



**BEECHWOOD**

Primary School

INTIMATE CARE  
POLICY DOCUMENT

APRIL 2021

Approved by: **Leadership & Management Committee**

Date:

Last reviewed on: **April 2021**

Next review due by: **April 2023**

# INTIMATE CARE POLICY

## **1. Rationale:**

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes in Beechwood Primary School and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children. It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however, there will be occasions when help is required. Beechwood 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. We recognise that there is a need to treat all our children with respect when intimate care is given.

No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

The principles and procedures of this policy apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

## **2. Definition:**

Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.' (9.26, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures).

In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

- Assisting a child to change his/her clothes;
- Changing or washing a child who has soiled him/herself;
- Assisting with toileting issues;
- Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care;
- Providing first aid assistance;
- Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child;
- Feeding a child;
- Providing oral care to a child;
- Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. \*

\* In the case of a specific procedure, only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure. Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

## **3. Aims:**

Beechwood aims to be an inclusive school. This means that equality of opportunity is a reality for all our children. We achieve this through the attention we pay to each individual's needs. The aim of this policy is to ensure that inclusive practice is followed when developing and managing intimate care and continence. It also ensures the needs of all children are met appropriately and with sensitivity, especially our youngest children within the Nursery.

## **4. Principles:**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- ✓ Every child has a right to be safe;

- ✓ Every child has the right to personal privacy;
- ✓ Every child has the right to be valued as an individual;
- ✓ Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- ✓ All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- ✓ All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account; and
- ✓ Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

### **5. Assisting a Child to Change Clothes:**

This is more common in our Foundation Stage than other areas of the school.

On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example:

- he/she has an accident at the toilet;
- he/she gets wet outside, or
- he/she has vomit on his/her clothes.

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required, this will be given. Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way, parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child. They will be informed if the child becomes distressed.

Parents will be asked to complete an authorisation slip when their child starts Nursery or Reception which gives permission for intimate care to be administered by school staff if necessary.

### **6. Contenance and Changing a Child who is Soiled:**

Beechwood Primary School does not discriminate against children who are yet to be toilet trained and will make them welcome into our school community. Achieving continence is one of the developmental milestones usually reached within the context of learning in the home. We recognise that occasionally this aspect in learning has not yet been achieved and it is important that children who have not yet reached this milestone in development do not feel discriminated against.

Delayed continence is not necessarily linked to learning difficulties. However, children with global developmental delayed which may not have been identified prior to starting Beechwood Nursery are likely to be coming out of nappies. Incontinence is not uncommon for pre-school or for older disabled children.

The school will ensure that parents/carers of children who have not yet achieved full continence will have the opportunity to discuss any concerns with a member of staff and will be offered suggestions that may help and support both parent and child. Parents/carers will be encouraged to seek advice from their Health Visitor and to share any information which will promote the continuity of strategies used at home and school.

Children in the process of becoming independent in toileting will be fully supported within the school, as will the parents/carers of those children. By working closely with parents/carers all children will be included and enjoy full access to the experiences and opportunities we provide at Beechwood.

## Two Year Old Pupils

We work together with parents of children who are not yet toilet trained to help each child develop this self-care skill. We promote independence wherever possible in using the toilet or potty, pulling up and down clothes, and washing hands. Members of staff are reassuring and celebrate achievements.

Children have access to the potty or toilet whenever they have need, and are shown how to use taps, soap, the hand dryer and paper towels.

In Beechwood Nursery we have a nappy changing unit and full facilities for children needing their nappy changed. This ensures children are provided with privacy and that changing is a positive experience for the children. Children who are in nappies or pull ups or regularly need changing have their own basket containing nappies/pull ups/spare pants and wipes. Parents/carers are responsible for supplying these. Nappies, pull ups and wipes are bagged and placed in the designated nappy bin. Wet or soiled clothing is bagged for parents/carers to take home.

Before a child starts at our setting, parents/carers will be advised of our policy and asked to give written permission to accept the changing procedure. *See Appendix A - Intimate Care Signing Sheet.* Parents/Carers will be given the option to decline our staff changing their child and choosing to be contacted by the school to change their own child when required.

At Beechwood Nursery:

- Teachers/teaching assistants (key workers) are responsible for changing children and must inform another member of staff before doing so.
- Students or volunteers must not change children.
- It may be appropriate to ask the child's parent/carer to come and change their child (in individual cases and with agreement of the parent).
- Staff should wear disposable gloves and an apron when changing a child, these should be double wrapped and placed in the designated bin.
- Children who have wet or soiled themselves should be supported sensitively in changing themselves, taking responsibility for as much of the process as they are able.
- Only baby wipes will be used to clean the child, unless other products are agreed by parents on an individual toileting plan.
- Soiled nappies are to be bagged and placed into the designated bin.
- The changing unit must be wiped down with antibacterial spray after use.
- Hot water and liquid soap are available to wash hands as soon as soon as the task is completed.
- Paper towels are available for drying hands.
- **Any welfare concerns or marks on the child should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in person and recorded electronically on CPOMS.**

Within the main school, if a child soils him/herself, a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing.

In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout.

The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
- School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. (A supply of clean underwear and spare uniforms are available in Elm classroom or the disabled toilet).
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.
- If the emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child. If none of the contacts can be reached, the Headteacher is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.

### Guidelines

- Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary.
- Get verbal agreement to proceed - **CARE - CONCERN - COMMUNICATE.**
- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her.
- Be responsive to any distress shown.
- Follow basic hygiene routines.
- Always wear protective disposable gloves.
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents. In the case of Foundation Stage children, in order to avoid any unnecessary distress, a member of staff may assist the child, with a colleague in attendance, unless a parent has requested otherwise or if the child is reluctant. Parents will be contacted as soon as it is practical to do so.

### **7. Providing comfort or support to a child:**

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum.

When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

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.

If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **8. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided:**

The school's 'Supporting Children with Medical Needs' policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school. Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school- this form is available from the school office.

A small number of children will have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements included in our Supporting Children with Medical Needs policy will have an individual care plan or school focus plan. This care plan will be formulated by the relevant medical body. If required, school staff will receive appropriate training.

## **9. Swimming:**

Children in Years 5 and 6 participate in a swimming programme at Crewe Lifestyle Centre and Year 6 children who are not able to swim 25m by the end of the year take part in 'Top-Up' swimming.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes, however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

Crewe Lifestyle Centre is organised on a village style changing basis. This supports effective and discrete supervision and privacy for our children when changing. Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence. Occasionally, a parent may choose to accompany a child to swimming lessons if there are medical and/or changing needs.

## **10. Residential Visits:**

Residential Educational Visits are an important part of our Year 2, Year 3 and Year 5 experiences. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in this less formal setting. As with Extra-Curricular Activities, although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, staff are still guided by our Safeguarding Procedures and Expectations and Discipline Policies. Some specific Intimate Care issues may arise in a residential context.

### Showering

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. This means that staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct e.g. adults must not change in the same place as children or shower in the same area as children.

It is best practice in our school that when an incident has taken place that has necessitated a member of staff to be present when children are changing, that the incident is reported to a senior member of staff.

### Night Time Routines

It is established practice that the children's bedrooms are private spaces and anyone else wanting to enter the room should knock and announce their intention to enter. At bedtime, children are given a set amount of time to change and prepare for bed and will be told when the supervising staff will visit the rooms to check all is okay and switch off the lights.

A reciprocal arrangement is in place in the mornings.

There are occasions when incidents take place during the night and the need arises to:

- Assist a child to change his/her clothes.
- Change a child who has soiled him/herself.
- Provide comfort to an upset or distressed child.

- Assist a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Guidance as above will be followed with the support of an additional member of staff in attendance.

### **11. School Responsibilities:**

All members of staff working with the children at Beechwood are subject to strict vetting. This vetting includes criminal record checks and two references. Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy are involved in the intimate care of children (they wear green lanyards).

Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child.

Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school.

Parents would then be contacted immediately. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the Whistleblowing policy.

### **12. Guidelines for Good Practice:**

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children. Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff.

1. Involve the child in the intimate care. Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and, where possible, give choices. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation. Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child.
3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent. As a child may have multiple carers and a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.
4. Be aware of your own limitations. Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
5. Promote positive self-esteem and body image. Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

6. If you have any concerns you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated staff member. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept electronically on CPOMS.

### **13. Working with children of the opposite sex:**

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with all children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens/curtains put in place;
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a written record;
- Parents must be informed about any concerns.

### **14. Communication with children:**

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, children may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc.

To ensure effective communication:

- Make eye contact at the child's level;
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- Wait for response;
- Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response; and
- Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

## **INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Leadership and Management Governor sub-committee, held on \_\_\_\_\_

Date to be reviewed: April 2023

Signed:

Name of signatory:

Sara Harper

John Cargill

Role of signatory:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors





## Promoting Personal, Social and Emotional Development - Intimate Care Plan Agreement

Changing children within the nursery session - regularly or on occasion

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

I agree:

- to ensuring that my child is changed at the latest opportunity before being brought to Nursery/School;
- to providing the school with spare nappies/underwear, a change of clothing and any prescribed creams;
- to informing the Nursery staff should the child have any rash/marks;
- to a 'minimum change' policy i.e the nursery would not undertake to change the child more frequently than if s/he were at home.

I understand and agree to the procedures that will be followed when my child is changed at Nursery - including the application of any prescribed cream.

The Nursery/School agree:

- to change the child during a single session should the child soil themselves or become uncomfortably wet;
- to monitor the number of times a child is changed in order to identify and support progress made;
- to discuss any marks or rashes seen;
- to review arrangements when needed.

Parent/Carer Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Nursery Manager's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_