



Intimate care Policy

St Catherine's C of E Primary School

April 2022

St. Catherine's is a nurturing community where differences are celebrated, and caring, happy children flourish. Children embrace their learning and develop skills of wisdom and resilience, enabling them to live life in all its fullness.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

Reviewed and Revised by foundation stage team and SLT 16/4/22

St Catherine's Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

St Catherine's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff are responsible for any intimate care of children and undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Staff who work with young children and/or children who have special needs realise that the issue of intimate care is sensitive and will require all those involved (pupil, parents and staff alike) to be respectful of one another.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature; ones associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene for example, which may demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of genitals. Children may need support as a 'one-off' or may have specific ongoing needs.

Best practice at St Catherine's Primary School

All/any staff member at St Catherine's may be required, at any point, to support children in cleaning/changing themselves more intimately than the usual day-to-day needs require. At St Catherine's a child's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues and health and safety. All staff at St Catherine's have had safeguarding training. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at St Catherine's work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible. Staff supporting a child with any intimate care needs should always ensure that they are safeguarding themselves and the child by ensuring that they use a space where they can be seen by others. If staff are changing nappies on the changing unit within Foundation Stage the door will be kept ajar.

All children take part in PSHE sessions to discuss keeping safe, at whatever their appropriate level may be. Parents are encouraged to reinforce personal safety messages at home. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, as appropriate, taking into account developmental changes (such as the onset of puberty).

There will be careful communication with each child who needs help with specific intimate care, so the child is able to communicate needs and preferences in a safe and caring environment. The child will be explained each step of the procedure, why it is being carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle children will be supported to have the highest level of autonomy and independence that is possible, given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves. This may mean asking a child if he/she can wash him/herself, etc. Individual plans may be drawn up if there is a persistent medical need, with specific circumstances. These plans will contain a risk assessment and will be shared with

the child, his/her parents/carers and relevant staff members. Parents may be requested to attend, and support the school if it is felt this will be beneficial.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine who and how many staff need to be involved with their intimate care.

Parents/carers will be included and involved with any intimate care plan, on a regular basis, where a clear account of arrangements and wishes will be shared, along with any possible constraints - eg staffing concerns, health and safety of the whole school community, and equal opportunities legislation.

The SENDCo will act as an advocate for any young person receiving intimate care, should the young person wish to communicate any concerns they may have about the quality of the care they receive.

Child protection procedures

Child protection procedures are accessible to staff and adhered to - all staff have regular child protection training. If staff have concerns regarding a pupil in their care, (eg, marks, bruising, toileting habits, inappropriate physical play, comments made) they must report their concerns immediately to the DSP. A clear record of any concerns should be noted and logged with the DSP. Children's Services, police and parents will be informed as it is felt to be appropriate. Where appropriate all children will be taught about personal safety, matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a member of staff, this matter will be investigated and recorded. Parents will be contacted and the issues will be discussed. Staffing schedules will be altered until any issue is resolved. Further advice will be taken if necessary. If a child makes an allegation against any member of staff all necessary procedures will be followed.

Protection of staff

Staff will always manage situations involving intimate care with humility and sensitivity. However, to minimise any risk of unfounded or mistaken allegations against them, staff members should *wherever possible*, deal with children in view of other members of staff, although it should be noted that there may be points in time where, for some reason, this is not possible. Staff should always explain clearly to the child each step of the process (eg when cleaning or changing) to ensure the pupil is clear about the process, and is put at ease.

Staff will wear protective gloves which will be provided by the school. There are purpose made nappy changing facilities in the Foundation Stage unit, reducing risk of injury to staff due to lifting.

Parental support

Parents will be liaised with regularly with regard to developmental self-care changes and are expected to notify staff of any relevant information from home. Parents should provide all intimate care items as appropriate.