

# The Birches Specialist Support School

## Intimate Care Policy



**Date Reviewed:** **September 2022**

**Reviewed by:** **Annie Williams, Assistant Head**

Signed: .....  
On behalf of the Governors

Signed: .....  
Head teacher

**Date of next review:** **March 2025**

# THE BIRCHES SCHOOL SPECIALIST SUPPORT SCHOOL

## Intimate Care POLICY

### Introduction

Some pupils may require intimate care for their comfort and dignity. Intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a 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 requires staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity will always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control.

### Definitions

**Intimate personal care** is hands-on physical care in personal hygiene, and/or physical presence or observation during such activities. It includes:

- Body bathing other than to arms, face and legs below the knee.
- Toileting, wiping and care in the genital and anal areas.
- Continence care. Placement, removal and changing of incontinence pads.
- Menstrual hygiene
- Dressing and undressing
- Application of sun cream

### General personal care

- Pupils should be encouraged and supported to be as independent as possible in all their care tasks. Staff should not undertake tasks which pupils are able to perform themselves provided they have sufficient time and support.
- All staff involved in the provision of intimate and/or personal care will have all relevant checks completed before they start employment (e.g. enhanced DBS checks), allowing them to support personal care. All staff will be subject to robust internal procedures such as reference checking and monitoring and regular updating of DBS checks.
- Where appropriate, all students will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- All staff will actively support pupils in becoming independent in managing their personal care to the best of their ability.
- Staff must be culturally sensitive and aware of different concepts of privacy, nudity and in/appropriate touch.

### Washing, dressing, toileting

- Pupils must be encouraged and supported to conduct their own self-care as much as possible. It must not be undertaken by staff because they feel it is quicker or more convenient.
- Staff should be mindful of pupils' need for privacy.
- If staff notice any changes in an individual's appearance that may require attention e.g. rashes, blisters, sores etc these should be reported to the School Nurse.

### **Nail & hair care**

- Staff will not cut pupils' fingernails, unless this is required in special circumstances and arranged with School Nurse and parent/carer.

### **Dental care**

Staff may assist pupils to clean their teeth and perform mouth care tasks as part of general personal hygiene guidance.

### **Hearing aids**

- Once taught the proper technique by an appropriate person, staff may assist pupils to insert and adjust hearing aids.
- Following training staff may clean hearing aids

### **Application of sun cream**

Parents may be requested to send in sun cream during hot weather. This must be clearly labelled with the child's name on it. Adults may support the application of sun cream if the child's learning needs mean it may be difficult for them to achieve this safely with independence.

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## **1. Aims**

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Intimate care is carried out properly by staff, in line with any agreed plans
- The dignity, rights and wellbeing of children are safeguarded
- Pupils with intimate care difficulties are not discriminated against, in line with the Equalities Act 2010
- Parents are assured that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that the needs of their children are considered.
- Staff carrying out intimate care work do so within guidelines (i.e. health and safety, manual handling, safeguarding protocols awareness) that protect themselves and the pupils involved.
- Intimate care refers to any care which involves toileting, washing, changing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure to children's intimate personal areas.

## **2. Legislation and statutory guidance**

This policy complies with statutory safeguarding guidance

## **3. Role of parents**

### **3.1 Seeking parental permission**

For children who need routine or occasional intimate care (e.g. for toileting or toileting accidents), parents will be asked to sign a permission form.

For children whose needs are more complex or who need particular support outside of what's covered in the permission form (if used), an intimate care plan will be created in discussion with parents (see section 3.2 below).

Where there isn't an intimate care plan or parental consent for routine care in place, parental permission will be sought before performing any intimate care procedure.

If the school is unable to get in touch with parents and an intimate care procedure **urgently** needs to be carried out, the procedure will be carried out to ensure the child is comfortable, and the school will inform parents afterwards.

### **3.2 Creating an intimate care plan**

Where an intimate care plan is required, it will be agreed in discussion between the school, parents, the child (when possible) and any relevant health professionals.

The school will work with parents and take their preferences on board to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible, dealing with needs sensitively and appropriately.

Subject to their age and understanding, the preferences of the child will also be considered. If there's doubt whether the child is able to make an informed choice, their parents will be consulted.

The plan will be reviewed as needed in line with any changes in the pupil's toileting needs.

Parents and Carers will be advised to bring in enough supplies for their child to support changes throughout the day.

See appendix 1 for a blank template plan to see what this will cover.

### **3.3 Sharing information**

The school will share information with parents as needed to ensure a consistent approach. It will expect parents to also share relevant information regarding any intimate matters as needed.

## **4. Role of staff**

### **4.1 Which staff will be responsible**

Any roles who may carry out intimate care will have this set out in their job description. This includes teaching assistants, lunchtime support assistants and personal care assistants. Teachers will proactively be involved in target setting derived through EHCP meetings and leading the class team in working towards achieving these targets. Where necessary, a supply member of staff may be asked to support with intimate care in conjunction with a familiar member of the class team or Birches team.

All staff at the school who carry out intimate care will have been subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with a barred list check before appointment, as well as other checks on their employment history.

## **4.2 How staff will be trained**

Staff will receive:

- Training in the specific types of intimate care they undertake
- Regular safeguarding training
- If necessary, manual handling training that enables them to remain safe and for the pupil to have as much participation as is possible
- They will be familiar with:
  - The control measures set out in risk assessments carried out by the school for both individual pupils and the toilets whereby personal care takes place.
  - Hygiene and health and safety procedures, including those related to COVID-19
  - Understand the importance of storing hygiene and personal care products in a hygienic way.
- They will also be encouraged to seek further advice as needed.

## **5. Intimate care procedures**

### **5.1 How procedures will happen**

Staffing within the class team is dependent upon the learning profile of pupils. The number of pupils who require support with their personal care, behavioural needs, level of learning and whether they are in the reception cohort, are all taken into consideration. Whilst it is best practice from a health and safety and safeguarding perspective to have 2 members of staff present, if this is not possible, class teams must ensure they have logged on a personal care check sheet, who has changed the child and when.

Class teams are made up of male and female staff and therefore pupils may be supported in their personal care by either sex. This will be explained via our intimate care permissions.

Procedures will be carried out in pupil specific toilets, equipped with changing beds and hoists as needed for the individual needs of the classes which access them.

When carrying out procedures, the school will provide staff with:

Protective gloves, disposable aprons, cleaning supplies, changing mats and sanitary bins.

For pupils needing routine intimate care, the school expects parents to provide, when necessary, a good stock (at least a week's worth in advance) of necessary resources, such as nappies, underwear and/or a spare set of clothing.

Any soiled clothing will be contained securely, clearly labelled, and discreetly returned to parents at the end of the day.

Supporting adults will sluice any faeces off first, before placing in a plastic bag. Parents will be notified of any soiled items in the child's bag which will need to be removed on their return home.

Privacy curtains will be used in toilets with multiple use.

## **5.2 Concerns about safeguarding**

If a member of staff carrying out intimate care has concerns about physical changes in a child's appearance (e.g. marks, bruises, soreness), they will report this using the school's safeguarding procedures.

If a child is hurt accidentally or there is an issue when carrying out the procedure, the staff member will report the incident immediately to the class teacher. The class teacher will then use their professional judgement to decide if further action needs to be taken and inform a member of SLT.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, the responsibility for intimate care of that child will be given to another member of staff as quickly as possible and the allegation will be investigated according to the school's safeguarding procedures.

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by a designated member of the senior leadership team every 3 years. This policy as a non-statutory policy will be ratified by SLT.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Accessibility plan
- Child protection and safeguarding
- COVID-19
- Health and safety
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical condition



**Appendix 1: template intimate care plan**



**INTMATE CARE PLAN 2022-2023**



<b>NAME OF CHILD</b>	
<b>CLASS</b>	
<b>Type of intimate care needed e.g. full support, support following a bowel movement.</b>	
<b>How often care will be given</b>	
<b>Please detail what size pads your child wears</b>	
<b>What training staff will be given</b>	
<b>Where care will take place</b>	
<b>What resources and equipment will be used, and who will provide them</b>	
<b>Please detail the steps the child will need to support their personal care</b>	
<b>How procedures will differ if taking place on a trip or outing</b>	
<b>Staff team names who will be supporting regular intimate care:</b>	
NAME	NAME
NAME	NAME
<b>Name of parent or carer</b>	
<b>Relationship to child</b>	
<b>Signature of parent or carer</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

**Appendix 2: template parent/carer permission form**

 <b>PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR INTIMATE CARE</b> <b>ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023</b> 	
<b>Name of child</b>	
<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Year group/ age:</b>	
<b>Name of parent/carer</b>	
<b>Please read the statements opposite. Please note below the number which best reflects your child's personal care needs.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) My child needs full support in their toileting including hoisting onto a changing bed to carry out their intimate care.</li> <li>2) My child wears pads and needs full support and directing in their toileting routine.</li> <li>3) My child needs support following a bowel movement to ensure they are clean.</li> <li>4) My child is ready for toilet training and I would like an intimate care plan in place to reflect this.</li> <li>5) My child is fully independent and does not require any support in their toileting routine</li> </ol> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">The statement which best reflects my child's intimate care needs is _____</p>
I give permission for the school to provide appropriate intimate care to my child (e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will advise the school of anything that may affect my child's personal care (e.g. if medication changes or if my child has an infection)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand class teams are made up of male and female staff and therefore pupils may be supported in their personal care by either sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have read and understood The Birches School intimate care policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>



## **Policy Information and Review**

*Review frequency: every 3 years*

Date	Version	Changes made	By whom (name and role)	Due date for next review	Reviewed & Ratified by Govs.  (sign and date)
June 2015	1	N/A	Welfare committee	June 2017	
June 2016	2	General review + formatting for consistency	H McLoughlin AHT	June 2019	
March 2019	2	Dates changed for ratification purposes – policy is the same just the dates altered	F Shah DHT	March 2022	
12.03.19	3	For ratification purposes and following Governor feedback; on page 2 list of policies corrected to reflect current ones to cross reference with – current policy names used.	H McLoughlin AHT	March 2022	
July 2022	4	Significant changes to reflect permissions by parents	A Williams AHT	March 2025	

August 2022	5	Edits made to reflect feedback from TA training	A Williams AHT	March 2025	
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