

Keelby Primary Academy

Intimate Care and Safe Touch policy 2023



Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure 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 suitable trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure.

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 safeguarding and child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny, and staff must work in partnership with parents and carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Keelby Primary Academy 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.

Aims

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. Keelby Primary Academy 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; the child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Children with special needs and disabilities 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 care plans for each child.

The four 'golden rules'

- If possible, the child should be encouraged to do as much of the cleaning of themselves and removal/donning of clothes as is practicable.
- A second member of staff should be present or in the vicinity. Volunteers must not provide intimate care, but may be used as a witness.
- The cleaning and changing should be done in a place that provides privacy, but is not in a completely isolated location.
- If it appears a child will need intimate care regularly, an individual care plan should be formulated and discussed with the child and child's parent or carer.

Our approach to best practice

Pupils with additional intimate care needs

The management of all children with intimate care needs beyond those normally expected in mainstream schools 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 safeguarding training and Health and Safety training in lifting and moving where necessary), and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from a 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. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage the child to do as much for themselves as they can. Intimate individual care plans will be drawn up where necessary. The needs and wishes of the child and parent or carer will be taken into account wherever possible, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Changing facilities

Children wearing nappies, and children who have long-term incontinence will be provided with specially adapted facilities, as well as an individual care plan. Keelby Primary Academy provides a purpose-built toilet suitable for use by people with a disability. Where suitable and possible, a changing mat will be used on the floor when a child is to be changed, to prevent injury. Parents and carers have a role to play when their child is still wearing nappies. The parent or carer will provide nappies, disposal bags and wipes. The school is responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Toilet accidents and first aid treatment

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. When Foundation Stage and Year One pupils are changed, one child will be catered for by one member of staff, with another adult made aware and in the vicinity. From year Two onwards, unless a child has a disability or individual care plan, the child will be expected to change themselves in the event of a toileting accident. Wherever possible, the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis. Also, wherever possible, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex.

Whilst administering first aid, children will be asked to take down tights/trousers themselves for knees etc. to be attended to. If intimate parts of the body need to be exposed, another member of staff must be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Physical contact and safe touch

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people 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 any 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.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give, especially when denying this would have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation. Hugs should be instigated by the child. Hugs should last no longer than necessary. Side hugs will be used where possible.

Staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils in the course of their duties when participating in PE, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment, or delivering physiotherapy to children with specific needs. Staff will 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.

Linked policies

- KPA Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- KPA Behaviour (including positive handling and restraint) policy
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018