



St. Joseph's Primary School and Nursery Unit Bessbrook

Intimate Care Policy 2023

Signed: **Date:**
(Principal)

Signed: **Date:**
(Chair of BOG)

Review Date: September 2024
Reviewed By: Principal and BOG

Introduction

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. In many 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 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 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.

Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents. Parents' permission for the school to provide Intimate Care will be sought when children first join the school in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 (Appendix 1 – Permission for school to provide intimate care). Parents of children with Special Needs who join the school at an older age and who require additional Intimate Care support may also be required to complete this form.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Photographs
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care
- Administration of first aid by trained member of staff.

Principles of Intimate Care

- ❖ Every child has the right to be safe
- ❖ Every child has the right to personal privacy and to be treated with dignity and respect
- ❖ Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- ❖ Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account

Our Approach to Best Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. Depending on the level of assistance needed, it may be necessary to complete a risk assessment and a detailed Intimate Care Plan in agreement with Parents/Guardians. (Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment –Intimate Care and Appendix 3 – Intimate Care Plan). At all times a record must be made of any intimate care procedure either planned or unplanned (Appendix 4 - Toileting/Intimate Care Record)

Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

1. Involve the child in the intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.

2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.

Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child.

3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.

As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.

4. Be aware of your own limitations

Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

5. Promote positive self-esteem and body image.

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

6. If you have any concerns you must report them.

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the designated teacher for child protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during the intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman. In St. Joseph's children will therefore be assisted by female members of staff only.

The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out with the following provisions:

- ❖ when intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, ie they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens/curtains put in place;
- ❖ if the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- ❖ report any concerns to the designated teacher for child protection and make a written record; and
- ❖ parents must be informed about any concerns.

Communication with Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress children may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:

- ❖ make eye contact at the child's level;
- ❖ use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- ❖ wait for response;
- ❖ continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response; and
- ❖ treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

In the event of a toileting or Wet Play Accident:

- ❖ The child will be taken discreetly to the toilet area
- ❖ The child will be encouraged to change into clean clothes themselves and assistance will only be given if they are having difficulty
- ❖ At all times the child's right to privacy will be respected
- ❖ At no time will the child be left in full view of other children
- ❖ Members of staff will remain in full view of others when dealing with a child
- ❖ Students will not be left to change a child, but may assist a member of staff
- ❖ All changes will be detailed on a record sheet and parents will be informed of changing details (Appendix 5- Intimate Care Record)
- ❖ Record of incident to be held in a confidential filing system (Appendix 4 - Record of Toileting and Intimate Care)
- ❖ **If a child soils themselves a parent/carer will be contacted immediately and asked to make themselves available for the task (Mainstream children only). If a parent/carer cannot be contacted within 15 minutes, staff will help the child to clean and change according to their own level of independence and the incident will be recorded.**
- ❖ **ASC/LSC children will be changed by 2 members of staff.**

In the event of a First Aid Accident:

- ❖ The child will be taken to a trained First Aider.
- ❖ First Aider will follow the school's First Aid Policy and correct recording procedures.
- ❖ Parents will be informed by class teacher via phone call or through Class Dojo.

Out of School Trips, Clubs etc.

Staff should take care when supervising in the less formal atmosphere of a school trip or after school activity. Staff must still approach every situation requiring intimate care attention in the same manner.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.



Appendix 1 Permission for school to provide intimate care

Parental Agreement

I understand and agree that:

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child in the case of a toileting/water play accident/ e.g. changing clothing and washing or first aid.
- If my child soils themselves I will be contacted by the school and make myself available to come and change them.
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

(Male members of staff will not be involved in the intimate care support of any child)

Name of child _____

D.O.B. _____

Signature of Parent/Carer _____

Date _____



Appendix 1B

Permission for school to provide intimate care for children in the ASC and LSC

Parental Agreement

I understand and agree that:

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child in the case of a toileting/water play accident e.g. changing clothing and washing or first aid.
- If my child soils themselves they will be changed by two members of staff and school will notify the parent using Appendix 5: Intimate care record.
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

(Male members of staff will not be involved in the intimate care support of any child)

Name of child _____ D.O.B. _____

Signature of Parent/Carer _____

Date _____



Appendix 2

St. Joseph's P.S. Risk Assessment – Intimate Care

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Date of Risk Assessment: _____

| | Yes | Notes |
|---|-----|-------|
| 1. Does weight /size/ shape of pupil present a risk? | | |
| 2. Does communication present a risk? | | |
| 3. Does comprehension present a risk? | | |
| 4. Is there a history of child protection concerns? | | |
| 5. Are there any medical considerations? Including pain / discomfort? | | |
| 6. Has there ever been allegations made by the child or family? | | |
| 7. Does moving and handling present a risk? | | |
| 8. Does behaviour present a risk? | | |
| 9. Is staff capability a risk? (back injury / pregnancy) | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>10. Are there any risks concerning individual capability (Pupil)</p> <p>General Fragility</p> <p>Fragile bones</p> <p>Head control</p> <p>Epilepsy</p> <p>Other</p> | | |
| <p>11. Are there any environmental risks?</p> <p>Heat/ Cold</p> | | |

If Yes to any of the above seek advice from the school nurse and complete a detailed personal care plan.

Date:.....

Signed:.....

Name:



Appendix 3

St. Joseph's P.S. Intimate Care Plan

Child's Name: Class/ Year Grp:

Name of Support Staff Involved:

.....
Date of Record:..... Review Date:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Area of Need | |
| Equipment Required/By Whom | |
| Location of Suitable Facilities – (eg. Toilets, changing area, eating area, washing area) | |
| Support Required | Frequency of Support |

Working Towards Independence (if appropriate)

| School will | Parents will | Child will try to | Target Achieved(Date) |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | |

Signed: Parents/ Carers

Signed: Member of Staff

Signed: Child (if appropriate)

Appendix 4
St Joseph's PS & Nursery Unit
Record of Toileting & Intimate Care



Child's Name:

Class:

Location:

| Date | Time | Nature of Care/ Activity | Procedure/Prompt V – Visual P – Physical Vb - Verbal | | | Staff Signature * | Comment |
|------|------|--------------------------|---|-----------|----------|----------------------|---------|
| | | | Independent | With Help | Toileted | | |
| | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | |

***TWO** signatures required if a risk assessment has been carried out for moving and handling only.

Appendix 5

St. Joseph's P.S. Intimate Care Record



Date: _____

Dear Parent

Your child _____ soiled/wet themselves today.

(please tick as appropriate)

- they changed their clothes independently
- they changed their clothes with the support of a member of staff
- they were changed by a member of staff
- they were changed by a family member (guardian)

In accordance with our policy the incident has been recorded.

If your child has been changed in school you will find soiled/wet clothes in their school bag. Would you kindly return any school clothes loaned to your child after they have been laundered.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher