



Intimate Care Policy for Schools

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Intimate Care

A Model Policy for Schools

Tenby Church in Wales VC Primary School

1. Definition

1.1 The intimate care policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies.

Intimate care can be

defined as any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties, developmental delay or any other additional needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

You may want to consider a nappy changing procedure for those children who are yet to be completely toilet trained. This would include;

- Pedal operated/ hands free bin specifically for nappy disposal (schools should be disposing of nappies appropriately in yellow bags for clinical waste – this is usually done through a company).
- All staff should use disposable aprons, disposable gloves and any additional PPE required. This will be disposed of in the yellow clinical waste bag.

Parents should not be asked to take any waste home.

- Nappy changing mat / nappy changing unit
- Steps if needed-this will be **provided by school**.
- A box for each child's nappies wipes etc. – this will be provided by parents/guardians and carers.
- Spare clothes – provided by parents/guardians and carers.
- If cream needs to be applied, please refer to health care plan
- Screen if needed to ensure privacy or to put a sign on the door
- Nappy sacks, anti-bacterial spray, paper towels, liquid soap, pedal operated bin for paper towels.
- All surfaces and areas should be wiped down using anti-bacterial products.
- Accurate toileting records need to be kept wherever support is required for intimate care.



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

2. Principles

- 2.1 The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Welsh Government guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe' 283/2022 (which replaced 265/2020) to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils¹ at this school.
- 2.2 This school takes 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.
- 2.3 The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that ity to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against. A child must not be refused admission into school on the basis of the child not yet being toilet trained or be sent home if they have an incident of incontinence.
- 2.4 This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the schools' policies as below:
- Welsh Government - 'Supporting learners with healthcare needs' 2015/2017
 - PCC Healthcare Needs Policy: Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs 2018
 - PCC Model School Safeguarding policy 2020/21
 - PCC 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People' 2019
 - Local Authority Whistle-blowing policy
 - Health and Safety policy and procedures, including moving and handling
 - Additional Learning Needs/Inclusion policy
- 2.5 The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.
- 2.6 We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, 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 a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that

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care is given gently and sensitively: no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

- 2.7 Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.
- 2.8 Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.
- 2.9 Information on intimate care should be treated as confidential.
- 2.10 All staff undertaking intimate care must follow appropriate school protocol in terms of Health and Safety and hygiene. They must all follow the safeguarding protocols of the school.
- 2.11 This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

3. Child focused principles of intimate care

The following fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based pay due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

- Every child has the 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. (e.g. It would not be appropriate to leave a child in wet/soiled clothes for any period of time)
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- **Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.**
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

4. Best Practice

- 4.1 Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP) which noted the intimate care needs, agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. An IHP would not be needed if the



child is not toilet trained – a toileting plan would be more appropriate in these circumstances. The plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil should also be present wherever possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips.

- 4.2 Good practice guidance, e.g. Public Health Wales and from a safeguarding perspective, advocates for pupil and parents/carers to use appropriate terminology for all body parts and functions and this should be noted in the plan. If children call body parts different names in different settings it can make them more vulnerable as adults may not know to what they are referring. For children with ALN this may be potentially even more dangerous.
- 4.3 Where an IHP is **not** in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). **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.
- 4.4 Where children may require ongoing support for their intimate care needs such as toileting, parents will be asked to sign a consent form at the beginning of the school year. E.g. nursery intake.
- 4.5 Staff involved with intimate care need to be vigilant to any issues that may require referrals to health or other agencies. In these circumstances accurate records should be kept.
- 4.6 All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.
- 4.7 Staff who provide intimate care should be made aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- 4.8 Staff will ensure that all clinical waste will be segregated in accordance with the schools policy. **This clinical waste includes used nappies/ pads, gloves, aprons and soiled dressings.** At no time should these items be sent home with the child. They should be disposed of immediately into the refuse area.
- 4.9 Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation



- 4.10 There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.
- 4.11 Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the pupil personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their needs.
- 4.12 Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when s/he needs help with intimate care. ALN advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.
- 4.13 An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a pupil with intimate care.
- 4.14 The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.
- 4.15 Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a pupil of the same gender, there is research² which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors; ideally, every pupil should have a choice regarding the member of staff. There might also be occasions when the member of staff has good reason not to work alone with a pupil. It is important that the process is transparent so that all issues stated above can be respected; this can best be achieved through a meeting with all parties, as described above, to agree what actions will be taken, where and by whom.
- 4.16 Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the expected range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- 4.17 All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.
- 4.18 Health & Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products.
- 4.19 No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

5. Safeguarding

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- 5.1 The Governors and staff at this school recognise that pupils with additional needs and who have a disability are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.
- 5.2 The school will adhere to the local authority safeguarding procedures.
- 5.3 From a safeguarding perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practice 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 practice.
- 5.4 Where appropriate, pupils will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding including correct terminology for body parts.
- 5.5 If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP). The DSP will seek advice from the Child Care Assessment Team (CCAT) and submit a multi-agency referral form (MARF) submitted to the CCAT if required, in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Advice should be sought from CCAT as to whether parents/carers are informed of any referral.
- 5.6 Any concerns should be immediately logged in writing and reported to the DSP. The child should not be left in a situation that causes concerns. If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the Head teacher and DSP. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue/s is/are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- 5.7 If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher). The Head or Chair of Governors will seek advice from the CCAT who will in turn consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who manages professional allegations if required. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff to whom the allegation relates. Staff should also adhere to the PCC Whistleblowing policy 2021 which can be found on the intranet or in the Safeguarding area on Hwb.
- 5.8 Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Head teacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the safeguarding procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.



6. Physiotherapy

- 6.1 If pupils require physiotherapy whilst at school, the programme needs to be agreed with parents. School staff should only undertake physiotherapy techniques/programmes with pupils under the advice and guidance of the Physiotherapy service.
- 6.2 Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.
- 6.3 Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported immediately to the Physiotherapy service. If there is a problem with equipment, stop using it and seek adviser from the prescriber

7. Medical Procedures

- 7.1 Pupils who have a disability might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the IHP and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.
- 7.2 It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.(see useful links).
- 7.3 Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with LA guidance. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

8. Massage

- 8.1 Massage is now commonly used with pupils who have complex needs and/or medical needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation.
- 8.2 Any massage undertaken by school staff has received consent from the parent and should be confined to parts of the body such as the hands, feet and face in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and pupils.
- 8.3 Any adult undertaking massage for pupils should have been given appropriate guidance about procedures and products by suitably qualified staff.
- 8.4 Care plans should include specific information for those supporting children with bespoke medical needs.



USEFUL LINKS

Infection Prevention and Control Guidance (2019) for Childcare Settings (0-5 years) in Wales (Nurseries, Childminding and Playgroups)

<https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/harp/infection-prevention-and-control/guidance/accordians/docs/infection-prevention-and-control-guidance-2019-for-childcare-settings-0-5-years-in-wales-nurseries-childminding-and-playgroups/>

All Wales Infection Control Guidance for Education Settings

http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/All%20Wales%20Infection%20Prevention%20and%20Control%20Guidance%20for%20Educational%20Settings_FINALMay%202017x.pdf

Example of a Clinical waste company
Indigo House,
Sussex Avenue,
Leeds.
LS10 2LF

Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

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