



Sedgefield Primary School

Learning Together for Life

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Sedgefield Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in its care. Meeting a child's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and other medical needs, as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with toileting or dressing. It also includes supervision of children involved in intimate self-care.

The Governing Body 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 day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Safeguarding Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Care and Welfare Policy.
- Confidentiality Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Restrictive Physical Interventions Policy.

Sedgefield 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. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

Sedgefield Primary School recognises that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity, with respect when intimate care is given. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or discomfort. Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

Aims

- To ensure a whole school approach which ensures that the needs of the children are paramount and their rights and privacy are respected.
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect and that they feel safe and secure.
- To ensure children are able to express choice and have a positive image of their own body.
- To recognise 'intimate care' includes attending to toilet accidents; medical conditions; accidents where an intimate part of a child has been injured; physiotherapy or other treatments.
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care.
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations.
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered and that they are consulted in the intimate care of their children.
- To ensure the procedures are non-discriminatory and that parents/carers of children with disabilities are not asked to do more than their peers who do not have children with disabilities.

Best Practice

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible.

Staff who provide intimate care at Sedgefield Primary School are trained to do so. They are also trained in child protection and health and safety and are fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental needs such as significant developmental delay or the onset of puberty.

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 their needs and preferences. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding, permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

All children 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 him/herself as possible.

Children who require regular assistance with intimate care have written individual healthcare plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurse or physiotherapists. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be noted and taken into account.

Every 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 a child needs help with intimate care. Adults who assist children one-to-one should be employees of the school and be DBS checked at the appropriate level (not a volunteer).

It is not always practical for two members of staff to assist with an intimate procedure and also this does not take account of the child's privacy. It is advisable, however, for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

The religious views and cultural values of families are taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer. All staff are aware of the school's Confidentiality Policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

Safeguarding

The Governors and staff at Sedgefield Primary School recognise that children with special needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

The school's Safeguarding Policy is accessible to staff and adhered to.

From a child protection perspective, it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults, as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely, but in this school best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.

Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, soreness etc., s/he will immediately report concerns to the Headteacher. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and the Headteacher will make a decision as to whether to contact the First Contact Team. Parents/carers will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made, unless it is considered that to do so will place the child at risk of harm.

If a child becomes distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Headteacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Headteacher) and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved, so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, the Headteacher must be informed (or the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) and this will be dealt with accordingly (see Safeguarding Policy).

Any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school, or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher.

Toileting/Wetting/Soiling

Intimate care for wetting/soiling should only be given to a child after the parents/carers have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents/carers who have children in Early Years are requested to sign a permission form so that staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child wetting/soiling themselves (Appendix 1).

If a parent/carer does not give consent, the school will contact the parents/carer, or other emergency contact, giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carer or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child should be comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent/carer arrives. If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school will seek to gain verbal consent from the parent/carer for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself. If the

parent/carer and emergency contact cannot be contacted, the Head Teacher will be consulted.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

If staff suspect soiling and it is denied by the child, the matter should be referred to the parent/carer. A child's refusal to allow themselves to be changed will also result in an immediate telephone call to inform the parent/carer. Parents can choose to visit the school to change the child or take them home to change, then return to school.

Children still undergoing toilet training should have all necessary materials (e.g. nappies, wipes, change of clothing etc.) provided by the parent/carer.

Physiotherapy

Children who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the Pupil Support Plan or Education Health Care Plan that a member of the school staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly.

Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

Adults (other than the physiotherapist) carrying out physiotherapy exercises with pupils should be employees of the school.

Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

Supporting Dressing/Undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed particularly in Early Years. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

Providing Comfort or Support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in the infants). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

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.

Medical Procedures/First Aid

Children with disabilities might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the Education Health Care Plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.

Any members of staff who administer first aid are appropriately trained. Any injuries needing intimate care should be dealt with sensitively and another adult should be present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or SENCO should be called in such circumstances and a parent/carer may be requested to attend as appropriate.

Record Keeping/Informing Parents/Carers

A record will be kept every time a child has physiotherapy, or a child with an Education Health Care Plan requires assistance with intimate care, including date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present.

These records will be kept in the child's file and available to parents/carers on request.

Where an Education Health Care Plan is not in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g.: has had an 'accident' and soiled him/herself or has required first aid to an intimate part of the body). Information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in person, by telephone or by sealed letter, not through the home/school diary.



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Permission Form for the Provision of Care

(To be filled out before starting Nursery/Reception)

If a child wets or soils themselves while they are in school it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible. Our Early Years staff are experienced and trained at carrying out this task if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, the school can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Sedgefield Primary has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on our website (<http://www.sedgefield-pri.durham.sch.uk/>), or a copy is available from the office on request.

Please fill out the permission slip below stating your preference.

Name of Child.....

Please delete as appropriate

*I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned by school staff if they wet/soil themselves while in the care of Sedgefield Primary School.

*I do not give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that in the event that I (or the emergency contact) cannot be contacted, the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid my child.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date.....