



Personal and Intimate Care Policy

This Personal and Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children, support staff and ensure good practice is followed.

At Brookwood Primary School we are 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 believe that the intimate care of children cannot be separated from other aspects of their learning and development. We believe that every child has the right to feel safe and secure. We do not discriminate against children who have not reached a stage where they can manage their own personal hygiene or children who need assistance through medical requirements. We recognise the need to treat all children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

Aim

- ❖ To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- ❖ To provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose duties may include intimate care.
- ❖ To assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual needs and concerns are taken into consideration.
- ❖ To remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination and ensure inclusion for all children and young people within our setting.

Definition of Personal and Intimate Care

Intimate care is any care which is associated with invasive procedures relating to bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene which demands direct or indirect contact with or exposure of intimate parts of the body, such as cleaning up after a child who has soiled themselves. Most children can carry out these functions themselves but it is recognised that some are unable to due to physical disability, learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

Personal care may often involve touching another person but it is less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal presentation. An example may be helping a child to change for PE or adjusting a child's hair fixing. These tasks do not invade conventional personal, private or social space to the same extent as intimate care.

Working with Parents

We believe that our partnership with parents is an essential principle in our setting and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. We recognise that the information required to carry out intimate care is available from parents. Prior permission is obtained from parents before intimate care procedures are put in place on a long term basis, however, we will step in without consent where appropriate, for example if a child accidentally soils themselves. Parents are encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure that their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This may include Health Care plans and any other plans which identify the support of intimate care where appropriate. Exchanging information with parents is essential through personal contact, telephone or correspondence. However information concerning intimate care procedures will not be recorded in home school diaries / homework diaries as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and named member of staff.

Our approach to Best Practice

For children who require long term assistance individual intimate care plans are drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; we recognise that the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. We will

work with parents and children to establish a preferred procedure for supporting the children in our care with their personal and intimate needs. Where these procedures may require specialist training we will seek out training for the staff who will be involved in a child's care, ensuring that the child's key-person and at least one other member of staff accesses the training.

Where possible the child's key-person is responsible for undertaking the care of an individual child. When this is not possible a staff member who is known to the child will take on that responsibility. The staff member who is involved will always ask the child for permission to assist them. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can.

Children will be cared for with dignity and respect for their privacy. When possible two adults will be present; one to undertake the intimate care and one to ensure the safeguarding of both child and adult. However, it may be that only one adult will assist the child.

The Protection of Children

Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has a concern about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Allegations of abuse

Personnel working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. This School policy can help to reassure both staff involved and the parents of vulnerable children. Action will be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal assistant. Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in the Child Protection procedures will be followed.

School Recording and Informing Parents

When any 'intimate care' is carried out, it will be recorded and parents informed.

(Letter to parent(s) outlining policy/procedures and their consent to carry out 'intimate care')

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to you regarding occasions when your child may need support with intimate care routines. We have drawn up the attached guidelines to ensure that your child's needs are met in a professional and dignified manner at all times.

I would be grateful if you could sign and return the slip below once you have read the guidelines and agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' procedures when necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Green
Headteacher

I have read a copy of the School's 'Personal and Intimate Care Policy.'

I agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' on my son/daughter when necessary.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Name of child: _____

Date: _____

