

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Updated: September 2025
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INTIMATE CARE POLICY

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes at Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery & Sunbeams Club (the school), and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children. It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when assistance is required. The principles and procedures outlined in the policy 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, Area Child Protection Committee Regional Policy and Procedures)

In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. School is committed to ensuring that all staff undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all of our children with respect when intimate care is given and that staff must be sensitive to each child’s individual needs.

This policy also takes into account statutory requirements as laid out in the 2025 Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework section 3.86 and should also be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe In education 2025 statutory guidance for schools.

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

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
2. Changing or washing a child who wears nappies
3. Supporting and encouraging a child to clean themselves after accidental wetting/soiling their underwear – if the child is unable to clean themselves parents will be called to assist
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. A Health Care Plan must be in place for this child and this needs to be signed. 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

- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

ASSISTING A CHILD TO CHANGE HIS / HER CLOTHES

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 in line with the recommendations of this policy.

Staff will always ensure that a colleague is nearby when supporting dressing/undressing. A child will always be given the opportunity to change in private, unless they are in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be contacted, by the Admin Team, and asked to assist their child. Parents will also be informed if their child becomes distressed whilst changing.

CHANGING A CHILD WHO HAS SOILED HIM/HERSELF

In Hedgehogs and Squirrels, the children who are toilet-trained that have wet/soiled will be helped to change if needed, this will be done in the nappy changing area/toilet area in Hedgehogs or Squirrels rooms for the children's privacy

If a child soils him/herself in school staff will encourage the child to clean themselves appropriately. If a child is struggling to clean themselves competently a professional judgement will be made to 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.

PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN THAT WEAR A NAPPY

- Nappy changing will take place as and when required. Children will also be checked periodically and changed as needed.
- Where possible, key workers will be responsible for their key child's nappy changing. If this is not possible, another member of staff (with whom the child is familiar/comfortable) will undertake this task.
- All children will be changed in the nappy changing room or on the changing mat.
- The changing mat will be wiped down with antibacterial wipes/spray after each nappy change.
- Staff and children will wash their hands with hot, soapy water and dry on disposable towels immediately after completing the task.
- The nappy will be disposed of in the appropriate disposal facilities.

PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN THAT ARE TOILETING OR POTTY TRAINING

- All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when toileting children.
- During toileting, staff will interact with the child, and if upset will reassure and comfort them.
- They will praise them verbally throughout the experience.
- Staff will wear protective gloves and apron (where appropriate) when supporting children during toileting. These will be disposed of after each use.
- Children will be shown the toilet areas before they actually need to use them, to help promote confidence and familiarity in a new environment.
- Staff will remind children to use the toilet/potty regularly.
- Potties are available for children too small to use the toilet or those who feel more confident using a potty.
- Potties are wiped down with antibacterial wipes/spray after each child has used them.

- All children will be encouraged to adopt good personal hygiene by washing their hands properly.
- Staff will wash their hands with hot, soapy water and dry on disposable towels immediately after completing the task.
- Activities and routines will also include reminders about the need for good personal hygiene.
- Only staff members with Disclosure Barring Service Check (DBS) clearance will undertake toileting duties.
- Parents are requested to send a bag containing a clean change of clothes for their child in case of accidents. These clothes will only be used for their child. Additional changes of clothes are available when necessary.

NURSERY, PRE-SCHOOL AND RECEPTION CHILDREN USING THE TOILET

- The child will be given the opportunity to change their underwear in private and carry out this process themselves
- Children in the Hedgehogs room, and younger children in Squirrels, will be changed in private, by a key adult from the room.
- School has a supply of clean underwear and spare clothes for this purpose.
- All children with medical needs should have a Health Care Plan in place, along with an up-to-date risk assessment
- If regular soiling occurs then a risk assessment needs to be in place to outline guidelines for checking and cleaning. Parents will be asked to send in wipes if their child has regular accidents to support the child's independence in their own personal care.
- If a child soils themselves, school staff will encourage the child to clean themselves appropriately. If a child is struggling to clean themselves competently a professional judgement will be made to request the parent/carer to come to school to support the child for changing
- If the child's parent/carers/emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.
- If the child's parent/carers/emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal and/or written permission for staff to change the child, in line with guidance above. If none of the contacts can be reached the Nursery Room Leader is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and School's duty of care to meet the needs of the child. The intention is always to make the child clean.

YEAR 1- 6 CHILDREN

- Should a child soil themselves they will be given the opportunity to change their underwear in private and carry out the changing process themselves.
- All children with medical needs should have a Health Care Plan in place along with an up-to-date risk assessment.
- If regular soiling occurs then a risk assessment needs to be in place to outline guidelines for checking and cleaning.
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the child's parent/carer/emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.
- If the child's parent/carer/emergency contact cannot attend, the school will seek verbal and/or written permission for staff to change the child, in line with guidance above. If none of the contacts can be reached, the Phase Leader is to be consulted and the decision taken on the

basis of loco-parentis and School's duty of care to meet the needs of the child. The intention is always to make the child clean.

- If a child wets/soils themselves or is still in nappies/pull ups due to a special educational need, this will be referred to in their EHCP. A Key Adult should carry out the changing of the child with respect and dignity in an appropriate changing area/accessible toilet with the door ajar.

BASIC HYGIENE ROUTINES

Staff will:

- Always wear protective disposable gloves and aprons where necessary.
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents.
- Ensure all nappies are placed in sealed bags and placed in the appropriate disposal facilities.

PROVIDING COMFORT OR SUPPORT TO A CHILD

- There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child, or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate or inappropriate. Staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age of child and context.
- 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. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be shared in confidence with the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

ASSISTING A CHILD WHO REQUIRES A SPECIFIC MEDICAL PROCEDURE AND WHO IS NOT ABLE TO CARRY THIS OUT UNAIDED

- Risk assessments, Health Care Plans, and Action for Inclusion meetings must be in place for all children requiring medical support. Staff are trained appropriately by medical professionals
- Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school- the requisite form is available from the school offices. Staff must then sign and date when the medication is administered. A countersignature is required.

SWIMMING

- Our Year 4 children participate in a swimming programme at Ellesmere Port Sports Village. Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations, and to ensure that unacceptable behaviour does not occur.
- Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence,
- Specific risk assessments are in place for swimming sessions.

VISITS & RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

- Educational trips and visits and residential educational visits are an important part of our children's school experience. Additional care is required when supervising pupils in this less formal setting.
- As with extra-curricular activities, although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, staff are still guided by our Safeguarding Policy.

Some specific Intimate Care issues may arise in a Residential context. These are addressed in specific risk assessments for these trips

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- All members of staff working with children have been subject to an enhanced DBS check; this includes students on work placement and volunteers.
- Only those members of staff who are familiar with the Intimate Care Policy and other relevant policies are involved in the intimate care of children.
- Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Risk assessments are carried out and are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. **Only in an emergency, and where contact with parents/carers has not been established would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school.** Parents would then be contacted immediately/as soon as is feasible.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report this in line with the school's Safeguarding and/ or Whistleblowing Policy.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD 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.

Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff:

1. Involve the child in 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.
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.
5. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
6. If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling on a child, report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
7. 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child



Nappy Change Procedure



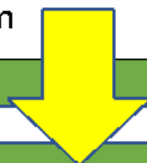
Prepare the area

1. Gather all required items before the nappy change
2. Adult to wash and dry hands using soap
3. Put on a new apron and gloves for each nappy change
4. Sanitise nappy change unit/mat using anti-bacterial spray
5. Go and get the child



Changing the child

1. Take child to the nappy changing room
2. Remove the nappy and place in the nappy sack
3. Allow the child to point to images of familiar songs displayed around the nappy station and sing and/or converse with the child during this time
4. Clean child appropriately from front to back before putting a new nappy on
5. Put used wipes in the nappy sack, tie and dispose of into the nappy bin
6. Put on clean nappy. Dress the child or if appropriate support child to dress themselves
7. Help child to wash their hands using liquid soap, water and paper towels
8. Take child back to the room



After the nappy change

1. Wipe mat/unit with antibacterial spray
2. Dispose of apron and gloves
3. Adult to wash and dry hands using soap