

**September 2015**

## **Great Bardfield Primary School Intimate Care Policy**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is:

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

### **Rationale**

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 should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body.

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.

### **Definition**

Intimate care is one of the following:

- Supporting a child with dressing/undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Assisting a child requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell

### **Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it is necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed particularly in the Foundation Class. Staff will always encourage children to attempt dressing and undressing by themselves.

### **Providing comfort or support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in the Foundation Class.

Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated.

When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

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.

### **Soiling**

Intimate care for soiling should only be given to a child if another adult is present. Parents who have children in the Foundation class may sign a permission form so that the staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling itself.

If a parent does not give consent, the school will contact the parents or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives.

Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child.

This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself.

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If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Head Teacher will be consulted. In this incident, staff will act appropriately, as there will be some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and must respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- protective gloves are worn
- the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- all spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child

## **Hygiene**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, and must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

## **Protection for staff**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk.

These should include:

- gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

## **Safeguards for children**

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Great Bardfield Primary School are CRB (Crime Record Bureau) checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily.

The CRB's 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.

It is not appropriate for volunteers, trainee teachers or students on work experience to carry out intimate care procedures.

Agreed by staff                      September 2015

Agreed by governors on        September 2015

To be reviewed                      September 2017