



Intimate Care Policy

October 2024

Intimate Care Policy

The Intimate Care Policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Special Educational Needs (SEND) Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children

This policy also reflects the requirements as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Act 2010 which provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It is therefore unacceptable to refuse admission to children who are delayed in achieving continence.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to illustrate the principles and procedures at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School which underpin our commitment to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children and our intention to develop independence in each child. We do however understand that there will be occasions when help is required.

Rationale

St Joseph's Catholic Primary understands that for children between the ages of 3 - 5 years this is a time of significant development in terms of their personal and growing independence. Importantly, one of the many development milestones is continence which is usually reached within the context of learning in the home, before the child transfers to an early years or childcare setting. At St Joseph's we understand that this is not always achieved.

The Governing Board and staff acknowledge the key role played in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and beyond in supporting children to develop the ability to care for themselves in a way that enables them to maintain both their independence and dignity. It is recognised however that most children from time to time need assistance and support if for example they suffer a toilet accident, get wet, are sick, have special needs or require first aid.

As with all developmental milestones in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there is wide variation in the time at which children master the skills involved in being fully toilet trained. Furthermore, the development and learning needs of some children will mean they are unable to use the toilet when admitted to nursery and will require a high level of personal care from adults, including changing nappies.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate personal care includes hands-on physical care in personal hygiene, and physical presence or observation during such activities. Intimate personal care tasks can include:

- body bathing other than to arms, face and legs below the knee
- toileting, wiping and care in the genital and anal areas
- dressing and undressing
- application of medical treatment, other than to arms, face and legs below the knee
- supporting with the changing of sanitary protection Scope

This policy applies to all staff undertaking personal care tasks with children but particularly to those who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The normal range of development for this group of children indicates that they may not be fully toilet trained. Due to parenting issues, it may be that some may not even have commenced toilet training at this age.

In addition to this there are other vulnerable groups of children that may require support with personal care on either a short, longer term or permanent basis due to SEN and disability, medical needs or a temporary impairment. This could include:

- children with limbs in plaster
- children needing wheelchair support
- children with pervasive medical conditions

Principles of Intimate Care

St Joseph's are committed to providing personal care that has been recognised as an assessed need and indicated in the care plan for an individual child, in ways that:

- maintain the dignity of the individual child
- are sensitive to their needs and preferences
- maximise safety and comfort

- protect against intrusion and abuse
- respect the child's right to give or withdraw their consent
- encourage the child to care for themselves as much as they are able; and
- protect the rights of everyone involved

The 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. The school understands that there is a need to treat all of our children with respect especially 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.

Promoting Children's Independence

In accordance with the school's commitment to fostering confidence, independence and self-esteem, adults will take every opportunity to encourage children to care for their own personal hygiene and toilet needs. This will involve encouraging the children to take themselves to the toilet, manipulating their own clothing and washing their hands afterwards. Adults will model hand washing and talk to the children at key worker times, in specific lessons or spontaneously as the need arises; to reinforce how to access soap, paper towels etc.

Children will be able to visit the toilet whenever they need to. Adults will accept the children's efforts to manage these tasks by themselves and will use praise to reinforce the children's confidence, whilst tactfully and sensitively reminding or encouraging them.

Parent / Carer Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform staff of the individual needs of their child and to actively engage in discussion with staff to determine the 'Next Steps' in reaching independence in this area as soon as possible.

Whilst it is acknowledged that some children, for developmental reasons, need to wear nappies, the aim is to encourage the children to care for themselves in this respect from the start. To this aim, the school will always request that parents/carers to avoid the use of 'nappies and pull-up trainer pants' and instead use ordinary underwear for their child(ren). Children's individual needs and concerns regarding this can be addressed during the meeting to draw up a care plan. No child will be discriminated against for their use of nappies. Parents/cares are required to provide the following items for their child:

- sets of clean underwear
- sets of socks/tights

- a set of clean uniform
- * spare nappies / pull ups, wet wipes and nappy bags
- Bag (with child's name on it) for sending home soiled clothing

ELG 05 Health and self-care¹ (Early Learning Goals)

: children... manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Early years foundation stage profile 2017 handbook

Key Workers

Where children are, for educational and developmental reasons, in receipt of designated 1:1 care it is expected that the adult who usually supports the children will carry out intimate care.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding procedures will be adhered to at all times and in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Regular activities will be planned to promote children's ability to keep themselves safe, and to know who to go to if something happens that they do not want or which worries them. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation e.g., marks, bruises, soreness, etc. he/she will immediately report concerns to the child protection officer. The normal process of assisting a child with their intimate care needs should NOT raise any child protection concerns.

There are NO requirements that indicate a second member of staff should be available to supervise the intimate care of a child. Although, this sometimes becomes necessary and should be dealt with on an individual needs basis. It is the policy of the school that a student on placement or voluntary helper should not change a child unsupervised.

All staff that provides intimate care has undertaken child protection training and are fully aware of best practice. All staff and volunteers will have had the appropriate level of DBS check completed prior to appointment.

Health and Safety

In school the following procedures will apply for a child who requires intimate care:

- Staff to wear disposable gloves and apron while changing nappies, pads or soiled clothes
- Soiled nappies or pads to be double wrapped and placed in hygienic disposal unit

- Changing a child can be done standing up but staff must ensure privacy and the time spent changing a child is a positive one
- Changing area to be cleaned after use
- Hot water and hygienic liquid soap must be used to wash hands after task is completed
- Hot dryer or paper towels must be available and used to dry hands

Swimming

Junior classes of children participate in a swimming programme at Knowsley Leisure Centre. 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 their health and safety and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

The Knowsley Leisure Centre is organised into large open rooms and children are separated by gender, however there are cubicle style changing facilities which we can access if required. This supports effective and discrete supervision and privacy for our children when changing. Where a child needs additional support of changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up to maintain dignity whilst aiming to increase independence.

Residential trips

Residential educational visits are an important part of a child's primary school experience. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in this less formal setting. As with extra-curricular activities, although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, staff are still guided by its Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and Behaviour Policy. Some specific intimate care issues may arise in a residential context.

Night time routines on residential visits

It is established practice that the children's bedrooms are private spaces and anyone else wanting to enter the room should knock and announce their intention to enter. At bedtime, children are given a set amount of time to change and prepare for bed and will be told when supervising teachers will visit the rooms to check all is ok and switch off the lights. A reciprocal arrangement is in place in the mornings.

These are occasions when incidents take place during the night and the need arises to:

- Assist a child to change his/her clothes
- Assist a child to change his/her bedding
- Assist a child who has soiled/wet him/herself or vomited

- Provide a child with personal care products (sanitary products)
- Provide comfort to an upset or distressed child
- Assist a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided

Partnership Working

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any educational setting. Much of the information required by the school to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from the parents. Regular consultation and information sharing remains an essential feature of this partnership, with the following principles underpinning an effective partnership between the school and parents/carers in relation to intimate care:

Parents/ Carers:

- agreeing to change the child at the latest possible time before coming to school
- providing spare nappies, wet wipes and a change of clothes (as outlined in this policy)
- understanding and agreeing the procedures to be followed during changing at school
- agreeing to inform school should the child have any marks/rash
- agreeing how often the child should be routinely changed if the child is in school for the day and who will do the changing
- agreeing to review the arrangements, in discussion with the school, should this be necessary
- agreeing to encourage the child's participation in toileting procedures wherever possible

The school:

- agreeing to change the child should they soil themselves or become wet
- agreeing how often the child should be routinely changed if the child is in school for the full day and who would be changing them
- agreeing a minimum number of changes
- agreeing to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or SENCO should the child be distressed or if marks/rashes are seen
- agreeing to review arrangements, in discussion with parents/carers, should this be necessary
- agreeing to encourage the child's participation in toileting procedures wherever possible
- discussing and taking the appropriate action to respect the cultural practices of the family