



Together we love to learn  
and learn to love

# **St. Mary's CE Infant School**

## **Intimate Care Policy**

St Mary's CE Infant school is committed to inspiring every individual. We embed the Christian value of love across school life because we believe that a person who feels loved, secure and happy can flourish. We encourage everyone to achieve their potential, develop their talents, celebrate their uniqueness, and rejoice in their relationships with others.

*"Do everything in love"*

1 Corinthians 16:14

# Intimate Care Policy

At St Mary's our primary concern is to address the needs of all children to help them to achieve their full potential. Through our Christian vision we recognise that everyone is unique. We work in partnership with families and encourage and support the involvement and inclusion of individual children and it is for this reason that we have an intimate care policy. We also recognise that particularly when children first enter the school in the Reception classes, they may still be in nappies, or may occasionally wet/soil themselves.

## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to:

- safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children;
- ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one;
- safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations;
- raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care;
- inform parents/carers how intimate care is administered;
- ensure parents/carers are consulted on the intimate care of their children.

## Principles

Every child must be treated as an individual and care must be given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their self-care skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times. The principles of this policy will be shared with parents during the 'New Parents' Welcome Meeting' and via the school newsletter.

## Definition

Intimate care is defined by St Mary's school as any of the following

- supporting a child with dressing/undressing;
- providing comfort or support for a distressed child;
- assisting a child requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided;
- cleaning a child who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell.

## Safeguarding (To be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy)

- Where intimate care raises **any** concerns these must be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- 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 Safeguarding Lead, who will then follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- If any parent or member of staff has concerns or questions about intimate care procedures or individual routines they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 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.
- St Mary's operates a whistle-blowing policy as a means for staff to raise concerns relating to their peers.
- If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the school will follow the procedure outlined in the Safeguarding Policy and Managing Allegations against staff policy

## Working with parents

Partnership with parents underpins the school's administration of intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of Intimate Care as comfortable as possible is available from parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious/cultural sensitivities. To ensure consistency of care and that intimate care provided is in line with parent's wishes and the child's needs, an intimate care plan must be agreed and signed by parents where it is likely that intimate care will be needed or where a child has ongoing intimate care needs.

Parents are encouraged to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement in the development of Intimate Care Plan. (See appendix)

Exchanging information with parents is essential through personal contact, telephone or correspondence. Particular care must be taken when gathering and sharing information regarding intimate care as it is likely to contain confidential information that should not be accessed by people other than the parent and staff members involved with the delivery of intimate care.

Open communication between staff responsible for intimate care and parents must be maintained. Staff and parents should arrange to review the Intimate Care Plan at least annually and more often as necessary, particularly where a child's needs may have changed.

## Occasional 'accidents'

Where a care plan is **not** in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). The following should also be taken into consideration.

- When a child has required assistance with intimate care following an accident a phone call will be made home to inform parents/carers.
- An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going to assist a pupil with intimate care. Where possible, intimate care should be undertaken with a minimum of two adults in attendance so as to safeguard both the adults and the child. Where this is not possible, the member of staff conducting the intimate care should inform another adult of the assistance they are providing and where they are providing it. Where only one adult is providing intimate care the door to the space where the care is being provided must be left open.
- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care following an 'accident' should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and they will have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know

## Pupil voice

Every attempt should be made to determine the child's wishes. To ensure effective communication with the child, staff should:

- ascertain the agreed method of communication (words, signs, signals) and identify this in the agreed Intimate Care Plan,
- allow the child, subject to their age and understanding, to express any preferences regarding their care,
- encourage as much independence in relation to their intimate care as the child is capable of,
- agree appropriate terminology to be used by staff for private parts and bodily functions and record them in the Care Plan.

Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

## **Guidelines for Staff**

Staff members must:

- ensure that sensitive information about a pupil is only shared with those who need to know, such as members of staff specifically involved with the child.
- ensure they know who to ask for advice if they are unsure or uncomfortable about a particular situation or procedure.
- identify and use a communication system that the child is most comfortable with.
- Provide the child with choices regarding their intimate care wherever possible
- communicate with and involve the child in the intimate care process
- develop, where possible, greater independence in the pupil in relation to their intimate care
- maintain confidentiality with children who discuss elements of their intimate care (safeguarding procedures must be followed where appropriate)
- work closely with other healthcare professionals as necessary to ensure best practice.

When involved in intimate care staff must:

- Wear single-use disposable gloves
- Follow robust hand-washing procedures
- Inform a colleague when leaving the room to support a child with intimate care
- Safely dispose of waste in a designated bin.

## **Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed particularly in the Foundation Stage. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

## **Providing Comfort or Support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, and situation of the child.

# APPENDIX - INTIMATE CARE PLAN



Name of child:

Date of birth:

Date plan was written:

**Description of the type of intimate care that requires assistance**

**Does this procedure require additional training for staff members? YES/ NO**  
If YES, please indicate here who will provide the training and how often staff will need to have refresher training.

**List of staff members trained to provide this care**

Name	Position	Date of training (if required)
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**Communication/choice**

**Location of care provided**

**Equipment /Resources needed**

**Strategies for learning and promoting independence**

**Terminology to be used**

**Any further comments**

Agreed with parent

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed with school

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Staff role within school e.g. SENCO \_\_\_\_\_