



## **Intimate Care Policy: July 2024 (review July 2026)**

**At St Mary's C of E Primary Academy, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children.**

### **Introduction**

'Intimate care' can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the sexual parts of the body. This may occur on a regular basis or as a one-off incident and may involve support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing nappies, helping someone use the toilet, washing intimate parts of the body, first aid or cleaning a child who has soiled him/herself or who has been sick. Most children are able to manage their intimate care needs independently, but it is recognised that due to physical disability, learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development some children may not be able to do this.

St Mary's C of E Primary Academy 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. Intimate care is a sensitive issue and requires staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with privacy, choice and control. We recognise 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 and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

### **Good Practice**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- Every child has a 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
- All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own intimate care as is possible and practicable. This may mean that an adult supervises the child and visually checks that they are clean; staff should not assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the child can undertake independently.

When providing intimate care, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff.

In the event that a child refuses, or if the child is soiled to the point where they are unable to clean themselves to a comfortable state, the parent/carer will be contacted.

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) 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 intimate health care plans (IHCP) for individual children. Regardless of age and ability, the views and emotional responses of children with SEND should be actively sought when writing or reviewing a care plan.

**Staff carrying out intimate care will:**

- Try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible
- Always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins
- Announce their intention of entering where there are changing rooms
- Keep a signed record of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, will include times left and returned.
- Note any changes to the care plan in writing and without delay, even if the change in arrangements is temporary; e.g. staff shortages

**School will:**

- Ensure that written Intimate Care Plans (see Appendix A) are in place for any child who could be expected to require intimate care
- Update Intimate Care Plans in writing where appropriate, e.g. because there are changes to staff rota and at least annually
- Ensure that children are actively consulted about their own care plan, where possible
- Ensure that intimate / personal care is provided by staff known to the child

**Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Safeguarding and child protection policies 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 member of staff has any concerns about a child's physical changes (e.g. marks or bruises), they will immediately report their concerns to a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team in person.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Head teacher immediately.

### **Assisting a child to change his / her clothes**

On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he/she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his/her clothes etc. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given. Staff will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so.

### **Using the Toilet**

It is generally expected that most children will be toilet trained before they begin school in Reception. However, we recognise that children will join our school having reached differing levels of independence and development in toileting and self-care. Therefore, it is inevitable that from time to time, some children will have accidents and will need to be attended to, or will need help in using the toilet. Children in the EYFS have access to the toilet whenever they need to and are encouraged to be as independent as is age and developmentally appropriate. They are reminded at regular times to go to the toilet and to wash their hands after using the toilet.

### **Changing a child who has soiled him/herself**

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement will be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

1. The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
2. School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose, but children are encouraged to have a spare set of clothes in school (especially in the EYFS).
3. If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will assist the child. Staff should use the accessible toilet in the main corridor or the EYFS or KS1 toilets if they are not occupied by other children. Staff must not lock the door to any cubicles that they are using.
4. Staff will ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her.
5. Staff will be responsive to any distress shown.
6. Staff will follow hygiene procedures. They will wear an apron, protective disposable gloves and seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents. 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.

### **Changing Nappies**

Some children may attend St Mary's C of E Primary Academy wearing nappies or pull ups. Staff will, where necessary, assist a child/change a nappy. Nappies will be changed in an appropriate place, usually the classroom toilet or the accessible toilet in the main corridor. The member of staff changing a nappy will always inform another member of staff that they are changing a child and the door to the toilet will remain open.

Parents/carers are asked to provide nappies, wipes and nappy sacks which should be kept in a named bag on the child's peg. The soiled nappy will be placed in nappy sack and put in the nappy bin in the accessible toilet. Parents/carers will be informed if a nappy has been changed.

Staff should wear an apron and disposable gloves whilst changing a nappy. The changing area and mat should be cleaned after use.

### **Supporting a Child to Apply Sun Cream**

During spells of hot weather, it will be necessary for children to wear sun cream to protect themselves from sunburn. It is expected that children will have had sun cream applied in the morning before school. A named bottle of sun cream can be left in school for re-application on particularly hot days. Children will be expected to apply this to themselves. There are occasions when a child may find this more difficult (particularly in the Early Years). In this circumstance staff will assist children by using a hand over hand approach to support with applying and rubbing in sun cream. If a child has individual needs that would prevent them being independent in any way, then the application of sun cream or other creams will be written into an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP).

### **Providing Comfort or Support to a Child**

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context. If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Safeguarding Leader.

### **Assisting a Child who Requires a Specific Medical Procedure (and who is not able to carry this out unaided)**

Our 'Managing Medication and Medical Needs Policy' outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school. Parent/carers permission must be given before any medication is administered in school.

A small number of children who have significant medical needs will have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP).

This policy should be viewed alongside the following policies:

- Leeds SCP Children and Young People's Intimate Care Good Practice Guidelines
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings

# Intimate Care Plan

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<i>Child's name:</i>	
<i>Date of birth:</i>	<i>Name and role of person(s) completing this plan:</i>
<i>Date of plan:</i>	<i>Planned review date:</i> <small>(The plan should be reviewed at least annually or more frequently if the situation changes)</small>

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## Family Contact Information

<i>Name:</i>	<i>Relationship to child:</i>
<i>Telephone number:</i>	

*Relevant conditions: Speech and language, mobility etc:*

**Management and description of relevant routines:**

*Consider details of eating, drinking, toileting and changing routines: What support is required?*

*Does any specific language need to be used for consistency with home? Are any reward incentives used?*

**Details of help required for personal care:**

*Who will provide this, where and how? (include names of agreed staff)*

**Arrangements for school visits, trips etc:**

**Signature of Parent/Carer:**

**Signature of School Staff:**

