



The Collaboration of Askrigg VC and Bainbridge C of E Primary and Nursery Schools

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Learning & Growing,
Loving & Caring with Jesus

Intimate Care Policy (Managing Intimate Personal Care)

Given the right approach, intimate personal 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, carers and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate personal care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child or young person's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

Schools should carefully consider their policies, staffing and accommodation in relation to providing intimate personal care. A 'blanket' policy, for example, which refused admission to a school for pupils until they were toilet trained, would be likely to be **unlawful** as it could discriminate against a disabled child under the Equality Act 2010. The reasonable adjustments duty under the Equality Act requires schools to avoid, as far as possible by reasonable means, the disadvantage which a disabled pupil experiences because of their disability.

A school **cannot** require a parent / carer to come into school to provide intimate personal care as a condition of admission, nor can it insist that a parent / carer provide equipment such as nappies. In both cases this could be discrimination by association and therefore **unlawful**.

What is it?

Intimate personal care includes:

- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled or wet him / herself
- Assisting girls with aspects of menstruation
- Assisting disabled pupils with toileting needs
- Assisting younger children with toileting needs

Intimate personal care in school may be needed for a wide range of factors including:

- Normal acquisition of toilet training
- General developmental delay
- Lack of appropriate parental / carer guidance at the correct age
- Congenital abnormalities
- Long term physical or medical conditions
- Short term infections
- Psychological issues

Intimate personal care is a hugely significant factor affecting children's self image. The stigma associated with wetting and soiling accidents can cause enormous stress and embarrassment to the child / young person and families concerned and can be enormously damaging to self-esteem. Difficulties with continence can severely inhibit an individual's inclusion in school and the community. It is essential that the toileting needs of all children and young people are managed with support and understanding.

What can we do about it?

Where intimate personal care is needed for a child / young person it is essential that:

- every child / young person is treated as an individual and that care is given as sensitively as possible giving due respect to the child's dignity;
- the child / young person is encouraged to consider their intimate personal care needs, is allowed to exercise choice and is encouraged to have a positive image of their own body;
- parents / carers are fully involved in discussions around intimate personal care arrangements;
- children and young people are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves;
- a written procedure with guidelines for delivering intimate personal care is agreed.

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Intimate Personal Care Plan

Children/young people who have ongoing intimate personal care needs may require an Intimate Personal Care Plan that is agreed between the school/setting, the parents/carers, the child/young person (where appropriate) and a health professional who may be involved e.g. specialist continence nurse. This **would not** be needed for children and young people who occasionally/accidentally wet or soil themselves.

An Intimate Personal Care Plan summarises the assistance a child/young person requires and provides information on the management of their intimate personal care needs. It will:-

- clarify a child's / young person's intimate personal care needs;
 - clarify the nature and level of support that is needed to meet these needs;
 - identify procedures to be followed by staff who are supporting the management of the child's / young person's intimate personal care needs;
 - identify procedures that are to be followed in the case of an emergency;
 - identify any training and / or resources that staff will need within the school/setting to enable them to support the child / young person;
 - identify how waste will be disposed of;
 - identify what the child / young person will be encouraged to do for themselves;
 - identify any resources that are required and who will provide them;
- be signed by the parents / carers and school, retained in the child's file and stored in line with data protection requirements.

If a child / young person already has a Health Care Plan then they would not need a separate Intimate Personal Care Plan as the above information could be included in the Health Care Plan.

Staff responsibilities

Schools need to have members of support staff able to provide support for intimate personal care. This needs to be explicitly identified within job descriptions otherwise unions may insist that intimate personal care procedures can only be undertaken on a **voluntary** basis.

Therefore schools need to agree with members of staff to have intimate personal care written into their job descriptions, and to provide appropriate training to carry out this role. Additionally, when making a new appointment a school should consider including this duty within the job description.

The Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to deal with unforeseen emergencies or accidents.

Safeguarding

It is not normally necessary for more than one member of staff to be involved and it is preferable for the child's privacy and dignity that only one staff member is involved. However, if concerns are identified by either staff or parents / carers (e.g. behavioural difficulties, moving a child) it would be appropriate to carry out a risk assessment to determine the level of risk using normal school risk assessment procedures.

Health & Safety

Staff need to be mindful of their own health and safety and to alert their Headteacher to any potential hazards arising from an intimate personal care plan (for example back care, appropriate clothing). It may be necessary to carry out a risk assessment to address any specific health and safety concerns.

Facilities & equipment

Appropriate facilities for cleaning children and for the proper disposal of waste need to be in place. This does not necessarily need to be an elaborate, purpose-built room, although the child's privacy and decency needs to be maintained as an absolute priority and they should be happy with the area identified for intimate personal care to take place, as should parents/carers. When schools are embarking on capital projects which are enhancing areas of the school, they should consider how facilities could be enhanced to

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better meet the potential intimate personal care needs of pupils (e.g. changing mat for lying or standing on, 'Do Not Enter' sign).

If a child requires particular resources to support them with toileting needs (e.g. continence pants) the school should liaise with the school nurse/health visitor service in the first instance.

What equipment may be needed?

Disposable gloves

Disposable apron

Wipes

Nappies

Nappy bags

Spare clothes

Changing mat/changing bed – this depends on the age of the child/young person. Some will prefer to change standing up.

Toilets

Children and young people need to be given time and privacy. Blanket policies (e.g. only allowed to use toilets at break) can cause distress to some children whether or not they have continence issues. Toilets need to be:-

- safe, pleasant and warm

- accessible at all times and easy to reach

- able to provide privacy

- cleaned and flushed regularly

- provided with adequate hand washing facilities, soap, paper towels

Waste Disposal

Soiled or wet nappies should be double bagged using nappy bags and disposed of in the usual waste. The exception to this is if a large quantity of nappies are disposed of on a daily basis or if there is a known infection e.g. HIV, Hepatitis. In these circumstances contact your local environmental health department for further advice. Soiled/wet clothes should also be double bagged and passed back to parents/carers. Many schools are installing washing facilities on site.

Resources

Where additional resources are required (adult support, changing facilities...) and the child does not have a statement of SEN, the school would be required to provide this from its delegated inclusion funding.

Where else can we go for help?

For advice on policy development:- Debbie Bell (Senior Adviser EYFS)

debbie.bell@northyorks.gov.uk

For advice on equalities duties – Simon Ashby (Senior Adviser Inclusion) –

simon.ashby@northyorks.gov.uk

For advice on developing and implementing intimate personal care plans – Caroline Barnes Tee (Lead for Physical Medical Team) – caroline.barnes-tee@northyorks.gov.uk

For advice on child development issues – school nursing service and/or the school's Educational Psychologist.

Further guidance/publications

Managing the Health Care Needs of Children and Young People - Information, Guidance and Standards for Schools and Settings - October 2008

(NYCC) <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3760&p=0>

Toileting Guidance for Schools and Settings - <https://fronter.com/northyorks/main.phtml> in the Early years Room – Inclusion page