



Argyle
Primary
School

Intimate Care Policy

2024-25

Review Date: March 2023

Agreed by: FGB 21.03.2023

Review Date: Spring 2025

Overview

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all staff at Argyle Primary School who are responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties to the highest professional standard and that all children will be treated with the utmost respect when intimate care is given. The school will aim to ensure that no child will be attended to in a way that causes them distress or discomfort.

The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against. 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 care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff members' duty of care. It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child will be allowed to exercise choice and will be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body.

It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff will be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young persons' right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

Parental permission

For children who need occasional intimate care, parents / carers will be asked to give consent on the enrollment form. For children whose needs are more complex, an individual health care plan will be created in discussion with parents/carers.

Procedures for staff

A named member of staff will be identified to provide for children who may need long term intimate care.

- Staff will be supported to adapt practice in relation to the needs of individual children's developmental stages e.g. toilet training.
- Where necessary Intimate Care Plans will be drawn up for vulnerable children as appropriate to suit circumstances of the child's needs.
- Where a care plan is not in place and a child has needed help with intimate care (in the case of a toilet 'accident') then parents/carers will be informed the same day.
- 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 him/herself as he/she can.

- In the Early Years children in need of intimate care support will be supported in the Early years open plan toilet area by one member of staff. If an older child requires support with intimate care, two members of staff will be present for care when a child is in need of intimate care.
- There will be identified suitable and appropriate places in school (clear and accessible to other members of staff for intimate care to take place). These will always be used when circumstances arise.
- In the event that intimate care is necessary while children are outside of school on a visit/trip, two members of staff will be present for care and the most appropriate place identified, this event will also be logged on return to school and shared with parents.
- Staff will always wear appropriate safety clothing and gloves when dealing with a child needing intimate care.
- Appropriate facilities and equipment (e.g. nappy bags) will be used to dispose of any waste materials and will be removed on a daily basis. All waste material will be disposed of in designated waste bins in the designated areas.
- Parents will be asked to provide school with nappies, extra clothing etc. to be kept in school where necessary and agreement made for the transportation of soiled clothing to and from school.
- No personal belongings/valuables will be stored in changing areas at any time under any circumstance.
- Clear processes and guidance in intimate care will be highlighted to all staff upon their induction. New staff should be given the opportunity to discuss any queries or uncertainties they may have in relation to this policy.
- Wherever possible staff will only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence.
- Under no circumstances will work experience students or visitors be asked to give intimate care.
 - When taking pupils to the toilet, staff will make colleagues aware of the task to be undertaken and explain to the child what will happen.
- The needs and wishes of individual children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
 - When providing intimate care, staff will carefully and sensitively observe the child's emotional response and report any concerns to the designated teacher.
- When children are changing, levels of supervision will be appropriate to the pupil's age
- Staff will avoid any physical contact unless a child needs help.

Child Protection Policy

The Governors and staff of Argyle Primary School recognise that disabled children are particularly vulnerable to all forms of abuse. Child Protection and Multi-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to at all times.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation (unexplained marks, bruises or soreness for example) s/he will immediately report concerns to the 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 investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of the process of reaching a resolution.

Further advice will be taken from partner agencies. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, this will be investigated in accordance with agreed procedures.

There is an obligation on schools to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Argyle Primary School are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. The DBS' aim is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society.

Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school. All those working with children will be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and will only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their supervisor's/mentor's satisfaction.

It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students will only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

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| Revised | Agreed by governors | Next Review date |
| March 2023 | 21/03/24 | Spring 2025 |