

**Hipsburn Primary School and Preschool**  
**Policy on Intimate Care**  
**September 2024**



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Our School Vision:

*“The most valuable gift we can give a learner is to enable them to think for themselves, to care for others and thereby acquire a sense of self-worth and confidence which can be used to benefit both society and the individual.”*

Hipsburn Primary School and Preschool are committed to promoting inclusion for all children whatever their needs including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who may have an increased dependency and/or require practical support with intimate care needs whilst in school. These needs are no different to the needs of a child who is not disabled but there are differences in the nature, method and principles of fulfilling those needs. We recognise that every child is an individual and will have a unique development pattern.

Toilet training is a developmental stage that may or may not create anxiety for the child and their parents and carers. Some children will be out of nappies between the ages of two and three, for others it may be later and, for some children, it may never happen. The term 'toilet training' suggests that children can somehow be taught to have control over their bladder and bowels however bladder and bowel control is largely dependent on development of the nervous system.

Our aim is to support and reassure parents and carers and welcome them and their child into our setting and help remove pressure on parents/carers and children by not insisting they are toilet trained before they are accepted into our early years setting and school. This intimate care policy supports these aims.

### Rationale

We have defined Intimate Care as direct care of the child in terms of any personal care activity a child is not able able to undertake themselves.

Intimate care is considered a higher risk activity in terms of abuse/allegation of abuse and it is important that there are guidelines to protect those being cared for and the staff carrying out the care. We take the view that everyone is safer if expectations are clear and guidelines that encompass all aspects of procedures are as comprehensive as possible. The guidelines apply to every member of staff involved in the intimate care of children, whatever the child's age.

### **Therefore, our guidelines have the following goals:**

- To protect children and staff who are required to carry out intimate care tasks
  - To promote good practice and outline appropriate procedures for intimate care tasks which ensures a consistent approach towards intimate care
  - To involve parents/carers and the children in the process to ensure this meets the needs of individual children
  - To reassure children and support their development of personal independence by encouraging them to make choices and decisions as part of the process
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## **Guidelines**

We aim that all Parents and children are confident that appropriate staff provide their child's intimate care.

All staff involved in Intimate Care routines will have had a DBS check/police check/fully cleared and have received appropriate training to carry out this aspect of their work. Volunteers or visitors will not be allowed to carry out intimate care.

The School's Intimate Care policy will be available on the website and parents will be offered an opportunity to discuss their child's needs with an appropriate member of staff.

Care practices used at home will be discussed with parents and a note will be made of any particular needs for example cultural or religious needs and preferences and of any allergies (e.g. latex allergy would determine the type of disposable gloves to be used).

Where there is a long term need for intimate care parents will be involved in developing an intimate care plan for their child.

Children who need to have nappies changed will be changed in a discreet area which has the necessary equipment available i.e. changing mat, protective gloves, wipes, nappies, change of clothes etc. Appropriate materials should be supplied by parents (e.g. nappies, cream, cleansing wipes) and parents are required to update staff of any changes in children's needs. For occasional use, the school keeps a supply of wipes and spare clothes.

### **Members of staff caring for the child should be aware of the needs and abilities of the child**

Practitioners carrying out personal care will be aware of any care plans in place and will support and encourage children, as far as is reasonably possible, to contribute their own intimate care by involving children in their care and in making choices and decisions (e.g. Do you want to go to the toilet? Should we wash your hands or face first?).

Staff will reassure children who need to be changed and help them remain relaxed, comfortable and safe. Children will be changed whenever the need arises and as agreed in any care plan.

## **Respecting children's dignity and ensuring privacy appropriate to age, stage and gender**

Respect will be shown in all care procedures and children's wishes will be sought and respected. Children will be involved in the process and children be treated with respect at all times.

Children will be changed in a discreet area with all necessary equipment available i.e. changing mat, protective gloves, cleaning/disinfecting materials, wipes, nappies, change of clothes etc

When a child needs any form of intimate care the member of staff giving the care will make a child aware of what is going to happen and include decision making as an integral part of the process (e.g. Do you want to go to the toilet? Should we wash your hands or face first? Can I help fasten your trousers?). Objects of reference, symbols, signs, gesture and verbal explanation will be given as necessary.

Intimate Care tasks should be carried out wherever possible by a member of staff who has an established positive relationship with the child. New members of staff should get to know the children in the classroom context before being involved in Intimate Care tasks.

In order to protect children's dignity and right to privacy, Intimate Care tasks will be carried out by one person unless two people are required for health and safety reasons. Children will be encouraged to perform tasks independently whenever appropriate e.g. children asking for assistance to wipe their bottom will be encouraged to try and do this for themselves.

Children will be changed whenever the need arises and as agreed under their care plan, staff will reassure children who need to be changed and help them remain relaxed, comfortable and safe.

## **Intimate Care tasks are considered an important part of the curriculum**

One of the Early Learning goals within the area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development states: 'manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.' The school therefore sees the development in this area as part of the overall EYFS curriculum. It is important however that this is achieved in partnership with parents and that both work collaboratively and consistently to help children develop independence as soon as possible. Personal independence also is valued as part of each child's essential curriculum throughout the school. We are committed to providing an opportunity to develop age/stage appropriate skills and help increase all children's independence and self-esteem.

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Staff members will respond positively and provide practical and emotional support to help children develop their self-help skills and work towards independence.

Children may ask for or require assistance to adjust and remove their own clothing when going to the toilet. Children will be encouraged to perform this task independently where possible and as part of the learning process staff will give assistance as appropriate with zips, buttons etc.

### **Guidance for Staff**

- Respond positively and provide practical and emotional support to children to enable them to develop their self-help skills towards independence
- Always give consideration for how best to respect children's privacy and dignity.
- Check for permission (i.e. care plan, if no permission is held - follow procedures under permission below.
- Be aware of children's individual needs and preferences, cultural and religious needs, allergies (i.e. individual care plans).
- Never undertake a task unless you are confident in your ability, if unsure about what to do ask a colleague for help (do not guess).
- Change children in the agreed, discreet area with all of necessary equipment available before you commence i.e. changing mat, protective gloves, wipes, nappies, change of clothes etc.
- Inform another member of staff that you are about to undertake intimate care
- Have regard to health and safety follow good hygiene practices at all times including:
  - never leave a child unattended in a toilet/changing area
  - use appropriate barrier materials including disposable glove/aprons
  - undertaken appropriate cleansing/disinfecting of surfaces
  - apply only creams supplied by the child's parents/carers
  - use child's individual supplies wherever possible (i.e. items supplied by parents)
  - ensure correct disposal of soiled materials/nappies
- Keep appropriate records i.e. a record to be kept of each intimate care episode, stored confidentially. (an example copy of a record is attached)

- Report any concerns in the usual way, for example safeguarding concern will follow the School Child Protection Procedures.
- If children ask for assistance to wipe their bottoms, encourage them, where appropriate, to perform this tasks themselves.
- If a member of staff enters a cubicle to assist a child the door should be left open. Children may close cubicle doors themselves for privacy.

### **Permission**

Intimate care for soiling will only be given to a child after the parents have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. All parents who have children in the school / preschool are therefore asked to give permission so that staff can clean and change their child if necessary.

If a parent has not given this consent, in the event of a child soiling themselves the school will contact the parents/carers or the emergency contact if necessary to give specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child and request them to come and carry this out if they do not wish a member of staff to perform the task. If a parent has not signed the consent form parents will need to be contacted for each occurrence.

If the parents/carers or emergency contact wishes to and is able to come within a few minutes, the child will be comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve their dignity until the parent/carer arrives. Children will not be left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. Children will remain dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school will seek to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for a staff member to clean and change the child and parents will be requested to sign the record on collection of their child.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Head Teacher must be consulted and will decide on the best course of action. Where the child is at risk or it is in their best interests, the Head Teacher will require staff to act appropriately and this may include the need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

Date: September 2024

Review date September 2025

Ratified by Governors – April 2023

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