

Ardstraw Jubilee Primary School

Intimate Care Policy



Date Approved by Board of Governors: 7th June 2023

Next Policy Review Date: June 2024

Rationale

It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. Our intimate care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our pastoral care policy. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Children are generally more vulnerable than adults and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities can include:

- toileting;
- feeding;
- oral care;
- washing;
- changing clothes;
- first aid and medical assistance; and
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Principles of Intimate Care

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

- 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;
- 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 such views taken into account
- every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate.

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children are vetted in accordance with relevant legislation and departmental guidance. This includes students on work placement and volunteers. Vetting includes criminal record checks and two references. Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy and other pastoral care policies of the school are involved in the intimate care of children. Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. **Only in emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school.** Parents would then be contacted immediately.

When a member of staff helps a child with an intimate care practice, the staff member will record this information on a report sheet. This sheet has a duplicate. The original report sheet will be sent home to the parent and the duplicate copy will be a school record.

Intimate care arrangements should be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff.

1. Involve the child in the intimate care
2. Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and, where possible, give choices.

3. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.
4. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.
5. Be aware of your own limitations
6. Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
7. Promote positive self-esteem and body image.
8. Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.
9. If you have any concerns you must report them.

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- when intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens/curtains put in place;
- if the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- report any concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record;
- parents must be informed about any concerns.

Communication with Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress children may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:

- make eye contact at the child's level;
- use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- wait for response;
- continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response
- treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Relevant Policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other School policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- The Administration of Medicines in Schools
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying policy

APPENDIX 1

PERMISSION FOR ARDSTRAW JUBILEE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

I understand that;

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing, toileting, administering medication.
- **Covid - 19 staff will wear PPE while administering intimate care when required.**
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____ - _____

Male/Female: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Number(s): _____

AJPS Covid-19 addendum to Intimate Care Policy

During this time, it is imperative that any child needing intimate care continues to be safe and cared for.

Where possible it will be a member of staff from your child's class/bubble will carry out any intimate care needs when required.

Staff will:

- Have access to PPE (face mask, visor, gloves and an apron) for use during intimate care
- Have received the appropriate training to enable them to care for the child/ren appropriately.
- The member of staff will adhere to the school's policy.

Cleaning

- Hands are to be washed before and after care.
- Any waste will be double bagged and disposed of in current guidelines
- The adult administering intimate care will "disinfect" the area they have used afterwards and then hand wash.

Parents/Carers are asked to supply the following: -

- Spare clothes including underwear, socks/tights