

Intimate Care Policy

Lucas Vale and Grinling Gibbons Primary Schools



Approved by: *Laura Warrington* Date: *14 February 2020.*

Last reviewed on: February 2020

Next review due by: February 2022

This policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- Health and safety policy
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

This policy is written with the understanding that all children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. It is designed to safeguard children and staff. As a federation, we recognise that young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable and that staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. Adhering to these guidelines should safeguard both children and staff.

What are the principles of intimate care?

- 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.

Respect is at the heart of our values-based approach to learning at GGLV. Our aim is to ensure that all members of our community treat others with respect and receive due respect in return. We always strive to support children to become as independent as possible. However, there will be occasions when we need to help our children to care for themselves.

'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.'

At GGLV, some children require intimate care support as a one-off and some over a longer period of time.

Our school is committed to ensuring that staff responsible for the intimate care of children undertake their duties in a professional and sensitive manner at all times.

No child should be cared for in a way that causes distress, pain or embarrassment and staff must be understanding of each child's individual needs.

Whose responsibility is it?

Governing Body

- Review policy bi-annually
- Undertake relevant safeguarding training annually
- Ensure all members of staff receive safeguarding training annually

Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure that all members of staff working with children have undertaken a full DBS disclosure procedure. This includes students on work placement and volunteers who may be left alone with children.
- Work closely with families and all staff members to ensure that the policy is used to effectively meet the child's needs
- Ensure that staff receive relevant training, where appropriate
- Liase with external agencies/professionals to support the development of care plans
- Ensure there are appropriate and accessible spaces in the building for intimate care to be carried out

Member of staff carrying out intimate care

- Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary
- Get verbal agreement to proceed
- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her.
- Be responsive to any distress shown
- Always wear protective disposable gloves and follow basic hygiene routines
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents
- Dispose of any waste products in the appropriate bins
- Always allow an opportunity for the child to be as independent as possible
- Raise any concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice IMMEDIATELY to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (either verbally or on CPOMS)
- Report any concerns about a child's wellbeing/safety including: any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling and/or any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child
- If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
- 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
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately and a member of the senior leadership team should be consulted to decide the next step

Parent(s)/carer(s)

- Advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child including any changes to this
- Provide the school with any necessary equipment (agreed with the senior leadership team)

Why do we carry out intimate care?

Assisting a child to change his/her clothes

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given. An individual child may require some assistance with changing if:

- he/she has an accident at the toilet
- gets wet outside
- vomits on his/her clothes

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself

If a child has soiled themselves, we will act quickly to ensure the child is comfortable as soon as possible. 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 their underwear in private and carry out this process themselves
- An appropriate member of staff will support the child with changing following the guidelines outlined in the 'responsibilities' section of the policy
- All members of staff supporting a child must always do their best to preserve the dignity of the child

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 appropriate to the age of the child and context within which they are working.

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 one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

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

- Our Administration of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of medications in school
- Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school- this form in our school offices and as an appendix to our policy
- A small number of children will have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements included in our Administration of Medications Policy will have an Individual 'Care Plan'.

Swimming

In some year groups, children participate in a swimming programme at Wavelengths Leisure Centre, Lewisham.

School staff overseeing the visits must:

- Respect the children's privacy when they are changing whilst also maintaining the required level of supervision to safeguard young people
- Be aware and vigilant to health and safety risks
- ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur
- 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

Residential/school Trips

Residential visits/school trips are an important part of our school experience. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in less formal settings. This must be included on the risk assessment for the trip.

In the following settings, staff must respect children's privacy; however, there must also be an appropriate level of supervision:

- Showering
- Changing
- Getting ready for bed/waking up

Staff should announce their intention of entering bedrooms/bathrooms, avoid remaining in non-communal areas unless pupil's needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour. 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.

Staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. adults must not change in the same place as children or shower with children.

IF IT NECESSARY TO ENTER A PUPILS ROOM DURING THE NIGHT THERE WILL ALWAYS BE TWO MEMBERS OF STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

At bedtime, children are given a set amount of time to change and prepare for bed and will be told when the supervising teachers 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.

