Reinwood I&N School

Intimate and Personal Care Policy
(Reviewed every 3 years)

Written November 2017	**Reviewed October 2020**
Reviewed October 2023	
Next Review October 2026	

Introduction

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals.

Examples include care associated with continence as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or showering. In addition, some children may need help with dressing/undressing or using the toilet. Most children can carry out these functions themselves, but it is recognised that some are unable to due to physical disability, learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children, support staff and ensure good practice is followed. At Reinwood I & N School all staff are checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and we are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We believe that the intimate care of children cannot be separated from other aspects of their learning and development and we believe that every child has the right to feel safe and secure.

We do not discriminate against children who have not reached a stage where they can manage their own personal hygiene and as such welcome all children to participate in our school and provide appropriate support for each child on an individual basis. We recognise the need to treat all children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. A high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. No child should be attended to in a manner which may cause distress or pain.

Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of safeguarding issues.

Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny, and staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Reinwood I&N 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.

We aim to:

Safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of all children and young people including those who may be more vulnerable to abuse.

- Provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose duties may include intimate care.

- Assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual needs and concerns are taken into consideration.

- Remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination and ensure inclusion for all children and young people within our setting.

Our approach to best practice

Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

Where possible the child's key-person is responsible for undertaking their care. When this is not possible, a staff member who is known to the child will take on that responsibility. The staff member who is involved will always ask the child for permission to assist them. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities and staff will encourage them to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. Children will be cared for with dignity and respect for their privacy. 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. Intimate care may be appropriately delivered by cross gender support (where all parties feel comfortable with that arrangement).

All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. We will work with parents and children to establish a preferred procedure for supporting the child in our care with their personal and intimate needs. Consent will be gained to complete intimate care procedures. (Appendix 1)

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so with access to Safeguarding and Health and Safety training in moving and handling, where appropriate, and are fully aware of infection control, including the need to wear full PPE e.g. gloves, apron, mask and visor.

Where necessary, apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements, following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required, e.g. hoists and slings.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, sign, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences.

The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle children 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 themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for wiping/washing themselves.

Staff work in partnership with the child or young person's parents or carers, to discuss their needs, routines or preferences; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded through the EHCP/ My Support Plan and may include a risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, health and personal safety of the child and the carer.

The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

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 needs help with intimate care. Adults who assist a child one-to-one are employees of the school and have DBS checks at the appropriate level.

By necessity a number of staff will need to be trained to deliver such care although attempts will be made to restrict daily contact to the same familiar faces.

Staff should inform another colleague when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

A signed record will be kept by staff of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken which will include times completed and any observations noted in the child's intimate care plan. (Appendix 2)

Each child will have an allocated member of staff on the senior leadership team to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

We appreciate that sometimes children have toileting 'accidents' which are out of character for them. In the event of this, and in the absence of a personal intimate care plan, the child would be fully encouraged and supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability. Staff will encourage the child to do as much for his/herself as possible and parents will be informed the same day. The parents/carers will be contacted confidentially either in person, by telephone or in a sealed letter. On the rare occasion that a child is soiled to a point where they are unable to clean themselves to a comfortable state, parents would be contacted immediately so that the child could be taken home for bathing.

Safeguarding the Child

Local Authority Safeguarding Procedures and Inter-Agency Safeguarding procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

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- Assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual needs and concerns are taken into consideration.

- Remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination and ensure inclusion for all children and young people within our setting.

Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding. Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child' presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/ Designated Safeguarding Lead. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social services and/or police if necessary.

Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at increased risk of harm by doing so.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a member of staff, the matter will be considered and outcomes recorded.
Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules may be altered until any issues are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice may be obtained from external agencies as necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, the school will follow the procedures set out in the government guidance document “Keeping Children Safe in Education – Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff “ and the school safeguarding policy.

Cameras and mobile phones must never be taken into bathroom areas by staff or children.

Allegations of Abuse

Personnel working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. This school policy can help to reassure both staff involved and the parents of vulnerable children. Action will be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal assistant. Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in the Child Protection procedures will be followed. If staff are concerned about a child's demeanour during or following intimate care, or has responded to or said something that has caused concern during the intimate care, they will report such incidents immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads who will follow the correct safeguarding procedures.

Policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with these policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Administering Medicine Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Complaints Policy

The governing body reviews this policy every three years. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Appendix 1

Letter to parents to get permission for school to provide intimate and personal care

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding occasions when your child may need support with intimate care routines. We have drawn up the attached guidelines to ensure that your child's needs are met in a professional and dignified manner at all times.

I would be grateful if you could complete, sign and return the slip below once you have read the guidelines and agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' procedures when necessary.

Yours sincerely, Mrs N Conquest (inclusion Manager/SENDCO)

Child's Full Name	
Male/ Female	
Date of Birth	
Address	

I have read a copy of the School's 'Intimate Care Policy.'
and

I understand that;

Subject to the conditions laid down in the school Intimate and Personal Care policy, I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate and personal care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting assistance as necessary.

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

Signed _____

Full Name _____

Relationship to Child _____

Date _____

Appendix 2 Record of Intimate and Personal Care Intervention

Child's Name _____Class _____

Date	Time	Procedure	Observations	Staff name (PRINT)	Staff signature