



Oasis Academy Long Cross

Policy for Intimate Care of Pupils

In this document we aim to provide guidelines in relation to the intimate care of children arising from such issues as incontinence, 'toilet accidents', periods and other incidents that may require a child to remove their clothes.

Introduction

Intimate care can involve risks for both the child and any adults in attendance. These guidelines seek to minimize such risks.

The principles adopted in these guidelines are:

1. Children should be encouraged to express choice and to have a positive image of his/her body
2. Children have a right to feel safe and secure
3. Children should be respected and valued as individuals
4. Children have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff when meeting their needs
5. Children have the right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices
6. Children have the right to complain and have their complaint dealt with

Good practice

In the first instance it is our policy to contact a parent or carer surrounding any issues around intimate care. For children in the Resource Base and EYFS, a change of clothes and a note home will be the standard procedure for toilet 'accidents'. It is essential that all staff are familiar with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures. If staff are concerned about a child's actions or comments whilst carrying out intimate care, this should be recorded and discussed with the school's Designated Professional for Child Protection or the headteacher.

Number of adults in attendance

Ideally two adults should be in attendance as this provides mutual support in case child protection allegations are made. However it is recognised that this is not always a practical proposition as staff numbers and availability may preclude it. In these circumstances the nature and the knowledge of the child must be used to help assess the risk. The dignity of the child must also be considered; two adults may be inappropriate. If only one adult is to be in attendance then, whilst maintaining discretion, ensure another adult knows why the child has been withdrawn from class.

Which adults should attend?

Wherever possible allow the child to express a preference, in the case of children in the Resource Base their "key person" or class teacher. They must be school staff, it would not be appropriate to involve any person who is on "supply" unless for longer term positions. It is not appropriate for a helper or volunteer to provide any of the care for the child. Wherever possible, staff should work with children of the same sex in providing personal care. Male adults should not normally be involved in providing intimate care for girls. Religious and cultural values must always be taken into account.

Location

Whilst privacy is necessary, the area should be accessible to another adult if they are needed. The minimum time possible should be spent with the child in this intimate care situation. However, the child may need support and/or re-assurance after the incident; try to provide this in a different place, where such support is normally given.

In the case of girls having a period, the disabled toilet, including a stock of sanitary products, will be made available. Girls can seek support from any female member of the teaching or support staff or one that can be designated.

It is expected that girls of this age are able to meet their own needs although we recognise the need for emotional support.

Caring

The child should be spoken to by name and given explanations of what is happening. Ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and the situation. Encourage the child to care for him/herself as far as possible. Be aware and responsive to the child's reactions. Items of spare clothing should be readily available.

Hygiene

When washing always use a disposable flannel or baby wipes and encourage the child to wash private parts of their body, unless they are unable to do this themselves because of disability. The provision of gloves and aprons should be readily accessible. Used items must be disposed of appropriately in the bins provided. Supplies of cleaning materials should be provided for cleaning and disinfecting any soiled surfaces. Please ensure this is replenished

Recording

All incidents involving intimate care must be recorded straight away. The minimum information to be kept is the date and time, the name of the child, the adult(s) in attendance, the nature of the incident, the action taken and any concerns or issues. The parent/carer must be informed as soon as possible. Within the resource base this is not applicable due to the nature of the children's self-help needs. Recording will take place at the request of the parent or if there are any associated health needs. This will be discussed with the parent prior to the child starting school and monitored regularly. Information given around toileting issues will be recorded in the home school book or at the request of the parent.

Regular occurrences

When it becomes evident that a child has an on-going problem that requires regular intimate care intervention, the school should seek to make arrangements with the parent/carer for the long-term resolution of the problems. This is likely to include a care plan that involves the parent/carer directly as well as external referral to a health professional. This may also include support from the resource base staff with regard to supporting toilet training.

Confidentiality

The dignity of the child must be respected so as much as possible should be kept confidential between child, school and parent/carer.

Parents/carers

All parents/carers should be made aware of the way the school will deal with these issues.

Support for staff

It is unlikely that any staff will not want to be involved in such intimate care, however for the smooth running of the school this can sometimes be unavoidable. It is therefore important that all staff are aware of the school's policy on intimate care issues and, where necessary are trained and supported appropriately. Staff will also have the opportunity to raise their own concerns and issues.

EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage at Oasis Academy Long Cross follows largely the procedures as described in the whole school policy. However, there are specific situations where EYFS staff will need to follow age and needs appropriate procedures.

Nappies –

We welcome children into our EYFS who wear nappies and a child will not be discriminated against if they wear one. If a child wears a nappy in our EYFS they will only be changed if their nappy is soiled or if a child is in our care for over 3 hours or it appears necessary i.e. the nappy is full and causing discomfort, then

they will be offered the opportunity to have their nappy changed. Parents will be encouraged to seek appropriate support with regard to toilet training.

All EYFS staff will record any intimate care incident in the Intimate Care Record Book hanging in the nursery/reception toilet area. Staff should clearly write the details of the incident and the action taken. This must be counter signed by EYFS Staff and parents must be informed when the child leaves our care.

Resource Base (separate to the main policy)

Staff who work with young children or children who have special needs will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions.

This may include:

- Care associated with continence
- Help with washing or bathing.
- Supporting dressing

Members of staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues.

Personal safety is taught as part of Personal, Social and Health Education to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

Oasis Academy Long Cross 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. Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them at all times.

Our Approach to Best Practice

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 trained to do so (including *Child Protection and Health and Safety* training in moving and handling where appropriate) and are fully aware of best practice. Staff will be supported and if necessary trained 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.
- Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required.
- 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. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.
- Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and health, when required
- 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 a child needs

help with intimate care. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult, with another adult in close proximity.

- The member of staff will wear protective clothing such as apron and disposable gloves. These will be disposed of safely and appropriately.
- Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis.

The Protection of Children

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

- 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. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the designated person for child protection. There are forms in the staffroom to make this notification. It must be written – a verbal report will not suffice.
- A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social services if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm. Further details are available in the school's Child Protection Policy.
- 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.