



New Brancepeth Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

Updated: September 2018

At New Brancepeth Primary School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We are committed to ensuring that children are treated with sensitivity and respect. This policy is in line with multi-agency guidance as found in the Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

What is intimate care?

'Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.' (9.26, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures). In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

New Brancepeth Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children always undertake their duties in a professional manner. We recognise that there is a need to treat all our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

- 1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes**
- 2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself**
- 3. Assisting with toileting issues**
- 4. Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care**
- 5. Providing first aid assistance**
- 6. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child**
- 7. Feeding a child**
- 8. Providing oral care to a child**
- 9. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. ***

* In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam.) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Principles of intimate care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

Every child has a right to be safe;

Every child has the right to personal privacy;

Every child has the right to be valued as an individual;

Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;

All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;

All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account; and

Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Assisting a child to change his / her clothes

This is more common in EYFS, but may be necessary further up the school perhaps due to an individual's SEN. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he / she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his / her clothes etc.

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing / undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child and informed if the child becomes distressed.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself (KS 1 and KS2)

If a child soils him / herself in school (KS 1 upwards) a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount, and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures, but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.

School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. (A supply of clean underwear and spare uniforms are available within the Changing Area in EYFS).

If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will support the child to change themselves, providing we have written consent from the parents / carers for this to happen.

If we do not have written consent from the parents / carers, an attempt will be made to call parents or carers to inform them of what has happened and to check whether they want school staff to change the child or whether they want to come in and collect the child and change them at home.

If parents / carers or emergency contacts cannot be reached, then the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.

The member of Staff who has assisted a pupil with intimate care will complete a log to say that the child has been changed and parents must be informed.

Changing a child who has soiled or wet him / herself in (EYFS)

Children in EYFS are much younger and therefore toileting accidents are more likely to occur. In addition, as we now have a 2-year-old provision staff need to be mindful that most of these children are likely to still be in nappies or pull-ups and may need changing over the course of their session with us. When parents register their child with us, it is imperative that they complete an intimate care consent form and that these are filed within EYFS so that staff are aware of which children we have permission to change.

If a child soils him / herself in EYFS a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount, and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures, but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.

School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. (A supply of clean underwear and spare uniforms are available within the Changing Area in EYFS).

If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will support the child to change themselves, providing we have written consent from the parents / carers for this to happen.

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If parents / carers or emergency contacts cannot be reached, then the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.

The member of Staff who has assisted a pupil with intimate care will complete a log to say that the child has been changed and parents must be informed.

Changing a child who wears a nappy

Permission to change nappies is sought as children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and slips are kept on record. All staff are informed of those children where no permission is given. Procedures for changing a nappy

Staff in the EYFS area have access to a bathroom area with a toilet and hand basin with warm water. There is also a stock of baby wipes, plastic bags and disposable protective gloves for staff to use.

Staff must wash their hands with hot water and an appropriate soap / hand cleaner both before and after nappy changing. Gloves should be worn while nappy changing. The changing area should be

cleaned after each use and the nappy should be disposed of hygienically in the nappy bin located in the EYFS changing area. Any spillages must be cleaned up immediately. Staff must be mindful of the need to preserve the dignity of the child (for example, do not allow other children to watch nappy changing). Staff should record times/frequencies of nappy changing and note any concerns (for example unusual bowel movement), which should be reported to parents/carers when the child is collected. An adequate supply of nappies must be kept on the premises at all times. Where parents/carers provide the nappies, staff should notify them well in advance when the stock is depleting.

The member of Staff who has changed the nappy must complete the nappy changing record and parents must be informed when they collect their child if their child has been changed that day.

Guidelines For 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.

Members of 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 both 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, where possible, give choices. 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 bodies belong 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 Lead for Child Protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Lead.

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. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. 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;

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.