



Intimate Care Policy

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To be read in conjunction with: *Keeping children safe in education (Sep 18); Guidance for safer working practice (Oct 15)*

Policy for Intimate Care

Introduction

Intimate care, is any care which involves carrying out a procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) requiring contact 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.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the pupil's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There will be a heightened 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/young people wherever possible.

In the case of a specific procedure, only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent, should undertake the procedure - in such cases, see individual health and care plans and school's 'Medical conditions' policy.

Thorpe Acre Infant School (TAIS) 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. TAIS 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.

Mandatory Procedures

- **All staff will already have enhanced CRB clearance or List 99;**
- Staff undertaking personal care and potentially more complex clinical tasks, should always act in accordance with the policy;
- Staff will have received training before undertaking any of the tasks detailed in a care plan;
- This policy must be read in conjunction with the School's protocols for administering medication, safe storage of medication and all other relevant policies and procedures.

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.

- Any child with intimate care needs 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 s/he can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.
- Where necessary, 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. *Where possible, one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly discussed with the SLT/ School DSP(s)*
- Where possible, the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. In certain circumstances, including for pupils with SEN, the specialised nature of their provision may mean this is not practical or beneficial.
- Ideally, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, at TAIS, this principle may be waived due to the lack of male staff and where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety considerations) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment, for example, from a physiotherapist/ occupational therapist.
- Intimate care arrangements resulting from a higher frequency of need, will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's 'Care Plan'.
- The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible and within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children.

Washing, dressing, toileting

At TAIS, we encourage and support all pupils to conduct their own self-care as much as possible. It must not be undertaken by staff on the basis that they feel it is quicker or more convenient.

Showering

If the level of soiling, for instance, is such that it is felt showering would benefit a child for hygiene and comfort purposes, this facility may be utilised in school. Staff are advised to follow the school procedure:

1. Parent(s)/ Carer(s) will be contacted to inform them of the toileting accident, that a shower facility is available and school's feeling that this would be appropriate in the circumstances should they wish us to offer this option to the child;

2. If not involved, at this stage, a second member of staff will be called upon to: [a] be made aware of the decision; [b] provide a level of support for the member of staff and supervision for the situation.

Other considerations

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision using this facility to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations (e.g. slips, trips, overly hot water – see *Risk Assessment*).

This is a key consideration when staff teams take a group of children swimming – we currently use the pool facility at Charnwood College. Owing to the location of the showers in relation to the changing rooms and pool, our risk assessment identified a high risk to pupils if the showers are used, owing to the main passage to poolside becoming wet.

For this setting and on residential trips, staff are also advised to maintain 'line of sight' with each other, i.e. the member of staff in and/ or the changing/ wash area, can always be seen by a member of staff positioned, for instance, in the doorway or corridor.

Staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms and not remain in these areas unless pupil needs require it. They must be aware of and avoid physical contact when children are in a state of undress and any visually intrusive behaviour.

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 their concerns to the appropriate **Designated Senior Person** for child protection.

If a child appears distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process and 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.

Children Wearing Nappies

Any child needing to wear nappies will have an 'Intimate Care Plan' which must be signed by the parent/carer. This plan will outline who is responsible, in school, for changing the child and where and when this will be carried out. This agreement allows school and parents to be aware of all issues surrounding the task from the outset.

Health & Safety Guidance

When a child has had a toileting accident - staff should:

- be aware of the School's 'Health and Safety' Policy;
- staff shall always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is soiled or when changing a nappy.

Other considerations

As much as is possible (according to the age and ability of the pupil), children will be encouraged to clean and change themselves. They will use the class toilet areas (or school hall facilities, e.g. additional toilets, disabled toilet/ shower room) and a Teaching Assistant/Class Teacher or Midday Supervisor, will provide guidance and supervision. As appropriate, the child will change within the toilet and the adult present can position themselves outside, to support where needed.

Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag and sealed. The bag should then be placed in a bin, (with a liner) specifically designed for such waste. This bin should be collected on a regular basis, as part of the usual refuse. It is not classed as clinical waste. *Any changes of clothing will be placed in a sealed bag for the child to take home at the end of the day.*

If a toileting accident may be/ is the result of illness, parent(s)/ carer(s) will be contacted to collect their child. Should a child regularly soil as a result of a medical condition or current medicine, then a 'Care Plan' will be devised. In this case, parents/ carers are encouraged to provide wipes for the children to clean themselves.

SEND

Children with special needs have the same rights to privacy and safety when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities (any physical disability and/ or learning difficulty), however, must be considered when drawing up care plans for individual children.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought when drawing up or reviewing a care plan.

A risk assessment will also be undertaken to ensure that all eventualities have been considered and planned for. This will be shared with parents and class teachers.

See Appx for 'Care plan' and 'Risk assessment' formats

Equal opportunities

All religious views and the wishes of all children are respected at TAIS. Staff are aware that some children may have to remain covered or need to wash in running water. All children will be treated appropriately, according to their individual needs and gender.

Physical Contact

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

Staff must be aware that even well-intentioned contact might be misconstrued by the child or an observer. Staff must always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.

The expectation is that when staff make physical contact with pupils it will be:

- for the least amount of time necessary (limited touch);
- appropriate, given their age, stage of development and background;
- in response to the pupil's needs at the time.

Safeguarding considerations

Any deviation from an agreed plan, must be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be needed where a child has previously suffered abuse or neglect. This may lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Many such children are needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances, staff should deter the child, seek witnesses and document and report the incident.

Pupils in distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance, including physical touch such as a caring parent/ carer 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. At Thorpe Acre Infant School, we are a caring school and we will cuddle a child who is distressed.

First Aid and intimate care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure that they administer care in the designated areas: [a] at the First Aid station adjacent to the corridor (from the main hall to staff area); [b] in the Foundation Stage annex.

Where an accident is considered to be of a more intimate nature

If the nature of an accident requires a child to remove their dress/ skirt, shorts/ trousers and underwear to enable school to determine the extent of an injury, the Headteacher, Deputy HT and/ or DSP will first be informed. A pupil's dignity must be considered at all times and the following measures will be put in place:

- an appropriate space for the child to undress will be considered, e.g. class cloakroom area, disabled toilet facility;
- a second member of staff will be in the vicinity and made aware of the course of action being undertaken.

NB All accidents are recorded in a specific book – if a second adult has been present then both should sign.

Should you have any concerns regarding intimate care please seek advice from a Member of the Senior Leadership Team.