Seven Sisters Primary School, Nursery & Nurture Centre

Intimate Care Policy

Last Reviewed	March 2024
Ratified on	23rd April 2024
Review	March 2026
Signed by Chair of Governors	

Principles
Seven Sisters Primary School, Nursery and Nurture Centre takes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in its care seriously. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with a Disability or Special Educational Need that affects his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against. It will also act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Government guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (2022) to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils.

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and their experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively. No pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parents, carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have an individual care plan in place, it should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance contained in this policy.

All staff undertaking intimate care will be given appropriate training, support and guidance and legal protection dependent on the needs of the child.

Definition
Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves. Some pupils are unable to do this because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs.

It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

Child focused principles of intimate care
The following are the fundamental principles upon which this policy is based.

- Every child has the 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 such views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible

We expect all staff to follow best practice at all times.

Assisting a child to change their clothes

On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, they have an accident on the toilet, get wet outside, or has bodily fluids on their clothes etc.

- Staff should 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 nearby when supporting dressing or undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private
- If staff are concerned in any way or a child is very distressed, then parents or carers will be asked if they can come to school or Nurture Centre to assist their child.

Changing a child who has soiled themselves

The following outlines our usual procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate and individual responses where needed.

- If a child soils themselves, a professional judgement has to be made as to whether it is appropriate to change the child or request the parent or carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and they should be comforted and reassured throughout
- The child will be given the opportunity to clean themselves and change their underwear in private. If a child is not able to complete this task, we will attempt to contact the parents or carers to inform them of the situation and ask them to come to school or the Nurture Centre to support their child's changing
- If the parent or carer is able to come within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity
- If the parent or carer cannot attend, the decision will be taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child to change them. The member of staff completing the care should advise another member of staff that they are changing the child
- Where an individual care plan is not in place, the parent or carer will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled themselves). It is recommended practice that information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated by telephone, face to face away from other parents or carers or by a sealed letter

Pupils who require regular assistance

- Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have written individual care plans agreed by staff, parents or carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. The plan will be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil will be present wherever possible and appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account
- The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). Staff should also take into account procedures for educational visits away from the school or Nurture Centre site
- Accurate records should be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care. These can be brief but should, as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case. These records will be kept in the child's classroom and can be made available to parents or carers on request
- All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible

Medical Procedures

- Pupils who are disabled might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents or carers, documented in the individual health care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so by medical staff
- It is particularly important that these staff follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly
- A written record will be kept in a format agreed by parents and staff every time a child has an invasive medical procedure, e.g. support with catheter usage
- Any members of staff who administer first aid will be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation another adult will be asked to be present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

Physiotherapy

- Pupils who require physiotherapy whilst at school or Nurture Centre should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist or physiotherapy aide
- If it is agreed in the Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) that a member of the school or Nurture Centre staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given to the school or Nurture Centre staff and updated regularly. The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique to ensure competency.
- Under no circumstances should school or Nurture Centre staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

Staffing intimate care

- Staff who provide intimate care are trained according to the needs of the pupil.
- Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils.
- Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected.
- Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when they help with intimate care. SEND advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.
- An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult if they are going alone to assist a pupil with intimate care.
- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care will be employees of the school and Nurture Centre, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- Health & Safety guidelines must be adhered to regarding waste products, and the use of yellow clinical waste bins.
- No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.
- Individual care plans must include specific information for those supporting children with bespoke medical needs.

Child Protection

- We recognise that pupils with special needs and who have a disability are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse
- From a child protection perspective, it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In the school and

the Nurture Centre best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in intimate care and others in the vicinity) will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.

- Where appropriate, pupils will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc., they will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head Teacher. A clear record of the concern will be completed and the school's child protection procedures followed.
- If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school or Nurture Centre this should be reported to the Head Teacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Head Teacher) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy.
- Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or Nurture Centre or about any improper practice will report this to the Head Teacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the Child Protection procedures and Whistle Blowing Policy

Appendix 1

Changing nappies and potty training

- Where possible the child's key person should attend to their toileting & intimate care needs
- Children's nappies must be changed as and when needed. There are not set times for changing children's nappies.
- Staff should not interrupt a child if they are concentrating or completing an activity, but wait until they have finished or change another child.
- Before changing any child, staff will ensure that they explain to the child what is happening, showing them a visual cue if necessary. Staff will speak to the child throughout the changing process.
- Staff should collect all items required to change the child before they start ensuring that the changing unit or mat is wiped clean with the antibacterial wipes provided.
- If a parent or carer has asked staff to use a barrier cream such as Sudocrem and provided a clearly labelled pot, staff will apply it when necessary.
- Staff should use one pair of disposable gloves for each child.
- Adults can use this opportunity to talk to, interact with and bond with the children, in particular, young babies. Avoid turning the experience into a 'task' by allowing children to play with a toy of interest.
- When finished, staff must place all used items in the nappy bin and sanitise the changing unit or mat.
- Staff will record when a nappy change has happened so that they can inform the parent or carer upon collection.
- Staff will respect children's privacy when they are using the toilet or potty. Staff will talk to the child and ask supportive questions as they go through the process, e.g. 'Do you want me to help you pull up your trousers?'
- If any clothes are wet or soiled they must be changed, placed in a plastic bag and given to the parent or carer when they collect their child.
- Staff will ask the parents or carers to bring in nappies, wipes, creams or clothes if they need to be replaced.
- Staff will ensure that both they and the child wash their hands.