

Rothersthorpe CE Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

Rothersthorpe CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

- Intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children and young people carry out for themselves, but which some are unable to do.
- Intimate care tasks are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of the genitals. Examples include support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing incontinence pads and nappies, helping someone use the toilet or washing intimate parts of the body. Disabled pupils may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.
- The School recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.
- We recognise that there is a need for children and young people to be treated with respect when intimate care is given.
- No child shall be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.
- Staff will work in close partnership with parents and carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

Our Practice

It is generally expected that most children will be toilet trained and out of nappies before they begin at school or nursery. However it is inevitable that from time to time some children will have accidents and need to be attended to. In addition to this an increasing number of children and young people with disabilities and medical conditions are being included in mainstream settings. A significant number of these pupils require adult assistance for their personal and intimate care needs.

In order to help the children to become aware of their bodily needs and respond to them in time, those who wish to go to the toilet are always allowed to go, although they are encouraged as they progress through the school to use the toilet during break times. The school undertakes to attempt any support any training programme requested by a child's GP and/or the school doctor or parent.

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned.

- All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist or occupational therapist as required.

- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care, in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- As a basic principle, children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and abilities. If a child soils him/herself during school time, a member of staff will help the child:
 - *remove their soiled clothes*
 - *clean skin (this usually includes bottom, genitalia, legs, feet)*
 - *dress in the child's own clothes or those provided by the school*
- *double wrap soiled clothes in plastic bags and give to parents to take home.*
- At all times the member of staff pays attention to the level of distress and comfort of the child. If the soiling is as a result of illness, the member of staff telephones the parent/carer. In the event a child is reluctant and finally refuses to be cleaned, the parent/carer will be contacted immediately.
- Our intention is that the child will never be left in soiled clothing, but as soon as the member of staff responsible for him/her is aware of the situation, she/he will clean the child and ensure that the child is clean for the rest of the day.
- If a child requires has frequent intimate care needs, the school will meet with parents to agree a hygiene plan.
- It is intended that the child will not experience any negative disciplining, but only positive encouragement and praise for his/her endeavours to master this necessary skill. It is always our intention to avoid drawing attention to such events and positively to encourage the child in his/her efforts to gain these skills.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when they need help with intimate care. Where possible, one child will be cared for by one adult, unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented. Wherever possible, the same child will not be cared for, solely, by the same adult on a regular basis. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.

Child Protection

- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc she/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred on if necessary (see Safeguarding Policy).

- If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into by the Head Teacher and, where necessary, outcomes recorded and appropriate action taken.
- Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process, in order to reach a resolution. The child's needs will remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

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