

Charlestown Primary School



Intimate Care Policy September 2022

**Approved by: Full
Governing Body**

Date: September 2022

Last reviewed on:

March 2021

Next review due by:

September 2024, or earlier if required

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes in Charlestown Primary School, and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children.

It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

‘Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.’ (9.26, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures). In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Charlestown Community 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. We recognise that there is a need to treat all our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain, and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child’s individual needs.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself
3. Assisting with toileting issues
4. Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
5. Providing first aid assistance
6. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
7. Feeding a child
8. Providing oral care to a child
9. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. *
10. Physiotherapy

Health Care Plans are in place for the children requiring specialist intervention.

Charlestown Community Primary School - Intimate Care Policy

Principles of Intimate Care:

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

Every child has a 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 their views taken into account; and

Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Assisting a child to change his / her clothes

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child and informed if the child becomes distressed.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount, and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures, but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses:

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
- School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear, and spare uniform for this purpose. If there is no spare clothing in school, then staff will contact parents / carers to ask them to bring some in.

Parents / Carers of those children who have a medical need who frequently require changing may be asked to ensure that their child always has some spare clean clothing in school.

- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.

- If the emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child. If none of the contacts can be reached the Head teacher/Deputy is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.
- The member of Staff who has assisted a pupil with intimate care will follow the advice below:
 - **Child Protection/Safeguarding Guidelines**
 - Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary. Get verbal agreement to proceed – CARE – CONCERN – COMMUNICATE.
 - **Pastoral Care Procedures**
 - Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him / her.
 - Be responsive to any distress shown.
 - **Basic hygiene routines**
 - Always wear protective disposable gloves.
 - Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents.

In the case of Foundation Stage children in order to avoid any unnecessary distress, a member of staff may assist the child, with a colleague in attendance, unless a parent / carer has requested otherwise or if the child is reluctant. Parents / carers will be contacted as soon as it is practical to do so. Parents / Carers may be asked to ensure that their child has a spare set of clothing in school in case they need to change.

Providing comfort or support to a child:

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

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. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with one of the Safeguarding Officers or the Designated Safeguarding lead.

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children have a DBS.

Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy 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 and will be included in the child's Individual Health Care Plan. Individual Health Care Plans are signed by the parents / carers.

Only in emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school. Parents / carers would then be contacted immediately. 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 Safeguarding Lead in line with the school Safeguarding Policies and Whistle Blowing Policy.

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 Lead for Child Protection and record on CPOMS.
- Parents must be informed about any concerns.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy, Supporting Children with Medical Needs in School, SEND Policy, Health, and Safety Policy.

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Policy produced by:	Sharon Peters Deputy Head (Inclusion)
Designation:	Chair of Governing Body