



Theale C of E Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

At Theale CE Primary School the children come first. They are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity.

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it, is* this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” *Mark 12: v 30-31*

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”
John 10:10

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Theale CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our children.

Introduction

Intimate care is any care which is associated with invasive procedures relating to bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene which demands direct or indirect contact with or exposure of intimate parts of the body, such as cleaning up after a child who has soiled themselves. In addition, some children may need help with dressing/undressing or using the toilet. Most children can carry out these functions themselves but it is recognised that some are unable to due to physical disability, learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children, support and safeguard staff and ensure good practice is followed. At Theale CE Primary School all staff are checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and we are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional and caring manner at all times. We believe that the intimate care of children cannot be separated from other aspects of their learning and development and we believe that every child has the right to feel safe and secure. We do not discriminate against children who have not reached a stage where they can manage their own personal hygiene and as such welcome all children to participate in our school and provide appropriate support for each child on an individual basis. We recognise the need to treat all children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. This policy is designed specifically for children who need an intimate care plan.

Aims

We aim to:

- safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of all children and young people including those who may be more vulnerable to abuse,
- provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose duties may include intimate care,
- assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into consideration,
- remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination and ensure inclusion for all children and young people within our setting.

Our approach to Best Practice Individual Intimate Care Plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. We will work with parents of a child who requires intimate care to establish a preferred procedure for supporting the child. Where these procedures may require specialist training, we will seek out training for the staff who will be involved in a child's care, ensuring that the child's support assistant and at least one other member of staff accesses the training. We will ask staff members who are known to the child will take on that responsibility for intimate care. The staff member who is involved will always ask the child for permission to assist them. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy and independence that is possible given their age and ability. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present, however we will ensure there is always another adult within earshot. It is the parent's responsibility to provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat or any other personal equipment needed.

Where children have occasional personal 'accidents' which are out of character for them they will not require an intimate care plan but will be treated with the principles outlined in this policy.

Working with parents

We believe that our partnership with parents is an essential principle in our setting and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing planned intimate care. We recognise that the information required to carry out intimate care is gained from parents as is prior permission (see Appendix 1). Where parents are unwilling to give permission in the event of an incident the parent will be required to come to school to change their child.

We acknowledge that cultural influences may affect what is deemed 'intimate' and ensure we pay regard to social, ethnic and cultural perspectives through open dialogue with parents. Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure that their child's needs are identified, understood and met.

When any intimate care is carried out on children with individual care plans, it will be recorded on their own personal record (see appendix 2). All information concerning intimate care procedures is recorded and stored securely.

We appreciate that sometimes children have toileting 'accidents' which are out of character for them. In the event of this, and in the absence of a personal intimate care plan, the child would be fully encouraged and supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability. Staff will encourage the child to do as much for his/herself as possible and parents will be informed the same day. On the rare occasion that a child is soiled to a point where they are unable to clean themselves to a comfortable state with minimal help, parents would be contacted immediately so that the child could be taken home for bathing.

The protection of children

Child Protection procedures will be adhered to. All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding to build their confidence and assertiveness about their own body and its worth. Confident and assertive children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to abuse. If a member of staff has a concern about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will follow our safeguarding procedures. 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. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed. (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures)

Allegations of Abuse

Personnel working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. This school policy can help to reassure both staff involved and the parents of vulnerable children. Action will be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal assistant. Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in the Child Protection procedures will be followed.

Health and Safety guidelines for changing children

- If possible, children should be changed standing up to avoid staff lifting children.
- The child's skin should be cleaned with a disposable wipe.
- Nappy creams/lotions should be labelled with the child's name and used only if prescribed for that child (by their parents) they must not be shared.

- Disposable gloves should be worn when changing nappies or any incident involving bodily fluids. The nappy should be folded inward to cover faecal material and double wrapped in a nappy bag. Soiled nappies should be disposed of into the bin provided. The disposal bin should be lined and emptied daily, replacing the used bin liner.
- Any soiled or damp clothing should be placed in a plastic carrier bag and stored safely until home time when they will be handed to the parent/carer.
- Once the child has been changed and removed from the changing area, the surface should be cleaned with an antibacterial detergent spray or wipe and left to dry.
- Gloves, apron and any items used for cleaning the changing area will be wrapped and disposed of via domestic waste.
- Hands should be thoroughly washed afterwards.
- Complete the intimate care record which is kept in school first aid room

Appendix 1

Letter to parent(s) outlining policy/procedures and their consent to carry out 'intimate care'

This letter would normally be sent out to confirm what had been agreed at a face-to-face meeting with a parent(s). Details of the nature of the care to be provided can be included in the letter below.

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding occasions when your child may need support with intimate care routines. This includes (but is not exclusive):

We have drawn up the attached guidelines to ensure that your child's needs are met in a professional and dignified manner at all times. I would be grateful if you could sign and return the slip below once you have read the guidelines and agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' procedures when necessary

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher.

I have read a copy of the school's 'Intimate Care Policy.' I agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care', as agreed at our meeting, on my son/daughter when necessary.

Name of child:

Signature of parent/carer:

Name:

Date:

