



WHINSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTIMATE CARE POLICY SEPTEMBER 2023

Date of Next Review: June 2025

Responsible Officer: Headteacher



Whinstone Primary School Intimate Care Policy

Statement of intent

This policy represents the agreed principles for intimate/personal care throughout Whinstone Primary School and aims to foster safer working practices for intimate/personal care and dignity for the child requiring adult support.

The policy applies to **all** children at Whinstone Primary School. We are a Rights Respecting School and we encourage all children to learn their rights in a responsible and respectful manner. Pupils will always be treated with care, sensitivity and respect when intimate care is given, and no pupil will be left feeling embarrassed or as if they have created a problem. Given the right approach, intimate/personal care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate/personal care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young persons' right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

The governing board recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010, which states that any pupil with an impairment affecting their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

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/personal care is positive
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate/personal care
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate/personal care is administered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate/personal care of their children

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2011
- Health Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'

It is not acceptable to ask parents to come to change their child if a child has a recognised disability as this is a direct contravention of current legislation. Also leaving any child soiled for any length of time is considered a safeguarding issue since it places the child at risk of harm.

Principles

This guidance refers to all children, of any age, who may require support for intimate/personal care from an adult on a daily basis and those who may require it occasionally or exceptionally.

As with all developmental milestones, there is a wide variation in the time at which children and young people develop and intimate/personal care may need to be provided at any stage.

Staff who work with children and young people or those with special needs will realise that the issue of intimate/personal care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.

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. It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, **intimate care** is defined as any care which may involve the following:

- Washing
- Touching
- Carrying out an invasive procedure
- Changing a child who has soiled themselves
- Providing oral care
- Feeding
- Assisting in toilet issues
- Providing comfort to an upset or distressed pupil

Intimate care tasks are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the genitals.

Examples of intimate care include support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing incontinence pads, nappies or medical bags such as colostomy bags, menstrual hygiene, helping someone use the toilet, or washing intimate parts of the body.

Pupils may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.

Health and Safety:

The Health and Safety Policy lays out specific requirements for cleaning and hygiene, including how to deal with spillages, vomit and other bodily fluids.

Staff will wear disposable gloves while assisting a pupil in the toilet or while changing a nappy, incontinence pad or medical bag.

Soiled nappies, incontinence pads and medical bags will be securely wrapped and disposed of appropriately.

The changing area or toilet will be left clean. Hot water and soap will be available to wash hands.

Facilities

Our Foundation stage unit has separate toileting and washing areas, intimate/personal care in the Foundation Stage will generally be supported in these areas. Across school there are two large disabled changing / toileting facilities, intimate/personal care can also be supported in these areas.

It recommended that:

Where possible children or young people are changed standing up.

Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist pupils who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist or occupational therapist. This may include the following:

- Non-slip step
- Adapted toilet seat or commode seat
- Disposable gloves/aprons
- Nappies, pads and medical bags
- Access to soap and hot water.

School responsibilities:

Arrangements will be made to discuss the personal care needs of any pupil prior to them attending the school.

Where possible, pupils who require intimate care will be involved in planning for their own healthcare needs wherever possible, with input from parents welcomed.

Where appropriate, liaison with the pupil and parents will result in an individual intimate care plan being created to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for any pupil with a health condition or disability. Regular consultations will be arranged with all parents and pupils regarding toilet facilities.

Children and young people should not be excluded from normal school activities because there may be intimate/personal care issues.

The privacy and dignity of any pupil who requires intimate care will be respected at all times. A qualified member of staff will change the pupil, or assist them in changing themselves if they become wet, or soil themselves. Students, work experience students, parents and volunteers **should never** be involved in intimate/personal care issues. Any pupil with wet or soiled clothing will be assisted in cleaning themselves and will be given spare clothing, nappies, pads, etc., as provided by the parents.

Parents will be contacted if the pupil refuses to be changed, or becomes distressed during the process.

Excellent standards of hygiene will be maintained at all times when carrying out intimate care.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Staff members working directly with children will receive safeguarding training as part of their mandatory induction and annual refresher training in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Intimate care is a regulated activity; therefore, only members of staff who have an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check are permitted to undertake intimate care duties.

Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for pupils as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the pupil.

Each pupil's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine how many carers will need to be present when the pupil requires intimate care. There is no legal requirement that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the intimate care process. In Whinstone Primary School staff try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

If any member of staff has concerns about physical changes to a pupil's presentation, such as marks or bruises, they will report the concerns to the DSL immediately.

Working with parents

Specific issues around toileting will be discussed at a private meeting with the parent/carer prior to admission into school should a pupil require regular intimate/personal care. The meeting will also provide an opportunity to involve other agencies as appropriate, such as a Health Visitor or School Nurse.

Where appropriate, parents and school staff will also need to agree a personal intimate/personal care plan and training programme, this will be written with guidance from medical professionals. Should a child with complex intimate/personal care needs be admitted, the child's medical practitioners will need to be closely involved and a separate more specialised individual intimate/personal care plan may be required.

Offsite visits:

Before offsite visits, including residential trips, the pupil's individual intimate plan will be amended to include procedures for intimate care whilst off the school premises.

Staff will apply all the procedures described in this policy during residential and off-site visits.

Monitoring and review:

This policy is reviewed every two years.

All changes are communicated to relevant stakeholders.

The scheduled review date for this policy is June 2025.