

Earlsfield Primary School

Intimate Care Policy



Earlsfield 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. Earlsfield 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.

Our Approach To Best Practice

- The management of any child/ren with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. A child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.
- Staff who provide intimate care will receive appropriate training, including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in Moving and Handling, and are fully aware of best practice.
- 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 for him / herself as he / she can. 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 if a child needs toileting.
- 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 differed 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. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staff and equal opportunities legislation.

The Protection Of Children

- Child Protection 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 eg marks, bruises, soreness, etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager / designated person for child protection.
- Pupils will be offered some choice as to who deals with their personal care. As far as practicable the child's wishes will be respected and acted on. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed

Further Guidance

- “Working Together To Safeguard Children”, Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures.
- Circular 10/95, Protecting Children From Abuse; The Role of the Education Service DFEE.
www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/guidanceonthelaw/10_95summary
- What To Do If You’re Worried A Child Is Being Abused. Summary (2003)
www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm

Guidance for Staff

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 themselves) 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.

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.

Children Wearing Nappies

It is the expectation of the school that children should be toilet trained and in the event they are not then parents will be called to change nappies unless the child has a defined special need as outlined in their IEP, Statement or written medical evidence from a professional.

Changing Facilities

Pupils with changing needs will be changed in school in appropriate facilities close to the classroom. The dignity and privacy of the pupils is of paramount concern.

Health and Safety

Some schools are concerned about 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 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 should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste (located in the medical room). Staff should be aware of the school’s Health and Safety Policy.

Guidance to safeguard children and education staff with regard to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (physical contact, first aid, showers / changing clothes, out of school activities and photography.

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 should 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.

Physical contact which is repeated with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the child, the organisation and those with parental responsibility.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning.

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 being 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.

Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases only the minimum force necessary should be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control. In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of the school’s Physical Intervention / Behaviour Policy.

Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation. Judgment will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil’s distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from their line manager or other appropriate person.

First Aid

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (eg assisting with toileting or the removal of wet / soiled clothes) another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Physical Education and Other Skills Coaching

Some staff are likely to 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

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. As children progress up the school provision should be made to provide separate changing areas for boys and girls. 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 to enter the changing areas, avoid remaining in changing areas unless pupil needs require it, 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. being discreet if changing in the same area.

Out of School Trips, Clubs etc

Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting 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. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with their school's policy and all LEA guidance regarding out of school activities.

To ensure pupils' safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on field trips, holidays etc. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Photography, Videos and Similar Creative Arts

Staff should be aware of the potential for such mediums of teaching to be used for the wrong purposes. Additionally, children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the legitimate use of photography, filming etc. The potential for founded and unfounded allegations of abuse requires that careful consideration be given to the organisation of these activities.

The school has clear policies and protocols for the taking and use of images and of photographic equipment.

Consent to participating in these activities should be sought from the child and those with parental responsibility at the beginning of courses but staff should remain sensitive to those children who appear particularly uncomfortable with the activity.

All material produced should be viewed for acceptability by another member of staff. Its circulation should be in accordance with the school's "Use of Images" policy and relevant arrangements with parents.

See Appendix 1 for a parental/carer consent form in respect of Intimate Care

Acknowledgement to Curledge Street Primary School

Approved – Author: Fiona Mudie	(Date)
Committee - Curriculum	
Review – Autumn Term 2011	(Date)

G:/Fiona Mudie/ a to z policies/ /Intimate Care

APPENDIX 1

PERMISSION FOR SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

Child's Last Name	
Child's First Name	
Male/Female	
Date of Birth	
Parent/Carers name	
Address	

I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting.

I will advise the Headteacher of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care

Name

Signature

Relationship to child

Date