Learning in Nature CIC & Beccles Forest Schools



Intimate Care Policy

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement:
3.86 Providers must ensure: there is an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available- there should usually be separate toilet facilities for adults; there are suitable hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies; children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting; there is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and any other necessary items.

This policy was adopted by:	Learning in Nature CIC & Beccles Forest Schools
Date of adoption:	8th February 2026
Date to be reviewed:	8th February 2027
Signed, on behalf of the provider:	
Name of signatory:	Rach Whitwood
Role of signatory:	Co-Director

Policy Statement

At Beccles Forest Schools, the well-being of our attendees is a primary concern. Core principles of Forest School are giving learners the opportunity to develop independence, and treating every person with dignity and respect, while also maintaining their safety. These elements necessarily need to be balanced when considering children's toileting and intimate hygiene.

Intimate care is defined here as any care that involves toileting, washing or touching. Children in our care tend to have experience of carrying out many intimate care responsibilities independently, but sometimes children will need support, whether because of age, physical need or emotional need. Examples of intimate care given regularly are with changing clothing when wet- particularly in colder weather when changing needs to be quicker, administering first aid- cleaning wounds and giving reassurance (please see our Accident, Injury and First Aid Policy (March 2026).docx) and when children are in nappies or potty training.

Please see Appendices for the legal framework and definitions upon which this policy is written.

Procedures

Staffing

All staff who are to be responsible for the intimate care of children are subject to our rigorous safer recruitment procedures when starting work with Beccles Forest Schools (please see our Safer Recruitment Policy (October 2026).docx). They undertake the role in a professional, caring manner at all times, in line with the Forest School Ethos, and balance the children's right to privacy with safeguarding and support needs. All staff are required to attend regular Safeguarding training and complete regular supervisions, ensuring that they fully understand their role in regards to intimate care. If a member of staff has any concerns while undertaking intimate care tasks, e.g. seeing bruises or soreness, they immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (October 2026).docx).

Staff are supported to ensure that their practice reflects the needs of the individual child. Where possible, the child's key person performs intimate care duties, but, where this is not possible, the duties are performed by another adult with whom the child is very familiar and comfortable.

Working with Families

We work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that similar routines are followed in the setting as at home. Prior permission is obtained from parents/carers for staff to undertake intimate care tasks before the child starts attending.

Where necessary, individual intimate care plans are drawn up for children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. Careful consideration is given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is supported with intimate care needs. Changes to intimate care arrangements are discussed with parents/carers. The needs and wishes of children and parents/carers are taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Independence, Dignity and Respect

Children are supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their comfort, age and ability. Staff gently encourage this independence, while being mindful of their emotional and physical well-being. A child's right to privacy is balanced with a need to safeguard and support their needs.

Changing Clothes

While children are encouraged to be independent with dressing and undressing, sometimes it is necessary for staff to support children. This may be because of age, tricky layers of clothing or because the weather requires a speedy change. Where this is done, physical contact is limited and children are asked for consent before contact, and this is respected wherever possible.

Providing Physical Comfort

When children are offered physical comfort, this is always child initiated and considered in regards to the needs and age of the child.

Nappies, Potty Learning, Toileting Support and Toileting Accidents

We provide multiple child-only composting toilets on site, with hand wash basins both within and close by. When children require support with toileting, this is always completed in the designated area. Physical contact is kept to a minimum and carried out in a child-friendly, reassuring manner.

Ongoing Commitment

With the well-being of our attendees being a primary concern, their toileting and intimate hygiene is considered in line with the core principles of Forest School- giving learners the opportunity to develop independence, and treating every person with dignity and respect, while also maintaining their safety. We ensure that we reflect on our practices and review this policy at least annually.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Legal Frameworks and Definitions

Department for Education (2025) *Early years foundation stage statutory framework: For group and school-based providers, Available at* https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework_-_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf.pdf (Accessed 8th February 2026)

Forest School Association (n.d.) *Full principles and criteria for good practice*, Available at https://forestschoolassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice/ (Accessed 8th February 2026)