



Intimate Care Policy

POLICY ORIGINATOR	MDSL	MONITORING & EVALUATION BY	MDSL
COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE	Standards	DATE APPROVED	July 2018
REVIEW CYCLE	3 Years	REVIEW PERIOD	Summer 2021

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GLF Schools are committed to safeguarding children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

In a school within the GLF Schools Multi-Academy Trust, teachers, teachers' assistants and nursery nurses may undertake care tasks of an intimate nature such as nappy changing, cleaning a child after soiling or wetting, support with medical conditions of an intimate nature. In such instances, it is important that great care is taken to maintain the child's dignity and safeguarding guidance is at the forefront of the staff member's mind.

Introduction

Staff who work with young children or children/young people* will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection/safeguarding issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at GLF Schools work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

GLF Schools is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. GLF Schools recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our Approach to Best Practice

All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection/Safeguarding and Health and Safety training) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for himself/herself as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. In some instances, individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans will include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present, although other staff may be aware of that care taking place on a need-to-know basis.

Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each child/young person will have an assigned member of staff, usually class teacher/form tutor, to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

The Protection of Children

Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to by all.

Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

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 appropriate manager/ designated person for child protection/safeguarding. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social care if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm. *See GLF Schools 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 GLF Schools Child Protection Policy and GLF Schools Managing Allegations against Staff Policy.*

** where 'children' are mentioned in this document, the term will also include young people.*