



GREENWOOD HOUSE ASSESSMENT CENTRE Intimate Care Policy

“At Greenwood House, we provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating educational environment, where each child will establish a secure foundation in terms of learning and wellbeing, thus developing the skills and capabilities to reach his/her full potential.”

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| Date Policy Written | May 2024 |
| Date Policy to be Reviewed | May 2025 |
| Date Presented to Governors | |
| Signed (Headteacher) | |
| Signed (Chair of Governors) | |

Introduction

Greenwood House Assessment Centre 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.

Please note: The term parent/s is used to refer to parents, carers and legal guardians.

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 for pre-school children may also involve help with drinking, eating, dressing, 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.

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 2003 and The Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures 2005.

- 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 will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account their developmental stage. 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. 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.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's intimate care plan. 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. 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/cultural sensitivities. Prior permission must be obtained from parents before Intimate care procedures are carried out (see appendix 7). 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 Education Plans (IEPs), Health Care Plans and any other plans which identify the need for intimate care where appropriate. Exchanging information with parents is essential through face-to-face contact, telephone or written correspondence via Seesaw. However, information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in home/school books as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and named staff member.

Voice of the Child

Greenwood House Assessment Centre will agree the appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff. It may be 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, visual 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 Plan.

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, AccessNI 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.

Staff Professional Development

- Staff will receive training in working practices which comply with Health & 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.
- Staff will receive Moving and Handling training where appropriate.
- Newly appointed staff will be closely supervised until they are confident carrying out the specified duties.
- The school will keep a dated record of all training undertaken.
- The school will ensure staff understand the needs of children from different racial and cultural backgrounds and specialist advice 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. Safeguarding / Child Protection 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.

Additional considerations we have in place include:

- Facilities with hot & cold running water
- Protective clothing including disposable protective gloves - provided by the school
- Labelled bins for the disposal of wet & soiled nappies/pads
- Waste for incineration
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials; anti-bacterial spray, sterilising fluid, deodorisers, anti-bacterial hand wash
- Supplies of appropriate clean clothing, nappies, disposal bags and wipes

- Changing mat or changing bench
- An effective system to alert staff for help in an emergency.

The Protection of Children

The School's Child Protection/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. 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.

The following are factors that can increase a child's vulnerability:

- Children who need help with intimate care are statistically more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse
- Children with disabilities may have less control over their lives than others
- Children may experience multiple carers
- Children may not be able to distinguish between intimate care and abuse
- Children may not be able to communicate.

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.

Intimate Care Daily Guidelines

Rationale

It is always our intention to treat each pupils with dignity and respect. In all aspects of intimate care, we aim to develop self esteem, confidence and independence for each pupil.

As you carry out procedures, talk the pupil through it, do not talk over their heads to other members of staff

Be prepared – prior to starting a procedure make sure that:

- You have all the equipment you need – gloves, aprons (optional)
- You know the procedures for each pupils you are working with – this should be in the pupil profile such as; their preference for standing or lying down to be changed, level of support needed

Carrying out procedure:

- Have everything you need at hand
- If using the bed, ensure it is adjusted to the right height, the hand rail is up and the curtain is pulled round for privacy if needed
- Do not leave the child unattended on the bed
- Make sure the pupil is clean and freshened up
- Only use cream belonging to an individual pupil
- Use a wipe to apply the cream then dispose of the wipe, do not use the wipe in the cream again
- Soiled or wet clothing should be sent home in a plastic bag
- Dispose of apron and gloves
- Place nappy in appropriate bin
- Spray and wipe down the bed after each change
- Staff wags hands after taking off gloves before leaving the bathroom
- Wash the pupils hands after they have been in the bathroom even if using a nappy