



Withycombe Raleigh C of E Primary School

Policy for Intimate Care

2024

Withycombe Raleigh 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. Withycombe Raleigh recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given.

Introduction:

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam).

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Our approach to best practice:

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

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 independently as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

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 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 on CPOMs. Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, whilst at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

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 in a primary school, 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, in a home/school link book or on the CPOMs system under the medical label. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

The Protection and Safeguarding of Children:

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures will be adhered to.

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 physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate line manager/ designated person for child protection.

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 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, all necessary procedures will be followed as stated in Safeguarding Procedures.

Children wearing nappies/pull ups:

If children are admitted to school wearing nappies/pull ups then parents will be advised of this policy and the practice in place in this school. Parents/carers will agree who will be responsible within the school, for changing the child and when and where this will be carried out (usually Class Staff). This agreement allows the school and the parent to be aware of all the issues surrounding this task right from the outset.

Parents/Carers will be informed at the end of the school day when the child was changed.

Parents have a role to play when their child is still wearing nappies. The parent should provide nappies/pull ups, disposal bags, wipes, spare clothes, etc. and parents should be made aware of this responsibility. They should also actively promote toilet training if appropriate and advice can be sought from the School Nurse Team/Bowel and Bladder Clinic. Schools are responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Changing facilities:

The Welfare Room or Disabled Toilet in the main entrance have been identified as the suitable places for changing children. There is a fold down baby change station in the Disabled Toilet (weight limit for a young primary aged child).

Children who have long-term incontinence will require specially adapted facilities.

The dignity and privacy of the child should be of paramount concern.

A changing mat will have to be used on the floor when a child is to be changed over the specified weight on the changing table in the Disabled Toilet at the main entrance. This changing table is at the appropriate height that a child can access it without being lifted (The changing mat is currently located in the Welfare Room). There is a screen that can go across in this toilet to ensure privacy but allow for safeguarding protocols to be in place.

Health and Safety:

There are health and safety issues when staff are changing children or dealing with a child who has had an accident and is bleeding. Staff should always wear gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding. Aprons should also be used

alongside the gloves when dealing with a child who is soiled or when changing a soiled nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste (bin in the Welfare Room). The bin should be emptied on a daily basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service.

Special needs:

Children with special needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child those with parental responsibility and the school should be easily understood and recorded.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who cannot) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

Showers/changing clothes:

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. adults must not change in the same place as children or shower with children.

Out of school trips/clubs:

Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting, before school or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school (following the agreed Code of Conduct). Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with the school's policy and practice.

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teacher for Welfare will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy when the need arises.

Original Policy Date: 22nd February 2010

Reviewed date: 1st September 2024

Designated Teacher for Welfare: Kathryn Lee