



Intimate Care Policy

2022-2024

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Introduction

In Harmony Hill Primary School, we are committed to providing a happy, safe and stimulating environment to support young children's learning and development.

The teaching and non-teaching staff aim to safeguard the welfare of each child in our care. We will support and encourage every child to become more independent in all aspects of personal care, however we recognise that some children may need assistance from time to time, especially if a toileting accident or minor injury occurs.

Intimate Care of children

Intimate care may be defined as any activity to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child and provide resources to enable staff to provide for the child's intimate care needs.

Staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with parents and children to ensure that each child's needs are met.

Intimate care can include:

- Dressing / undressing
- Toileting
- Feeding
- Oral Care
- Washing
- Medical/Treatments and care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Procedures are 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, in an age and developmentally appropriate manner
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible

With these principles in mind, the following intimate care procedures will be followed:

- If a child needs a change of clothes, he/she will be encouraged to change him/herself, where possible.
- If a child needs assistance and is agreeable, staff will undertake these duties. The child will be talked through the procedure and reassured that he/she will not be left alone. At this stage, every effort will be made to contact the child's parents/carers to inform them of the need to support the intimate care of the child.
- The staff attending to the child will endeavour to be as discreet as possible, and sensitive to each child's needs.
- If a child is unable to change themselves and unwilling to accept assistance, the parents/carers will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school.
- If, during the intimate care procedure, staff notice any unusual markings, bruising, discolouration, swelling etc. these will be notified to the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- With the exception of pupils who require ongoing daily intimate care support for medical needs, a record of all incidents requiring an intimate care procedure will be noted in school. Parents, or carers, will be informed either in writing, in person, or by telephone.
- Where appropriate, an individual Intimate Care Plan will be created for pupils with specific physical challenges, as guided by medical professionals.

It is a parent's responsibility to provide accurate contact numbers at which they, or a nominated adult, can be contacted, as and when required. Parents should also make themselves available, if necessary, to change their child at school, or in the event of an accident, to take their child to hospital or administer medication.

Responsibilities of Staff

All staff working with children will be vetted using Access NI checks.

Only staff employed by Harmony Hill Primary School may undertake intimate care of children.

The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Governors, will ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand, the Policy and Procedures for Providing Intimate Care to children, and other relevant Circulars and Orders.

Where a child has particular physical needs requiring ongoing intimate care support, staff involved will be trained in the specific types of intimate care required. They will fully understand and implement the key Policy and Procedures.

Intimate care arrangements will be agreed by parents/carers and the child, as appropriate.

An Intimate Care Plan will be included in the child's records. Consent forms should be signed by the child's parent/carer.

Harmony Hill Primary School will make provisions for emergencies, e.g. absence of a staff member. Additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks when required to do so.

For children with particular needs, intimate care arrangements will be reviewed as required, but more specifically at Annual Review meetings. The views of all relevant parties will be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

If a staff member has any concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they must report this to the Principal, Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher.

Procedure for assisting a child when toileting

When a child in our school requires help with their self-care during toileting, staff will:

- Inform another adult that they are assisting the child. Where a child needs unexpected intimate care support, reasonable attempts will be made to have two adults present, or at least in the very near vicinity. Where this is not possible, the member of staff providing the care will inform another member of staff of the situation.
- Respect the child's right to privacy by ensuring the child is in an appropriate environment closing the toilet door when assisting him/her with cleaning, dressing and/or changing.
- Maintain hygiene standards by wearing a disposable apron and gloves.
- Use baby wipes, provided by school, to help the child to clean themselves or to clean the child as thoroughly as possible.
- Communicate with the child in a sensitive and respectful manner so they are aware of what support is being given and why.
- Foster the child's growing independence by assisting with cleaning, dressing and/or changing, while also encouraging the child to try to take care of some of their own intimate self-care needs.
- Inform their parent/carer via a phone call, as well as an Intimate Care Slip (Appendix 2).
- that the child needed help with intimate care and maintain appropriate classroom records of same.
- Send wet/soiled clothes home in a tied plastic bag, via the child's bag in the cloakroom. Please note that when underwear is badly soiled, these may be disposed of. Parents will be informed if this is the case.

This policy is closely linked to the school's Child Protection, Health and Safety and Pastoral Care policies.

(Appendix 1 for Staff 'Guidelines for Good Practice when Providing Intimate Care')

Appendices to Intimate Care Policy

APPENDIX 1

Guidelines for good practice when providing Intimate Care

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.

Involve children in their intimate care – try to encourage their independence as far as possible. Talk to him/her about what is going to be done and give them a choice, where possible. Check your practice by asking child/parent any likes or dislikes while carrying out intimate care.

Remain supportive, at all times, and be consistent in approach.

Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy that is appropriate to the child's age and situation. If a child and their parents have requested it, the practice of one to one intimate care is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort or safety of the child, or if the child prefers having two people present.


Make sure practice in intimate care is always consistent – effective communication between parents and carers or the school ensures that children and parents can expect consistent intimate care.

Be aware of own limitations. Only carry out care activities that you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out, or that you have been trained specifically to support. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures may only be carried out by staff who have received formal training.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image; the approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Our attitude to a child's intimate care is important, so try, as far as possible, to make routine care relaxed and without fuss, and very much just a part of daily routine. Report any concerns you may have – if you observe any unusual markings, discolouration's or swellings on a child's body, report immediately to the Principal. If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child misinterprets/misunderstands something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Principal. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural responses by the child. Written records of concern may be made and kept in the child's records. Parents and Carers will be made aware of concerns.

APPENDIX 2

Intimate Care Parent Slip



Dear Parent/Guardian,

_____ had an accident today. He/She

Action taken; _____

Yours Sincerely,

_____ (Class Teacher) _____ (Date)