



Policy and Guidance for staff who provide Intimate Care for Children and Young People

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1. Introduction

The Governors will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024' to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school

The Governors recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

This school take seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding and this policy applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children regardless of their position within the school.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other policies including:

- Accessibility Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Positive Handling Policy and Searching and Screening Policy
- Medication Policy
- Anti-Bullying policy

In the rest of this document the term child/children will be used to refer to children and young people. The term parent/s is used to refer to parents, carers and legal guardians.

Woodlands 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. These guidelines on Intimate Care aim to both protect those being cared for and the staff who care for children's needs. Dependency on a wide network of carers and other adults is the everyday experience of some disabled children in order that their medical and intimate care needs such as bathing and toileting can be met. The large number of adults involved and the nature of the care needs both increase the risk of exposure to abusive behaviour and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries. We take the view that everyone is safer if expectations are clear and approaches are as consistent as possible. Statutory guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024) requires the development of local guidelines and training for staff on good practice in intimate care for disabled children. This document meets this statutory requirement and is also applicable to children without disabilities.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation, with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate and personal care should be positive. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively; no child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

2. Legislation/Statutory Guidance that Inform this Policy

- Children Act 1989
- Childcare Act 2006
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010
- S.175 / S.57 Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse (Statutory Guidance)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

3. Definition of Intimate Care

Our definition of Intimate Care is any personal care activity a child would normally be able to do for him/herself which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of equipment associated with the process as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the cases of specific procedure only staff suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam).

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

4. Principles

- The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned (appendix 2). Children who require regular assistance will have health care plans or intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals involved. Ideally, the plan should be agreed at a meeting which all key staff and the child should also be present. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually. They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips (appendix B)
- In relation to record keeping, a written record should be kept in a format agreed by parents and staff every time a child has an invasive medical procedure, e.g. support with a catheter usage.
- 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 should be kept in a file and available to parents/carers on request.
- The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Each child's right to privacy will be respected.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Positive Handling) and are fully aware of best practice. Staff should be fully aware of best practise regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.
- The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.
- Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the child by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their age.
- 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 sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented (appendix 4).

- Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting boys, as no male staff are available.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers 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 and equal opportunities legislation (appendix 5).

5. The Protection of Children

Child Protection Procedures and Working Together Statutory Guidance 2023 will be accessible to staff and will be adhered to.

From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risk for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practise 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 practise.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of ability, development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the Safeguarding Lead, who can be contacted via email on safeguarding@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded.

Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution.

Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, Child Protection/ Managing Allegations procedures will be followed

6. Working with Parents/Carers

- 6.1 Partnership with parent/carers is an important principle in any educational setting and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious/cultural sensitivities. A clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded (see appendix 2)
- 6.2 Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with Health Care plans and any other plans that identify the support of intimate care.
- 6.3 Exchanging information with parents is essential through personal contact, telephone or correspondence. However information concerning intimate care procedures should not be

recorded in home/school books as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and staff member.

7. Writing an Intimate Care Plan

- 7.1 Where a routine procedure is required an intimate care plan should be agreed in discussion with the child, school staff, parents and relevant health personnel. The plan should be signed by all who contribute and reviewed on an agreed basis.
- 7.2 In developing the plan the following should be considered;
- a) Whole School implications
 - The importance of working towards independence
 - Arrangements for home-school transport, sports day, school performances, examinations, school trips and visits, swimming, etc.
 - Who will substitute in the absence of the appointed person.
 - Strategies for dealing with pressure from peers .e.g. teasing/bullying particularly if the child has an odour
 - b) Classroom management
 - The child's seating arrangements in class
 - A system for the child to leave class without disruption to the lesson
 - Avoidance of missing the same lesson all year due to medical routines
 - Awareness of a child's discomfort which may affect learning
 - Implications for PE e.g. discreet clothing, additional time for changing.
- 7.3 All plans must be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectation, roles and responsibilities. They should reflect all methods of communication including emergency procedures between home, school and the medical service. A procedure should also be included to explain how concerns arising from the intimate care process will be dealt with.

8. Links with Other Agencies

- 8.1 Positive links with other agencies will enable school based plans to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals and will ensure the child's well-being and development remains paramount.
- 8.2 It is recommended good practice for the school nurse to be informed of all children requiring intimate care.

9. Pupil Voice

- 9.1 Allow the child, subject to their age and understanding, to express a preference regarding the choice of his/her carer and sequence of care.
- 9.2 Agree appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff.
- 9.3 It may be possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of reactions to the intimate care.
- 9.4 Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.
- 9.5 It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing.

9.6 To ensure effective communication with the child, staff should ascertain the agreed method of communication and identify this in the agreed Intimate Care Plan.

10. Recruitment

10.1 Parents must feel confident that relevant staff have been carefully vetted and trained helping to avoid potentially stressful areas of anxiety and conflict.

10.2 Recruitment and selection of candidates for posts involving intimate care should be made following the usual Enhanced DBS checks, equal opportunities and employment rights legislation.

10.3 Candidates must be made fully aware of what will be required and detailed in their job description before accepting the post.

10.4 Enquires should be made into any restrictions the candidates may have which will impede their ability to carry out the tasks involved. This will enable employers to identify and provide necessary support and adjustments that are practical.

10.5 Where possible, pupils may be involved in the recruitment process, dependent on their age and ability to understand.

10.6 It is recommended that candidates have an opportunity to meet the child with whom they will be working.

10.7 Wherever possible, staff should work with children of the same sex in providing intimate care respecting their personal dignity at all times.

10.8 Trained staff should be available to substitute and undertake specific intimate care tasks in the absence of the appointed person.

10.9 Intimate care can only be provided in school and foundation stage settings by those who have been appropriately trained and have specifically indicated a willingness to do so, either as part of their agreed job description or other arrangements.

11. Staff Development

11.1 Staff must receive Child Protection training every year.

11.2 Staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the intimate care policy and guidelines within the context of their work.

11.3 Where appropriate staff must receive Positive Handling training at regular intervals.

11.4 Newly appointed staff should be closely supervised until completion of a successful probationary period.

11.5 Whole school staff training should foster a culture of good practice and a whole school approach to intimate care.

11.6 It is imperative for the school and individual staff to keep a dated record of all training undertaken.

11.7 The following guidelines should be used in training senior staff and those identified to support intimate care. Senior staff members should be able to;

- Ensure that sensitive information about a child is only shared with those who need to know, such as parents, members of staff specifically involved with the child. Other personnel should only be given information that keeps the child safe.
- Consult parents about arrangements for intimate care
- Ensure staff are aware of the set procedures, the Child Protection Policy & Health & Safety Policy etc.
- Ensure staff understand the needs of refugee children, asylum seekers and children from different racial and cultural backgrounds and specialist advice is sought when necessary
- Ensure staff know who to ask for advice if they are unsure or uncomfortable about a particular situation.
- Ensure staff know of a whole school approach to intimate care
- Wherever possible, avoid using staff involved in intimate care, in the delivery of sex education, as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved. In addition identified staff members should be able to;
- Access other procedures and policies regarding the welfare of the child e.g. Child Protection
- Identify and use a communication system that the child is most comfortable with.
- 'Read' messages a young child is trying to convey
- Communicate with and involve the child in the intimate care process
- Offer choices, wherever possible
- Develop, where possible, greater independence with the procedure of intimate care
- Maintain confidentiality with children who discuss elements of their intimate care unless it is a child protection issue when Child Protection Procedures must be followed.

12. Environmental Advice

- 12.1 When children need intimate care facilities, reasonable adjustments will need to be made. Where a purpose built toilet is not available, the use of a screen to make the area private is acceptable.
- 12.2 Where children have long - term incontinence or a disability requiring regular intimate care, the school will require specially adapted facilities. Specialist advice from medical or therapy staff may be required when considering space, heating, ventilation and lighting.
- 12.3 Additional considerations may include:
- Facilities with hot & cold running water
 - Protective clothing including disposable protective gloves - provided by the school
 - Labelled bins for the disposal of wet & soiled nappies/pads (soiled items being 'double bagged' before being placed in bin)
 - Waste for incineration (e.g. needles, catheters etc.)
 - Supplies of suitable cleaning materials; anti-bacterial spray, sterilising fluid, deodorisers
Anti-bacterial hand wash
 - Supplies of appropriate clean clothing, nappies, disposal bags and wipes
 - Changing mat or changing bench
 - An effective system should be identified to alert staff for help in an
Emergency

13. Invasive Procedures

- 13.1 It is recommended that two adults are present when invasive procedures are performed unless the parents have agreed to the presence of one adult only. Whilst this may be seen as providing protection against a possible allegation against a member of staff, it further erodes the privacy of the child.

13.2 Schools should make arrangements to ensure that there is always a member of staff nearby when intimate care takes place.

14. Vulnerability to Abuse

Children should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth. Staff should be encouraged to listen to the child at all times.

14.1 It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Working Together 2023 and the Child Protection Procedures and local procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff.

14.2 The following are factors that can increase a child's vulnerability:

- Children who need help with intimate care are statistically more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse
- Children with disabilities may have less control over their lives than others
- Children do not always receive sex and relationship education and may therefore be less able to recognise abuse.
- Children may experience multiple carers
- Children may not be able to distinguish between intimate care and abuse
- Children may not be able to communicate

14.3 If a child is hurt accidentally he or she should be immediately reassured and the staff member should check that he or she is safe and the incident reported immediately to the nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead, Dominic Riste.

14.4 If a child appears sexually aroused, misunderstands or misinterprets an action/instruction, the incident should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Dominic Riste.

15. Allegations of Abuse

All staff working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. The School policy can help to reassure both staff involved, and the parents of vulnerable children.

15.1 Action should be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal staff assistant, particularly with reference to time spent alone together.

15.2 It is advised that the support role be changed as quickly as possible, should such a discrepancy occur, and then reviewed on a regular basis.

15.3 Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in Woodlands' School Managing Allegations Child Protection Procedures should be followed.

16. Toileting Procedures (appendix 4)

16.1 If the toilet management plan has been agreed and signed by parents, children and staff involved, it is acceptable for only one member of staff to assist unless there is an implication for safe moving and handling of the child.

16.2 The plan should consider the following;

- Location of the plan for reference, ensuring discretion and confidentiality
- Location of recording procedures, ensuring discretion and confidentiality
- Necessary equipment & waste disposal – see environmental advice
- Clear labelling of equipment and procedures e.g. Wipe table after use.

17. Health and Safety Issues

Barrier materials will always be used e.g. disposable gloves. Appropriate Lifting and Handling Procedures will be followed when necessary.



Signed: _____
Head Teacher

Dated: 10th March 2025



Signed: _____
Chair of Governors

Dated: 10th March 2025

APPENDIX 1

RECORD OF AGENCIES INVOLVED

Child's Name.....

DOB.....

Name/ Role	Address/phone/email
Parent/Carer	
School Nurse/Health Visitor	
Continence Advisor	
Physiotherapist	
Occupational Therapist	
Hospital Consultant	
GP	
EP	
Social Worker	
Other	

APPENDIX 3

WORKING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE RECORD

Name of Child	
Date of Birth	
Name of Associate Staff Involved	

I can already

Aim:
I will try to

Review date.....

Parents/Carer.....

Child (if appropriate).....

Personal Assistant.....

Senior Leadership/SENDCO.....

Date.....

APPENDIX 4

TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Name of Child	
Date of Birth	
Name of Associate Staff Involved	

Area of need:
Equipment required:

Location of suitable toilet facilities:	
Support required:	Frequency of support

Working towards Independence

Child will try to:	Personal Assistant will do:	Target Achieved

Review Date:

Parents/Carer.....

Child (if appropriate).....

Personal Assistant.....

Senior Leadership/SENDSCO.....

Date.....

APPENDIX 5

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Child’s Name.....

DOB.....

Personal Assistant’s Name.....

Personal Assistant

As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- When I am the identified person I will stop what I am doing to help you in the toilet, as soon as you ask me. I will avoid all unnecessary delays.
- When you use our agreed emergency signal, I will stop what I am doing and come and help.
- I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times.
- I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing
- I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally
- If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you.
- I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan.

Child

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me.
- I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times.
- I will only use the agreed emergency signal for real emergencies.
- I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet.
- I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.
- I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change.

We will review this agreement on.....

Child (if appropriate).....

Personal Assistant.....

Date.....

APPENDIX 6

PERMISSION FOR SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

Child's Last Name	
Child's First name	
Male/Female	
Date of Birth	
Parent/Carers Name	
Address	
<u>Telephone Numbers</u> Home Mobile Emergency contact number	

I understand that;

I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting.

I will advise the Head Teacher of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

Name.....

Signature.....

Relationship to child.....

Date.....