents/carers. Appendix 4

In developing the plan the following should be considered;

a) Whole School implications

- The importance of working towards independence
- Arrangements for home-school transport, sports day, school performances, school trips, swimming, etc.
- Ensure that there is enough stock of equipment and medication (within date) such as nappies and liaise with parents when stocks are running low.
- Who will substitute in the absence of the appointed person?

b) Classroom management

- The child's seating arrangements in class

- A system for the child to leave class without disruption to the lesson
- Avoidance of missing the same lesson all year due to medical routines
- Awareness of a child's discomfort which may affect learning
- Implications for PE e.g. discreet clothing, additional time for changing
- Strategies for dealing with pressure from peers. e.g. teasing/bullying particularly if the child has an odour

All plans will be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectation, roles and responsibilities. They will reflect all methods of communication including emergency procedures between home, school, and medical services. A procedure will also be included to explain how concerns arising from the intimate care process will be dealt with (e.g. School's Complaint's Policy).

Menstruation

Should a pupil at Willowbridge start their menstrual cycle then everything within this policy would appertain to the procedures, care, dignity and support for that pupil. Parents can be asked to supply sanitary wear and wipes if appropriate, the school will provide emergency sanitary packs and clinical bins for the disposal of sanitary wear.

Continence

Achieving continence is one of the many developmental milestones usually reached within the context of learning before a child transfers to school. At Willowbridge, we acknowledge that there may be children with longer term continence issues for whom an **individual programme may need to be put in place. (Appendix 3 -Working towards Independence)**. In addition, there may be children joining us in school who are at various points of developing their independence in toileting who may need short term support in this important area of personal hygiene. Parents will be asked to supply spare clothing in the event of incontinence. **A Toilet Management Plan can be agreed with parents (Appendix 4)**

Toileting Procedures

If the Toilet Management Plan (Appendix 4) has been agreed and signed by parents, children and staff, it is acceptable for only one member of staff to assist unless there are implications for safe moving and handling of the child.

The plan will consider the following;

- Location of the plan for reference, ensuring discretion and confidentiality.
- Location of recording procedures, ensuring discretion and confidentiality.
- Necessary equipment & waste disposal – see environmental.
- Clear labelling of equipment and procedures will be displayed e.g. Wipe table after use.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself

If a child soils him/herself in school the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves. School will ask parents to provide a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. Always wear protective disposable gloves. Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents. (Staff should rinse heavily soiled items of clothing in a sluice sink before returning to parents).

Swimming

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. Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought (**Appendix 2**)

Pupil Voice

In some cases, and if appropriate, a pupil may wish to be consulted on how staff provide intimate care. In such cases, **Appendix 5** can be completed.

It may be also possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of reactions to the intimate care. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents/carers are usually in the best position to act as advocates. It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing. To ensure effective communication with the child, staff will ascertain the agreed method of communication and identify this in the agreed Intimate Care procedures for that child.

Recruitment

Parents must feel confident that relevant staff have been carefully vetted and trained, helping to avoid potentially stressful areas of anxiety and conflict. Recruitment and selection of candidates for posts involving intimate care will be made following the usual Safeguarding, Access NI checks, equal opportunities and employment rights legislation.

Candidates will be made fully aware of what will be required and detailed in their job description before accepting the post.

Intimate care can only be provided in school by those who have a job description to reflect this or have specifically indicated a willingness to do so.

Staff Professional Development

- Staff will receive training in working practices which comply with Health and Safety.
- All staff will receive Safeguarding/Child Protection training as part of Whole School Training.
- Staff will be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the intimate care policy and guidelines within the context of their work.
- The school will keep a dated record of all training undertaken.

- Ensure staff understand the needs of refugee children, asylum seekers and children from different racial and cultural backgrounds and specialist advice is sought when necessary.

In addition identified staff members should be able to;

- Access other procedures and policies regarding the welfare of the child e.g. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Communicate with and involve the child in the intimate care process
- Offer choices, wherever possible
- Develop, where possible, greater independence with the procedure of intimate care

Environmental

Where children have a long-term incontinence or a disability requiring regular intimate care, the school may require specially adapted facilities. Specialist advice from medical or therapy staff will be sought when considering space, heating, ventilation and lighting.

If a child accidentally wets or soils him/herself they will be attended to in the toilet area usually used by that child. Staff involved in this procedure will be expected to wear disposable gloves.

Gloves and aprons and any items used for cleaning the changing area will be disposed of safely. Wet or soiled underwear/clothing will be returned to parents. (For heavily soiled items of clothing, it may be necessary to use sluice sink to rinse clothes).

The changing area will be cleaned after use. Hot water and liquid soap will be available to wash hands as soon as the task is complete. Paper towels will be available for drying hands.

Additional considerations we have in place include:

- Facilities with hot and cold running water
- Protective clothing including disposable protective gloves – provided by the school
- Labelled bins for the disposal of wet and soiled nappies/pads
- Waste for incineration (e.g. needles, catheters etc.)
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials; anti-bacterial spray, sterilising fluid, deodorisers, anti-bacterial hand wash
- Supplies of appropriate clean clothing, nappies, disposable bags and wipes
- Changing mat or changing bench
- An effective system should be identified to alert staff for help in emergency

The Protection of Children

The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to. If a member of staff has any concerns about changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child protection and Safeguarding. Further advice will be sought from outside agencies if necessary. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Vulnerability to abuse

Children should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth. It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school's Child Protection policy and procedures.

If a child is hurt accidentally he or she should be immediately reassured and the adult should check that he or she is safe and the incident reported immediately to the designated line manager.

Relevant Policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other School Policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy- A Guide for Schools (updated Sep 2023)
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- The Administration of Medicines in Schools
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying policy
- Pastoral Care Policy

Further Guidance

Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children

SBNI Procedures Manual-online-December 2017

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools-A Guide for Schools DE 2017(updated Sep 2019, Aug 2020, Sep 2023)

Appendixes

- Appendix 1: Record of Agencies involved
- Appendix 2: Record of Intimate Care Intervention
- Appendix 3: Agreement Between Child and Personal Assistant
- Appendix 4: Permission for Schools to Provide Intimate Care
- Appendix 5: Toilet Management Plan

APPENDIX 1**RECORD OF ANY AGENCIES INVOLVED**

Child's Name _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

GP: _____

School Nurse/
Health Visitor: _____

Continence Advisor: _____

Physiotherapist: _____

Occupational Therapist: _____

Hospital Consultant: _____

Physical/Sensory Service: _____

Social Worker: _____

Others:

APPENDIX 2

(Permission from parents for Intimate Care procedures to be carried out)

RECORD OF INTIMATE CARE INTERVENTION

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing, toileting, dressing, showering
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Names of support staff involved: _____

Procedure: _____

Further comments: _____

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3

WORKING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE PLAN

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Name of support
staff involved: _____

I can do: _____

I will try to do: _____

Review date: _____

Parents/Carer: _____

Child (if appropriate): _____

Form Teacher: _____

APPENDIX 4

TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Name of support

staff involved: _____

Area of need: _____

Equipment required: _____

Support required: _____

Frequency of support: _____

Signed:

Parent/Carer: _____

Form Teacher: _____

APPENDIX 5

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND SUPPORT STAFF (If appropriate)

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Classroom Assistant's Names _____

Date of Agreement: _____

Assigned Classroom Assistants

As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- When I am the identified person I will stop what I am doing to help you
- I will avoid all unnecessary delays
- I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times
- I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing
- I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally
- If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you
- I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan

Child/Young person

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me
- I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times
- I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet
- I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrasses
- I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change

We will review this agreement on: _____

Child/Young Person (if appropriate) _____

Parent/Carer _____

Classroom Assistants _____
