English Nursery and Primary School

Onegino



Intimate Care Policy

February 2022

Review date February 2024

**INTRODUCTION**

This Policy and these guidelines have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children in our school.

**AIMS**

* To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one;
* To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations;
* To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care;
* To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered;

**DEFINITION**

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have the responsibility to advise staff of any intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

* Feeding;
* Oral care;
* Washing;
* Dressing/undressing - Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing;
* Toileting - Assisting a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell;
* Menstrual care - Providing advice to enable a pupil to attend to their own needs;
* Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil and assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided are also considered as intimate care.

**PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE**

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the policy is 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;
* Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
* Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF PROVIDING INTIMATE CARE**

1. At ENS all staff are police checked as required by Russian law. Therefore, all individuals who provide intimate care will have been vetted correctly;
2. The Deputy/Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand this policy.
3. All staff must have an awareness of the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy within the context of their work;
4. If a staff member has concerns about an intimate care practice they must report this to their Designated Safeguarding Lead following the process outlined within the Safeguarding Policy.

**INTIMATE CARE ARRANGEMENTS**

**Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

In the preparation for, and during nap time, children in EYFS are aided to change their clothes and settle to sleep. Communication with parents is key to understand the routines, strategies and props (toys or comforter from home) which will aid the child to settle.

**Providing Comfort or Support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact should always be child initiated and not prolonged by adults.

When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff’s hands should always be within view and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff’s body which could be regarded as intimate.

If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

**Medical Procedures**

All children undergo a daily health check upon arrival in school. This is carried out by the school nurse, who may decide that the child must return home if deemed too unwell, or if their illness poses a risk to other children.

If, at any point in the school day, any member of staff has a concern in regards to a child’s health, the child will be referred to the school nurse for further checks and possible medical care.

It is always preferable that any medication is administrated at home before or after school. If it is necessary for a child to receive medicine during the school day parents/guardians must give written permission and discuss their child’s needs with the school nurse before the school agrees to administer medicines or medical care.

The school nurse is responsible for the administration of any medication during the school day. Medicines should be kept in a place not accessible to pupils. Arrangements must be in place to ensure that any medication that a pupil might need in an emergency is readily available to them.

**Soiling**

Staff from ENS will work together in partnership with parents to support each child towards independent use of the toilet. Nannies usually take on this role, however in some situations other staff may be required to assist in toileting the younger children.

If tending to a child who has soiled themselves during the school day, staff will respond sensitively and professionally. If ‘accidents’ occur the child will change themselves into dry clothing, and wet items will be sent home for washing. The child’s independence will be encouraged as far as possible in his/her intimate care and reassurance given. The school nurse will keep a record of incidents which occur in school and the parent will be informed (verbally at home collection time or by telephone call).

If there is an occurrence of heavier soiling or vomiting, this may require staff to provide care at a more personal level. Staff will follow set procedures for this intimate care:

* If possible, the child will be removed to a less public place to maintain dignity and avoid a feeling of humiliation;
* If appropriate, the child will be encouraged, through guidance and assistance, to clean themselves to make them more comfortable.
* Parents should be contacted as soon as possible;
* Staff will provide further intimate care in the following situations

1. If parents/guardians cannot be contacted **– the school nurse will decide on the most appropriate care to minimise any stress; discomfort or anxiety the child may be experiencing.**

2. If the parents/guardians are unable to come to school.

3. If the child is very distressed or suffering unduly.

4. Intimate care will only be provided to older children in extreme circumstances. It is anticipated that older children will be able to manage any circumstances given guidance or assistance.

If staff are providing intimate care best practice is for two members of staff to be in the vicinity at all times e.g. the second staff member could be in the adjacent room with the adjoining door open.

**Hygiene**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection. They must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

**PROTECTION FOR STAFF**

Members of staff need to be aware of the potential danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk.

These should include:

* If staff are providing intimate care two members of staff should be in the vicinity at all times e.g. the second staff member could be in the adjacent room with the adjoining door open.
* Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary.
* Allow the child, wherever possible, to give verbal consent to the person assisting them.
* Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care.
* Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

**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. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

* Involve the child in their own intimate care - Try to encourage a child’s independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependant talk to them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.
* Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child’s age and situation.
* Be aware of own limitations. Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ask.
* Promote positive self-esteem and body image. Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse.
* If you have any concerns, you must report them.
* It is important to follow the school’s safeguarding reporting and recording procedures.

*To be reviewed: February 2024*