



# Intimate Care Policy 2022

## **INTRODUCTION**

Staff who work with young children or young people will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require them to be respectful of children's needs.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with intimate personal areas or exposure to intimate personal areas. An example includes care associated with continence as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or showering.

Children's dignity will be preserved, and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff that provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of up-to-date safeguarding issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Chancellor Park Primary School work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

Chancellor Park Primary School 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. Chancellor Park Primary School recognises 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.

*See Administration of Medicines & First Aid Policy.*

## **OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE**

All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care have received training from the SENCo which incorporates measures to safeguard pupils and staff. Equipment will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required. This is then followed by specialist led training in how to use the equipment safely.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex and relationship education to their children/young people as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle, children 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 for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate Health Care Plans will be drawn up for children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the staff and health.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many staff might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. Where possible one child will be cared for by two adults.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be named staff members 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, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different staff.

Parents/staff will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each child/young person will have an assigned member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

## **THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Updated training on Safeguarding Procedures are delivered annually, unless changes in legislation or current issues determine this to be delivered sooner. Every briefing meeting, staff are updated with regards to individual children's medical needs. All Safeguarding Procedures are adhered to at all times, by all members of staff.

Where appropriate, 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. he/she will immediately report concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead (Headteacher/ Deputy or SENCo). A clear record of the concern will be completed and where appropriate referred to social services. Parents will be informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm - see Chancellor Park Primary Schools Safeguarding Procedures / Policy.

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 schedules 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 - see Child Protection Procedures / Policy.

## **SPECIFIC AREAS OF INTIMATE CARE**

### **Children wearing nappies**

If a child is admitted into Chancellor Park Primary School and still wears nappies, parents will be provided with information from this policy and our practices in school. These being: a care plan for parents and the Headteacher to sign; outlining who will be responsible, within the school, for changing the child and where and when this will be carried out. This agreement allows the school and the parent to be aware of all the issues surrounding this task from the outset.

### **Equipment Provision**

If a child is admitted to Chancellor Park Primary School still wearing nappies it will be the parent's responsibility to provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes and where necessary a changing mat. Spare clothes for the child are needed too. The school will make the parents aware of this responsibility prior to the child joining the school. We as a school will be responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

### **Health and Safety**

Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or 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 will then be placed in a bin (complete with liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin will be emptied on a weekly basis and it will be

collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classified as clinical waste. Staff will be aware of the school's Health and Safety policy.

### **Changing facilities**

Any child who has long-term incontinence will require specially adapted facilities. At Chancellor Park Primary School we have two toilets specifically for children who need a larger space to toilet in. Within these rooms there are also shower facilities. When children need to be changed in school, the dignity, safety and welfare of the child is of paramount concern. An area, which can be made private by the use of a screen, is acceptable. Consideration will be given to the sighting of this area from a health and safety aspect. The area should not be situated in a thoroughfare.

### **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 our school will be easily understood and recorded. Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs will be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who can't) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

### **Physical Contact**

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff will be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported. Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

### **Physical Education and other skills coaching**

Staff will come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation. Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

### **Changing clothes**

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. 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. 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.

### **Out of school trips/clubs**

In advance of residential visits where intimate care will be required, communication will take place with parents and staff to inform the risk assessment planning.

If a child requires support during washing during the residential trip, ensure two members of staff to attend to the child.

### **Photography, videos and similar creative arts**

Staff to adhere guidance set out in staff code of conduct and E safety policy. Parental consent is sought for pupils to have their photographs taken and use of images to protect vulnerable pupils.

### **Policy Review**

This policy was written in Autumn 2022 and shared with all staff and governors.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless the need for review arises beforehand.