

St. Lawrence Church of England Primary School

E.Y.F.S. INTIMATE CARE POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2026

Policy written by: Helen Lonsdale (E.Y.F.S. Lead)

Last reviewed on: September 2026

Approved by: David Oludotun-Fasanya (Chair of Governors)

Next review on: September 2027

At St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, we recognise that young children may require support with personal and intimate care as part of their normal development and daily life at school. We are committed to providing intimate care in a way that:

- protects children's dignity, privacy and wellbeing;
- promotes independence and self-care skills;
- respects children's individual needs, abilities, communication and preferences;
- supports children with SEND, medical conditions and additional needs;
- protects children and staff from inappropriate or unsafe practice;
- supports effective safeguarding;
- maintains appropriate professional boundaries; and
- works positively with parents and carers.

The school recognises that children develop independence at different rates. Children should not be denied access to education because they are not fully independent with toileting or other personal care.

Scope

This policy applies to intimate and personal care provided to children within the EYFS, including:

- toileting;
- assistance with wiping;
- changing wet or soiled clothing;
- nappy changing;
- personal hygiene;
- handwashing;
- washing and cleaning following accidents;
- assistance with changing clothes;
- support with continence products;
- support with prescribed personal care or medical needs;
- assistance with eating or drinking where this involves personal care;
- support with personal hygiene following illness;
- assistance for children with physical disabilities;
- support with mobility where intimate areas may be involved; and
- other care involving a child's personal or intimate areas.

This policy applies whether care is provided routinely or in response to an unexpected accident or incident.

Legislative and guidance framework

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- relevant requirements under the Equality Act 2010;
- relevant health and safety legislation;
- Lancashire County Council early-years guidance and resources;
- Lancashire safeguarding guidance and the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP);
- Lancashire guidance concerning professional and personnel relationships;
- NHS guidance where relevant; and
- relevant guidance from other recognised professional organisations.

The current EYFS framework came into force on 1 September 2026 and sets the statutory standards that schools must meet to ensure that young children are safe, healthy and well cared for.

KCSIE 2026 reinforces that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, that staff must maintain a child-centred approach and that concerns must be reported to the DSL or deputy without delay.

Principles of Intimate Care

At St Lawrence, intimate care will always be provided according to the following principles:

Dignity

Children will be treated with dignity, kindness and respect.

Privacy

Children will be given appropriate privacy while ensuring that safeguarding and health and safety requirements are met.

Independence

Staff will encourage children to do as much for themselves as they are able to do safely.

Choice

Where possible, children will be offered appropriate choices about how and when support is provided.

Communication

Staff will explain what they are doing before and during intimate care in language that the child can understand.

Safeguarding

All intimate care arrangements must be carried out in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. Staff should remain vigilant for any signs of abuse, neglect, injury or concerns regarding a child's well-being. Any concerns identified during intimate care must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding concerns arising from intimate care must be recorded and reported in line with safeguarding procedures, including recording on CPOMS where appropriate. Any allegations or concerns regarding the conduct of a member of staff during intimate care must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and staff conduct procedures

Consistency

Children should receive consistent care from appropriately trained and authorised staff.

Inclusion

The school will make reasonable adjustments to support children with SEND or disabilities.

Promoting Independence

Intimate care should be viewed as an opportunity to develop children's independence and self-help skills rather than as something adults simply do for children. Staff will encourage children to:

- recognise when they need the toilet;
- communicate their need for the toilet;
- manage clothing independently;
- use the toilet appropriately;
- wipe themselves where developmentally appropriate;
- flush the toilet;
- wash and dry their hands;
- recognise when they are wet or soiled;
- change clothing where they are able;
- dispose of tissues and other waste appropriately; and
- ask an adult for help when required.

Staff should provide only the level of assistance that the child requires.

Lancashire County Council identifies using the toilet independently, being clean and dry, flushing the toilet and washing hands as useful school-readiness skills, while recognising that children with SEND or bladder/bowel conditions may need additional support and tailored strategies.

Toileting

Children will have regular and easy access to toilets during the school day. Children will not routinely be expected to wait until a designated toilet time if they need to use the toilet. Staff will support children to develop toileting independence through encouragement, modelling, visual prompts and appropriate adult support. Staff will never shame, embarrass or punish a child for:

- having a toileting accident;
- wetting or soiling themselves;
- needing a nappy or continence product;
- asking for help; or
- being at a different stage of toileting independence from their peers.

Children who are not toilet trained

The school recognises that some children may enter Reception still requiring nappies or continence products. A child will not be excluded from school simply because they are not fully toilet trained. Parents/carers will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school to support the child's developing independence. Where a child requires regular assistance with nappies or continence products, an **individual intimate care plan** should be considered.

For children requiring planned or ongoing intimate care, arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers and recorded within an Individual Intimate Care Plan. In unexpected situations, staff may provide necessary intimate care to preserve the child's dignity, hygiene, health or safety and parents/carers will be informed as appropriate.

The plan should identify:

- the child's level of independence;
- what support the child requires;
- who will provide the support;
- communication methods;
- any relevant medical or SEND needs;
- preferred routines;
- appropriate equipment;
- hygiene arrangements;
- how dignity and privacy will be maintained;
- recording arrangements; and
- arrangements for reviewing the plan.

Nappy changing

Where a Reception child requires nappy changing, staff will follow the child's individual intimate care plan where one is in place. Nappy changing will:

- take place in the school's designated changing/toileting area;
- be carried out by an appropriately authorised member of staff;
- maintain the child's dignity and privacy;
- be explained to the child;
- encourage the child to participate as much as possible;
- follow appropriate infection-control and hygiene procedures;
- use appropriate PPE where required;
- involve safe disposal of nappies and contaminated materials; and
- be recorded in accordance with the school's procedures.

Staff should not carry out unnecessary intimate care. Children who can safely undertake an aspect of their own care should be supported to do so.

Assistance with wiping and cleaning

Staff may assist a child with wiping or cleaning where the child is unable to manage independently. Staff should:

- Explain to the child what help is required.
- Encourage the child to complete as much of the task as possible.
- Provide only the necessary assistance.
- Maintain the child's dignity and privacy.
- Use appropriate hygiene procedures.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Record the care where required by the child's care plan or school procedure.
- Where possible, children should be encouraged to learn appropriate wiping and personal hygiene skills appropriate to their age and development.

Toileting accidents

Accidents will be dealt with calmly and without embarrassment. Staff will reassure the child and explain that accidents can happen. The child will be supported to:

- clean themselves where able;
- change into spare clothing;
- place soiled clothing in an appropriate bag;
- wash their hands; and
- return to learning as soon as they are comfortable.

If an adult needs to provide intimate assistance, this will be carried out according to this policy. Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate, particularly where:

- the child has had repeated accidents;
- the accident is unusual for that child;
- there is diarrhoea or vomiting;
- there is blood;
- the child appears unwell;
- there is an injury;
- there is a significant change in toileting behaviour; or
- staff have any safeguarding or welfare concerns.

Children with SEND

The school recognises that children with SEND may require additional or different intimate care arrangements. Children may require support because of:

- physical disabilities;
- developmental delay;
- autism;
- communication difficulties;
- sensory needs;
- bladder or bowel conditions;
- neurological conditions;
- mobility difficulties;
- medical conditions;
- continence difficulties; or
- other individual needs.

The school will make reasonable adjustments and will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to establish appropriate arrangements. Lancashire County Council specifically recognises that children may require support with personal care, including toileting, because of SEND or physical/personal care difficulties. Where appropriate, the school will involve:

- parents/carers;
- the SENCO;
- the child's teacher/key person;
- health professionals;
- occupational therapists;
- physiotherapists;
- school nurses;
- paediatricians;
- continence services; or
- other relevant professionals.

Individual intimate care plans

An individual intimate care plan should be considered where a child:

- requires regular adult assistance;
- wears nappies or continence products;
- requires support due to SEND;
- has a medical condition affecting toileting;
- requires specialist equipment;
- requires assistance with changing or washing;
- has significant mobility difficulties; or
- requires care which differs significantly from the usual arrangements for Reception children.

The plan should be developed in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child. For children requiring regular intimate care, the school will agree arrangements with parents/carers and document these within an Individual Intimate Care Plan.

The child's views should be sought and respected, taking account of their age, understanding and communication needs. Plans should be reviewed regularly and whenever the child's needs or circumstances change. Lancashire guidance recommends that individual vulnerabilities and the child's views, as well as the views of parents/carers, are considered when developing intimate care arrangements.

Privacy and dignity

Children have a right to privacy and dignity when receiving intimate care. Staff will:

- use appropriate changing/toileting areas;
- close doors or screens where appropriate;
- avoid exposing the child unnecessarily;
- explain what they are doing;
- use age-appropriate language;
- preserve the child's dignity;
- avoid discussing the child's personal care needs in front of other children; and
- ensure that other children do not observe intimate care unnecessarily.

However, privacy must never compromise safeguarding. Staff should not lock themselves into a room with a child during intimate care. Wherever possible, another appropriate adult should be aware that intimate care is taking place and be nearby. Lancashire's professional relationships guidance states that children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing, toileting or receiving other intimate care, while recognising that an appropriate level of supervision is necessary for safeguarding and health and safety. Parents/carers may express preferences regarding intimate care arrangements. The school will seek to accommodate reasonable requests where this is compatible with safeguarding, staffing and the child's welfare.

One-to-one intimate care

Intimate care will normally be undertaken by one appropriately authorised member of staff. A second appropriate adult should normally be in the vicinity and aware that intimate care is taking place and, wherever possible, visible and/or audible. A second member of staff should not routinely be present inside the changing/toileting area unless:

- the child's intimate care plan requires two adults;
- the child's medical or physical needs require two adults;
- a manual handling procedure requires two adults;
- there is a specific safeguarding reason; or
- the situation presents a risk which cannot safely be managed by one adult.

Lancashire guidance supports this approach, stating that intimate/personal care should normally be undertaken by one member of staff while another appropriate adult is in the vicinity.

Staff undertaking intimate care

Only staff authorised by the Headteacher or delegated senior leader may undertake intimate care. Staff undertaking intimate care must:

- have appropriate safeguarding checks;
- understand this policy;
- follow the child's individual care plan where applicable;
- understand the child's communication needs;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- follow hygiene procedures;
- record care where required; and
- report any concern immediately.

Staff must not undertake intimate care if they have not been authorised to do so by the school. Lancashire guidance states that staff undertaking intimate care must have undergone the appropriate safer recruitment and safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check where required.

Volunteers, students and visitors

Volunteers, students, agency staff and visitors must not undertake intimate care unless the school has specifically authorised this and the appropriate safeguarding checks, training and supervision are in place. An unfamiliar adult should not normally undertake intimate care.

The child's safety, dignity and emotional wellbeing must always be prioritised. Lancashire guidance specifically advises that intimate/personal care should not be undertaken by an adult the child does not know and that appropriate safeguarding checks must be in place.

Physical contact

Some physical contact is necessary and appropriate when providing intimate care.
Staff should use the **minimum physical contact necessary** to provide safe and effective care.
Physical contact must:

- be appropriate to the task;
- be explained to the child;
- be proportionate;
- respect the child's dignity;
- take account of the child's communication and sensory needs; and
- never be used as punishment or for the adult's convenience.

The school does not operate a blanket "no physical contact" approach. Appropriate physical contact may be necessary to care for, comfort or protect a child. KCSIE 2026 recognises that appropriate physical contact can be necessary in schools and that policies should support sensible professional practice rather than adopting a blanket no-contact approach.

Communication with children

Staff should explain intimate care in simple, age-appropriate language. For example:
"You have had an accident. I am going to help you get cleaned up and changed." Staff should:

- tell the child what they are going to do;
- ask permission where appropriate;
- explain physical contact before it occurs;
- give the child choices where possible;
- use visual communication or communication aids where required; and
- respect a child's communication style.

Children who communicate non-verbally must be supported to express preferences, discomfort or refusal using their usual communication system.

If a child refuses intimate care

Children's views and feelings should be respected. If a child refuses assistance, staff should:
remain calm;

- reassure the child;
- explain why the care is necessary;
- offer choices where possible;
- use the child's established communication strategies;
- allow reasonable time where this is safe; and
- seek assistance from another familiar member of staff if necessary.

If refusal creates an immediate health, hygiene or safeguarding concern, staff should seek advice from the EYFS Lead, SENCO, DSL or Headteacher. The school will never use threats, humiliation or punishment to make a child comply with intimate care.

Personal hygiene

Children will be encouraged to develop good personal hygiene habits, including:

- washing hands after using the toilet;
- washing hands before eating;
- using tissues;
- disposing of tissues appropriately;
- covering coughs and sneezes;
- changing wet or soiled clothing;
- maintaining appropriate personal cleanliness; and
- understanding why hygiene is important.

Staff will model appropriate hygiene practices.

Infection control

Staff will follow the school's infection-control procedures when providing intimate care. This includes:

- handwashing before and after care;
- appropriate use of disposable gloves;
- use of aprons where appropriate;
- cleaning and disinfecting changing areas;
- safe disposal of nappies and other contaminated materials;
- appropriate handling of soiled clothing; and
- following advice relating to infectious diseases.

Staff should cover any cuts or broken skin with waterproof dressings.

Changing clothes

Children may require assistance with changing clothes following:

- toileting accidents;
- water or messy play;
- illness;
- outdoor learning;
- weather-related incidents;
- physical activities; or
- other unexpected events.

Children should be encouraged to change independently wherever they are able. Where adult assistance is necessary, staff should provide only the support required. Children should not be unnecessarily undressed by an adult.

Medical and specialist personal care

Some children may require personal care as part of a medical condition.

This may include:

- continence management;
- catheter care;
- medication;
- specialist feeding;
- mobility support;
- use of specialist equipment;
- management of medical devices; or
- other healthcare procedures.

Such care must only be undertaken by appropriately trained staff and in accordance with the child's healthcare plan, medical advice and school procedures. The school will not ask untrained staff to undertake specialist medical procedures.

Safeguarding

Intimate care must always be considered within the school's wider safeguarding arrangements. Staff should remain alert to:

- unexplained injuries;
- changes in behaviour;
- distress associated with particular adults;
- unusual fear or avoidance;
- changes in toileting behaviour;
- disclosures;
- comments about inappropriate touching;
- sexualised behaviour that is unusual for the child;
- unexplained soreness, bleeding or injury; or
- any other concern relating to abuse or neglect.

If a concern arises, staff must:

- Listen to the child.
- Remain calm.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Avoid promising confidentiality.
- Record the concern factually.
- Report the concern to the DSL or deputy without delay.
- Follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

KCSIE 2026 requires staff to act immediately on safeguarding concerns and report them to the DSL or deputy without delay.

Allegations or concerns about staff

Any concern or allegation about an adult's conduct during intimate care must be reported immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. This includes concerns about:

- unnecessary physical contact;
- inappropriate comments;
- failure to maintain professional boundaries;
- inappropriate exposure of a child;
- failure to follow the child's care plan;
- inappropriate use of photographs or recording;
- humiliating or shaming a child; or
- any other behaviour that may place a child at risk.

The school's procedures for managing allegations against staff must be followed. KCSIE 2026 requires schools to have systems for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations about staff, including concerns that may appear minor.

Recording intimate care

The school will maintain appropriate records of intimate care. Routine toileting by an independent child does not normally require a record. A record will normally be made where...

- a child receives significant adult assistance;
- a child is changed;
- a nappy or continence product is changed;
- intimate care is provided outside the child's normal routine;
- there is an injury or medical concern;
- the child becomes distressed;
- there is a safeguarding concern;
- the child's individual care plan requires recording; or
- staff believe a record is necessary to protect the child or staff member.

Records should include, where appropriate:

- date and time;
- child's name;
- reason for care;
- type of care provided;
- staff member providing care;
- any significant observations;
- any concerns;
- action taken; and
- parent/carer communication where relevant.

Records must be factual, professional and proportionate. Lancashire guidance recommends maintaining signed records of intimate and personal care tasks and recording relevant times where care is undertaken away from the usual setting. Records relating to intimate care will be stored securely and handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Accidental exposure or unexpected situations

If a child is accidentally exposed during intimate care, staff should remain calm and restore the child's dignity as quickly as possible. If an unexpected situation occurs, staff should:

- ensure the child is safe;
- maintain appropriate supervision;
- inform the EYFS Lead or another senior member of staff where appropriate;
- record the incident if necessary; and
- report any safeguarding concern.

Staff should never attempt to conceal an incident.

Parents and carers

The school will work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's personal care needs. Parents/carers will be asked to provide relevant information about:

- toileting;
- continence;
- medical needs;
- allergies;
- skin conditions;
- communication needs;
- sensory needs;
- equipment;
- preferred approaches; and
- any changes in the child's care needs.

Parents/carers should inform school of significant changes that may affect the child's intimate care. The school will discuss significant or repeated difficulties with parents/carers and agree appropriate strategies.

Spare clothing

Parents/carers will be encouraged to provide a named set of spare clothing appropriate for the school day. The school will maintain an emergency supply of spare clothing where possible. Children should not be prevented from participating in learning because they do not have spare clothing.

Cultural, religious and individual considerations

The school will respect children's and families' cultural, religious and personal preferences concerning personal care wherever these are compatible with safeguarding, health and safety and the child's welfare. Parents/carers should communicate any relevant requirements to the school. The school will seek to accommodate reasonable requests and make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Safeguarding and professional boundaries

Staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times. Staff must not:

- make jokes about a child's body or toileting;
- shame or embarrass a child;
- make comments about a child's appearance or cleanliness;
- discuss a child's intimate care in front of other children;
- take photographs of children during intimate care;
- use personal mobile phones during intimate care;
- undertake unnecessary physical contact;
- provide care beyond what is required;
- use intimate care as a form of behaviour management; or
- conceal intimate care from other staff.

Any concern about practice must be reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

Staff wellbeing and protection

The school recognises that intimate care can place staff in situations where clear professional procedures are important for their own protection. Staff should:

- follow this policy consistently;
- follow individual care plans;
- ensure another appropriate adult is aware that care is taking place;
- record significant care;
- report any unusual incident;
- seek advice where they are unsure; and
- never feel pressured to undertake a procedure for which they are not trained or authorised.

Staff should report any concern about their own practice or the practice of another adult promptly.

Training

Staff responsible for intimate care will receive appropriate information and training. Training may include:

- safeguarding;
- intimate care procedures;
- infection control;
- manual handling;
- continence support;
- SEND;
- communication strategies;
- medical needs;
- use of specialist equipment; and
- relevant health and safety procedures.

Training requirements will depend on the individual needs of children within the setting.

Risk assessments

The school will complete appropriate risk assessments where a child's intimate care needs present additional risks. Risk assessments may consider:

- the child's physical needs;
- mobility;
- manual handling;
- specialist equipment;
- staffing;
- the environment;
- privacy;
- safeguarding;
- infection control;
- communication;
- sensory needs;
- staff training; and
- emergency procedures.

Where a child's needs change, the risk assessment should be reviewed.

Review of individual arrangements

Individual intimate care arrangements will be reviewed:

- at least annually where ongoing;
- whenever the child's needs change;
- following an incident;
- following advice from health professionals;
- following a change in staffing or equipment; or
- where parents, the child or staff identify a concern.

Parents/carers should be involved in reviews. The child's views should be considered wherever possible.

Complaints

Parents/carers who have concerns about intimate care arrangements should initially speak to the child's class teacher or EYFS Lead. Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, the school's Complaints Policy will apply. Safeguarding concerns must be dealt with under safeguarding procedures and should not be treated solely as a complaint.

The EYFS Lead, DSL and SENCO are responsible for monitoring implementation and ensuring concerns are addressed promptly.

The policy will be reviewed:

- annually;
- following any significant intimate-care incident;
- following changes to EYFS statutory requirements;
- following changes to safeguarding guidance;
- following relevant Lancashire County Council or CSAP guidance;
- where an individual child's needs identify a requirement for change; or
- where school monitoring identifies that amendments are required.

Related documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Safer Sleep Policy
- EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – September 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- SEND Code of Practice
- Lancashire County Council Early Years guidance
- Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership guidance

Quick-reference procedure for staff

When a child needs intimate care:

1. INFORM

Tell the child what is going to happen.

2. ENCOURAGE

Allow the child to do as much as they can independently.

3. PROTECT DIGNITY

Provide appropriate privacy.

4. CHECK

Ensure another appropriate adult knows that intimate care is taking place and is nearby.

5. CARE

Provide only the assistance that is necessary.

6. HYGIENE

Follow handwashing, PPE and cleaning procedures.

7. RECORD

Record significant or planned intimate care in accordance with the child's care plan and school procedures.

8. REPORT

Report any safeguarding, health or welfare concern immediately.

Remember:

- **Children should be supported, never shamed.**
- **Independence should be encouraged, never assumed.**
- **Privacy should be respected, but safeguarding must never be compromised.**
- **Only appropriate, authorised and suitably checked adults should provide intimate care.**