



Wren Spinney Community School

Intimate Care Policy

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: February 2024

Last reviewed on:

December 2023

Next review due

by: February

2026

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching, or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but which some students are unable to do because of their age, physical difficulties, or other special needs. Intimate care can include:

- Washing & changing - dressing/undressing (underwear)
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a student involved in intimate self-care.

Aims

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding students have been developed to ensure that;

- The health, safety, independence and welfare of students is promoted.
- The dignity and privacy of students is respected.
- Students and staff are safeguarded.
- Arrangements for intimate and personal care are open and transparent.
- The vulnerability of students is recognised.
- Staff involved with student intimate care are sensitive to their individual needs.

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy Guidelines are based:

- Students should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable.
- Students are always entitled to respect and privacy, and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering.
- Every student has the right to be safe.
- Every student has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every student has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every student has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.

- Every student has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views considered.
- Every student has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- Create, in liaison with the student and parents/carers, an Individual Healthcare Plan to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for any child with a health condition or disability (this may not be necessary for every child who has intimate care needs)
- Ensure students are actively consulted about their own care plan in line with their ability to interact with the process.
- Ensure all staff undertaking the intimate care of students are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy
- All staff access any required training for specific types of intimate care that they carry out.
- Ensure intimate care arrangements are agreed by the school, parents / carers, and student (if appropriate)
- Ensure intimate care arrangements are recorded in the student's care and safety plan.
- Ensure intimate care arrangements are reviewed at least six monthly (The views of all relevant parties, including the student (if appropriate), should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements)
- Ensure provision is in place for occasions when key members of staff are absent (other staff are trained as a contingency).

School staff will:

- Work in partnership with students and parents
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Always explain to the student what is happening before a care procedure begins.
- Change the student, or assist them in changing themselves if they become wet, or soil themselves.
- Never knowingly leave a student in wet or soiled clothing

- React to accidents in a calm and sympathetic manner.
- Keep accurate records of times, staff and any other details of incidents of intimate care.
- Agree how often the child should be routinely changed if the student is in school for a full day, and designate a member of staff to change them (Agree to a minimum number of changes)
- Encourage the student's participation in toileting procedures wherever possible.
- Discuss and take the appropriate action to respect the cultural practices of the family.
- Contact parents/carers if the student refuses to be changed or becomes distressed during the process.
- Maintain excellent standards of hygiene when carrying out intimate care.
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the student and their parents/carers.
- Where the student is in a changing room/toilet announce their intention of entering
- Always consider the supervision needs of the students and only remain in the room where their needs require this.
- Wear a fresh disposable apron & gloves while changing a student.
- Do not assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the student is able to undertake independently. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

Parents will:

- Advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child.
- Provide spare nappies/incontinence pads, wet wipes, and a change of clothes in case of accidents.
- Read and sign this policy to ensure they understand the policies and procedures around intimate care.
- Inform the school should their child have any marks/rashes.
- Discuss with the school how often their child will need to be changed, and who will do the changing.

- Work with the school to develop their child's independence where appropriate.

Guidelines for Good Practice

When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one or two members of staff depending on the care and safety plan for the student. However, if one staff member is supporting a student, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible. Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual student's care plan.

Involve the student in their intimate care.

Try to encourage a student's independence as far as possible in their intimate care. Where the student is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible. Check your practice by asking the student / parent any likes / dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent before beginning an intimate care routine. Treat every student with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the student's age and situation. Name body part using correct terms when carrying out intimate care. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent (a student can have multiple carers, so a consistent approach to care is important). Effective communication with parents / carers ensures practice is consistent. Be aware of your own limitations - only carry out care activities that you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image.

Confident, self-assured students who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a student about their body worth. Your attitude to a student's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the student's age, routine care can be relaxed & enjoyable. If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher. If during the intimate care of a student you accidentally hurt them, or the student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the student, ensure their safety, and report the incident immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the student. A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the student's personal file. Parents / carers are to be informed about concerns. (see school Safeguarding Policy)

Communication with Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a student to ensure that they are aware of the student's method and level of communication. Students communicate using different methods e.g., words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, objects of reference, sequenced story boards. To ensure effective communication:

Ascertain how the student communicates e.g., consult with student, parent / carer, students' communication profile, and, if appropriate, Make eye contact at the child's level. Use simple language and repeat if necessary. Wait for response. Continue to explain to the student what is happening even if there is no clear response. Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect at all times.