



*'Learning from Each Other' -
'Achieving Together'*

Positive Handling, Intimate Care & Changing Policy

Date of Policy: **Spring 2025**

Person(s) Responsible for Policy: **SENCO**

Committee Responsible:

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Intimate Care Policy at Swindon Village Primary School

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. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam.)

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. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

The following document is based on best practice in special schools.

Intimate care policy for Swindon Village Primary School

Swindon Village 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. Swindon Village recognises 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 or pain.

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 are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required.

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. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.

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. Wherever possible one child will be catered for by one adult, with another adult in attendance.

Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting boys in a primary school, as no male staff are available.

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

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. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

If a child becomes distressed 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. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. 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.

Health and Safety

Further Guidance

'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

Swindon Village is concerned about health and safety issues when staff are changing children or dealing with a child who has had an accident and is bleeding.

Staff should:

- Always wear an apron, gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding.
- If a child has accidentally soiled, or they have a specific medical condition themselves staff should wear apron and gloves when cleaning the child. However, if the child persistently soils themselves, **and there is no medical reason for this**, then the parents should be notified and they should come to school and clean their child and bring spare appropriate clothing.
- It is advised that the parents should then seek medical advice.

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 a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied on a daily basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety policy.

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 care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child those with parental responsibility and the school should be easily understood and recorded.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who can't) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

Guidance to safeguard children and education staff with regard to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (Physical contact, first aid, showers/ changing clothes, out of school activities, and photography)

Physical Contact

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

The expectation 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-intentioned physical 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.

Physical contact which is repeated with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the child, the school and those with parental responsibility.

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 might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerability 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 to have a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

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 force necessary 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 documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of the school's Positive Handling Policy, which should comply with LEA policy.

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. Physical force of this nature can, and is likely to, constitute a criminal offence.

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.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. It may be more suitable to involve the child's relative or school's pastoral support lead.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice, from their line manager or other appropriate person.

First Aid and intimate care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. 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 documented and easily understood. The necessity for such requirements should be reviewed regularly. The child's views must also be actively sought and, in particular, any discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

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 which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.

Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

Showers/changing clothes

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. 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.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore Staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. adults must not change in the same place as children or shower with children.

Out of school trips, clubs etc.

Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more informal 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/establishment's policy and all LEA Guidance regarding out of school activities.

To ensure pupils' 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.

On occasions (field trips/days out, etc.) some pupils might be short of funds and would embarrassed or singled out if this were known. It would be acceptable for a member of staff to subsidise a child, provided that this was disclosed to colleagues.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises where a chaperone will not be present, are not permitted unless specific approval is obtained from the head teacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority. Staff should not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a child.

If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Photography, videos and similar creative arts

Staff should be aware of the potential for such mediums of teaching to be used for the wrong purposes. Additionally, children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the legitimate use of photography, filming etc. The potential for founded and unfounded allegations of abuse requires that careful consideration be given before using any of these mediums.

Schools should have clear policies and protocols for the taking and use of images and of photographic equipment. These should require the justification and purpose of the activity; its content; avoidance of one to one sessions; appropriate privacy when the changing of clothes is required; and, arrangements for access to the material and its storage.

Consent to participating in these activities should be sought from the child and those with parental responsibility at the beginning of courses, but staff should remain sensitive to those children who appear particularly uncomfortable with the activity. All material produced should be viewed for acceptability by another member of staff. Its circulation should be in accordance with the LEA's/schools 'Use of Images' policy, and relevant arrangements with parents.

Appendix 1

Nappy Changing Guidelines

No child is excluded from participating in our setting who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent whatever their age. We work with parents towards toilet training at the appropriate age, unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time. We make necessary adjustments to our bathroom provision and hygiene practice in order to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained. We see toilet training as a self-care skill that children have the opportunity to learn with the full support and non-judgemental concern of adults.

AIMS:

The aims of this policy and associated guidance are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff who are required to change a child's nappy or underwear
- To assure parents/carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account
- To protect children from discrimination, and ensure inclusion for all

Basic Principles

At Swindon Village Primary School we will bear in mind the following principles when changing a child's nappy or underwear:

- Children have the right to feel safe & secure
- Children will be respected and valued as individuals
- Children have a right to privacy/dignity when staff are meeting their needs
- Children are supported in their understanding of toileting procedures so that they are led to independence

Vulnerability to Abuse

We will ensure that all staff are familiar with our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures to develop children's resilience and to protect them from any form of abuse. It is important that children are changed in a reassuring and caring way by a member of staff they have a close relationship with, and it is important that we signal our intention to change a child's nappy or underwear and ask for the child's consent, as appropriate for their development. That means we do not give children the message that just anyone can pick them up, take them off and undress them. Staff should always change children in the disabled toilet, which allows for privacy, and they should be

accompanied by another adult. This is part of making sure we have a culture of openness which safeguards children and ensures all adults follow safe working practices.

Working with Parents/Carers

We will work with parents when attending to nappy changing or changing routines.

- If a child has any disability or medical needs that may affect their personal care routine, a Health Care Plan will be drawn up in agreement with parents/carers.
- Parents will be asked when their child first starts at the school whether or not their child has any special words/actions/particular needs during their nappy changing / changing procedure
- Any significant observations made during a nappy changing procedure will be notified to the parents at the end of the session (i.e. badly soiled nappy/strong urine etc.)

Achieving Continence

At Swindon Village Primary School we will encourage all of our children to achieve continence when they exhibit signs that they are ready. This will be achieved through modelling, positive praise, working with parents and having high expectations. In addition, key persons ensure that nappy changing / changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.

Protection for Staff

As far as possible, nappy changing / changing procedures will be carried out by the child's Key Person, protection being afforded to the single member of staff in the following ways:

- Staff will inform other Members of staff discreetly that they are taking the child to carry out a care procedure. A second member of staff will accompany them.
- Each instance of intimate care will be recorded by the adult who undertook the care with details recorded of: what was carried out, who undertook the task, when it happened (time and date).
- If a situation occurs that causes staff concern, the incident will be reported to the line manager and recorded
- Where staff are concerned about a child's actions or comments whilst carrying out the personal care procedure, this should be recorded and discussed with the lead for safeguarding immediately
- Risk Assessments will be carried out for Toileting and Nappy Changing procedures

Nappy Changing Procedure

We will follow the Nappy Changing Procedure below:

- Gather all the necessary items needed before each nappy change/ change, for example, nappy, wipes, nappy sack, cream if necessary (where cream is used the child should have their own named cream and written permission obtained from the parent).
- Wash and dry your hands.
- Put on gloves. You should use a new set of gloves for each change.
- Approach the child and say or sign that it's time for a change.
- Support the child on to the nappy changing mat if necessary
- Remove the child's clothing to access the nappy. Remove the nappy and place it inside the nappy sack.
- If the child's clothes are soiled, they should be bagged separately and sent home, they should not be rinsed by hand.
- Using the wipes, clean the child from front to back and place the used wipes in the nappy sack. Tie the nappy sack and put it in a pedal operated bin.
- Put on a clean nappy and apply cream if necessary (see above).
- Take off the gloves and place them in a pedal operated bin.
- Dress the child.
- Always help the child to wash their hands using liquid soap, warm water and paper towels.
- Wash your hands using liquid soap, warm water and paper towels.
- Take the child back to the room.
- Return to the nappy changing area if necessary, clean the changing mat, surrounding area and underneath the mat before leaving to dry. Then wash and dry your hands.

Appendix 2

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

I understand that my child will need to have his / her nappy / be changed in school. The people who will change my child are:

If none of the staff mentioned above are available then someone else who knows your child well will change them. In the unlikely event that there is no-one fitting this description then we will call you to ask your advice. The school will keep a record of when my child has been changed and who changed. There will always be two adults present when my child is changed. Nappies will be changed in the disabled toilet near the main reception area unless otherwise agreed with the parents on a different location.

I will supply nappies / pull ups, wipes, nappy bags and a changing mat for my child. I will also ensure my child always brings a change of clothing into school.

Signed: _____ (Parent / Carer)

Date: _____