



Wilberforce Primary
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Wilberforce Primary School

Intimate Care Policy



Policy date: January 2015 (Ratified by the Governing Body February 2015)
Review date: January 2016

Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes, as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure. The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and requires staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There will always be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Aims and Objectives

Wilberforce Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is recognised that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Any child with intimate care needs will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Each child will be encouraged to do as much for him/herself as s/he can by staff.

Individual intimate care plans will be formed when required for identified children to suit presenting circumstances.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a specific reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care.

Ideally, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex but in the event of an emergency, it may differ if failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents on a regular basis and recorded

on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing.

The Protection of Children

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to at all times. All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding. If a staff member has any concerns about a child's physical changes (bruises, marks etc) they will immediately report concerns following school procedures.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy regarding being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into, parents will be consulted and outcomes recorded. Alternative care arrangements will be made until the issue is resolved. Similarly, if a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, school procedures will be followed.

Children Wearing Nappies

Any child wearing nappies will have an intimate care plan which must be signed by the parent/carer. This plan will outline who is responsible in school for changing the child, and where and when this will be carried out. This agreement allows school and parents to be aware of all issues surrounding the task from the outset.

Health & Safety Guidance

Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is soiled or when changing a nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag and sealed. The bag should then be placed in a bin, (with a liner) specifically designed for such waste. This bin should be collected on a weekly basis as part of the usual refuse as it is not classed as clinical waste.

Special Needs

Children with special needs have the same rights to privacy and safety when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities (any physical disability or learning difficulty) must be considered when drawing up care plans for individual children. Regardless of age and ability, the views and emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought when drawing up or reviewing a care plan.

Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact.

Staff must be aware that even well-intentioned contact might be misconstrued by the child or an observer. Staff must always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.

The expectation is that when staff make physical contact with pupils it will be:

- For the least amount of time necessary (limited touch)
- Appropriate, given their age, stage of development and background
- In response to the pupil's needs at the time.

Arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs and consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Where possible consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from usual procedure is anticipated and must be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be needed where a child has previously suffered abuse or neglect.

This may lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

Many such children may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child, seek witnesses and document and report the incident following school procedures.