Farnborough Road Infant School

Intimate Care Policy

“Learning, Caring and Achieving Together”

Introduction
Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member’s duty of care.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of a child’s needs and any child protection issues. A child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Farnborough Road Infant 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. Our school recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our approach to best practice
The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual Health Care plans will be drawn up for some children requiring intimate care, as appropriate, to suit their individual circumstances. This is the responsibility of the school's Inclusion Leader.

The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Wherever possible the same child will be cared for by the same adult guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, the constraints of staffing e.g. female staff supporting boys in a primary school, as few or no male staff are available.

The Protection of Children
If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/ 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. 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 a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.
Additional Guidance for school and staff

Introduction
Schools often ask how they can ensure that an individual child’s needs are met whilst having regard to the needs of all the other children within the school. There are a number of issues to consider when responding to an individual child’s needs. The following advice/strategies are some suggestions as possible ways to actively promote inclusion and the welfare of pupils.

Children wearing nappies
Parents are asked to sign a simple agreement form outlining who will be responsible, within the school, for changing the child and when and where this will be carried out. This agreement allows the school and the parent to be aware of all the issues surrounding this task right from the outset. (See Appendix 2)

As part of our good practice staff will have a home/school book to record who changes a child, how often this task is carried out and the time it occurred. This provides reassurance for parents that systems are in place and that schools have implemented procedures for staff to follow.

Changing facilities
The dignity and privacy of the child is of paramount concern. An area will be made private when a child is to be changed.
If a changing mat is being used, it should not be situated in a thoroughfare, as it will have to be used on the floor when a child is to be changed. This is the recommended method of changing a child, as it avoids an adult having to lift a child and cause possible back injury.

Equipment Provision
The parent should provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat etc. and parents should be made aware of this responsibility. Schools are responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Health and Safety
Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a soiled nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied on a weekly basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Staff should be aware of the school’s Health and Safety policy

Special needs
Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and Individual Health Care Plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child those with parental responsibility and the school should be easily understood and recorded.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who can't) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

Guidance to safeguard children and education staff with regard to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (Physical contact, first aid, changing clothes, out of school activities, and photography)

Physical Contact
All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in ‘limited touch’ cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil’s needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.
Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of ‘limited touch’ will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child’s needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child’s view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

**Restraint**
There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property.
In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of the school’s Positive Handling Policy.

**Pupils in distress**
There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.
Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil’s distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice, from their line manager or other appropriate person.

**First Aid and intimate care**
Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.
Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between the school, those with parental responsibility and the child concerned should be documented and easily understood. The necessity for such requirements should be reviewed regularly. The child’s views must also be actively sought and, in particular, any discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

**Physical Education and other skills coaching**
Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.
Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.
Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

**Changing clothes**
Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when their clothes are changed. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard children with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress in the form of intimate care, another member of staff is present.
Out of school trips, clubs etc.
Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with their school’s policy regarding out of school activities.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises where a chaperone will not be present, are not permitted unless specific approval is obtained from the head teacher or another senior colleague with delegated authority. Staff should not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a child.
If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Photography, videos and similar creative arts
Schools should have clear policies and protocols for the taking and use of images and of photographic equipment including mobile phones. These should require the justification and purpose of the activity; its content; avoidance of one to one sessions; appropriate privacy when the changing of clothes is required; and, arrangements for access to the material and its storage.
Consent to participating in these activities should be sought from those with parental responsibility, but staff should remain sensitive to those children who appear particularly uncomfortable with the activity.
All material produced should be in accordance with the LA/school’s ‘Use of Images’ policy, and relevant arrangements with parents

Monitoring and review
This policy will be monitored by the Governing Body.
The policy will be reviewed regularly.

Updated October 2018

Signed ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Headteacher

Signed ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Chair of Governors
Permission form for the Provision of Intimate Care  (Appendix 2)

If a child wets or soils themselves while they are at school it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible.

Our experienced staff will carry out this task if you wish them to do so or, if you prefer, the school can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Farnborough Road Infant School has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on our website (www.farnboroughroadinfants.co.uk), or ask for a copy at the office.

Please fill out the consent slip below stating your preference, and return to school.

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