



Personal (Intimate) Care Policy

Date of policy:	March 2013
Date last review adopted by governing body:	26 February 2019
Frequency of review:	3 years

This policy represents the agreed principles for the personal (intimate) care of pupils throughout the school. This policy has been agreed by all staff and governors within the school.

1. School aims

Our school community (children, staff, parents and governors) aims to:

- Promote the importance of the partnership between home and school as the route to the well-being and success of the individual.
- Deal decisively with bullying, discrimination and disadvantage to ensure individuals feel safe, happy and equal.
- Set high expectations and give everyone the confidence that they can succeed.
- Establish what learners already know and to build upon this.
- Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging, enjoyable and achievable.
- Recognise individual talents and skills so that they can be celebrated and used for the benefit of all.
- Empower individuals to be active partners in their own learning.
- Establish the foundations for lifelong learning skills and personal qualities which prosper the individual and the society we serve.

2. 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 personal care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for personal care
- To inform parents/carers in how personal care is managed at our school
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the personal care of their children

3. Principles

- It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible.
- We believe a child should be allowed to express choice and 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.
- Personal care can help a child develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem.

- Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning personal care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young persons' right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

4. Definition

Personal (or intimate) care is 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

5. Partnership Working

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early year's settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any educational setting and is particularly necessary in relation to young people. 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.

Issues around toileting should be discussed at a meeting with the parents/carers prior to admissions into the school/setting. Senior leaders must be made aware of these at this point. This will include admissions for children into Foundation Stage and will also provide an opportunity to involve other agencies as appropriate, such as a Health Visitor.

If concerns appear when a child has started school, in the first instance concerns should be raised with the parents. A meeting may be called that could possibly include the health visitor and head teacher to identify the areas of concern and how all present can address them. If these concerns continue there should be discussions with the school's Child Protection co-ordinator about the appropriate action to take to safeguard the welfare of the child.

If the child or young person has a disability recognised as part of the Disability Discrimination Act, asking or telling parents to come and change their child (unless the parents have expressed a preference for this) or wanting an older sibling to change their sister/ brother is likely to be a direct contravention of the DDA, as is leaving a child soiled which could place the child at significant risk. Wherever possible the child or young person should be encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves.

The process for the management of a child's personal care needs may need to be further clarified through a Toilet Management Plan or Health Care Plan. For example, where the school has concerns about parental support, for children transferring to FS2 or above who are not toilet trained and for children with SEN and/or disabilities.

Where appropriate, parents and the school will need to agree a toilet training programme.

In the very small number of cases where parents do not co-operate or where there are concerns that:

- the child is regularly coming to school/Foundation One in very wet or very soiled nappies/pull ups and
- there is evidence of excessive soreness that is not being treated
- the parents are not seeking or following advice

6. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important issue. All schools should have, as part of their partnership working, a Confidentiality section which is shared with all staff, parents and, where possible, pupils. Sensitive information about a child should be shared only with those who need to know, such as parents or other members of staff who are specifically involved with the child. Escorts and others should only be told what is necessary for them to know to keep the child safe. Parents and children need to know that where staff have concerns about a child's well-being or safety arising from something said by the child or an observation made by the staff then the school's Responsible Person for Safeguarding will be informed. This may lead to the procedures set down in the school's/SCE's Safeguarding Policy being implemented.

Information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in a home school diary, as the diary is not a confidential document and could be accessed by people other than the parent/carer and member of staff. It is recommended that communication relating to intimate care should be made through one of the following:

- Sealed letter
- Personal contact (and recorded in a log)
- Telephone call – between member of staff and parent/carer (and recorded in a log)

Sharing information between home and schools is important to secure the best care for pupils but the consent of parents and their children who are able to give such consent is needed for the Headteacher to pass on information about their child's health to school staff or other agencies. Their agreement is also needed for any exchange of information between the Medical Officer and the school about a child's medical condition.

Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young person's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

7. Agreeing a Procedure for Personal Care in School

Intimate care in SCE schools and foundation stage settings can be provided only by those who have specifically (either as part of their agreed job description or otherwise) indicated a willingness to do so. No SCE employee can be required to provide intimate care.

Schools should have clear, written guidelines for staff to follow when changing a child so that staff are not put at any unnecessary risk.

Written guidelines should specify:

- Who will change the child (to include more than one person to cover for absence etc.)
- Where changing will take place
- What resources will be used and who will provide them
- How a nappy will be disposed of
- How other wet or soiled clothes will be dealt with
- What infection control measures are in place
- What the member of staff will do if the child is unduly distressed or if marks or injuries are noticed
- How changing occasions will be recorded and how this will be communicated to parents

8. Supporting dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed e.g. for PE. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided and will support the development of their independence to do so.

9. Providing comfort or support

Young 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 a child 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 them feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

10. Medical procedures

See Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy.

11. Soiling

Personal care for soiling should only be given to a child if:

- There is **no record or form** from a parent/ carer requesting us **not to change a child** (see attached form which should be completed and returned to school, where applicable)
- A child is comfortable with staff assisting them and that staff continue to check a child's wishes and feelings at all times. If at any time a child shows signs of hesitancy/ distress then the parent/ carer should be contacted immediately
- There are 2 staff present

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 the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit/ excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet. Wipes/ gauze used to clear up blood should be disposed of via the medical bins provided.
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child

12. Hygiene

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

13. 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 a senior member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Ensure 2 staff are present to witness the actions taken
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

14. Safeguards for children

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo safe recruitment checks. All staff at Writtle Infant School are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. The DBS system aims is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society. Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school.

Volunteers/ students on work experience are not to carry out intimate care procedures.

15. Equality Statement

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, disability, and ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.