

Intimate Care Policy

Author:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ch. H. G. G. G. G.', with a period at the end.

Headteacher

Revision: Dec 2023

Next Review: Dec 2026

Aim

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly. We are a caring community, whose Christian values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one.
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is considered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate care of their children

Principles

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

Definition

Intimate care may be one of the following:

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell

Supporting dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing independently. In the earlier year groups however, it may be necessary for Teachers and Teaching Assistants to help the children to get changed for P.E. This will be done within the normal classroom setting.

Providing comfort and support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and children should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

Soiling

Intimate care for soiling should only be given to the child after the parents have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents must complete and sign the permission form when their child starts school, so that staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling themselves. (Appendix 1)

If a parent has declined their consent via the consent form, the school will contact the parents (or other emergency contact) giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child. The permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child. When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to a minimum to carry out necessary cleaning
- Privacy is given which is appropriate to the child's age and situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are dealt with appropriately, using sanitising crystals
- Any soiling that can be is flushed down the toilet
- Spoiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed and sent home with the child
- Cleaning will take place in privacy
- On most occasions staff would not be in the toilet area with the child but positioned outside the door to support and comfort. If support with cleaning is needed this may be conducted in the school wash pod or accessible cloakroom and two members of school staff will be present at all times.
- If a child needs support but does not require adult intervention a member of staff can support by talking them through the stages of dressing/undressing/cleaning. There will always be another adult within sight.

- If there are not two members of staff immediately available, the supporting adult can ask the office to observe or to find another member of staff.
- Children will be provided with clean and dry clothes
- Any support given which includes intimate care, cleaning and support with dressing which involves removing underwear will be recorded. The statement will be signed by the member of staff involved and the observer. (Appendix 2)

Following all accidents (soiling) every effort will be made to inform parents/carers, usually at the end of the day. If the child has had an 'accident' then they are able to stay in school, but if it was due to a stomach illness then the parent/carer will be asked to come and collect and reminded that they will not be able to return until they have 48 hours of good health.

All incidents will be logged in The Intimate Care Log. This will include the date, a brief description of care administered and signed by both members of staff present.

Swimming

All year groups take part in a course of swimming during the school year. It is preferable that staff and parent helpers work in teams of at least two per changing room. No adult should be alone with a single child but there may be times when a single adult is with a group of children. All children are encouraged to be independent and support with dressing and undressing is kept to the absolute minimum.

Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

Protection for staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions
- Ensure two staff members are present and the incident is logged

Safeguarding

All staff at Trinity St Stephen First School hold a DBS. It is not appropriate for a volunteer to carry out intimate care procedures.

Acknowledgement and thanks is given to Clewer Green First School in the creation of this policy.

Appendix 1

Permission form for the Provision of Care

If a child wets or soils themselves while they are at school it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary, cleaned) as quickly as possible. Our staff are experienced and prepared to carry out this task if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, the school can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Trinity St Stephen First School has an Intimate Care Policy which is available from the office for your information and can be viewed on the website.

Please fill out the slip below stating your preference.

Kind regards

Louise Lovegrove
Head Teacher

Name of Child:

Class:

Please state as appropriate

- I give my consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves whilst in the care of Trinity St Stephen First School
- I do not give my consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that in the event that I (or the emergency contact) cannot be contacted the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid my child.

If you do not respond and don't return this form we will assume that you are happy for us to change your child if necessary.

Signature of parent/carer:

Date:

