



Foxton Primary School
Intimate Care Policy
September 2024

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Introduction

Staff who work with young children or children/young people who have special needs, 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.

At Foxton Primary School, we take a person centred approach to caring for children, where we ensure that children's dignity is preserved and high levels of privacy, choice and control is provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high and current awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Foxton Primary School endeavour to 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 and Health 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.

Foxton Primary School 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. We recognise our 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 discomfort.

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 fully aware of best practice. To enable this best practice, we ensure that more than one member of staff works with a child requiring intimate care so that more than one adult is interacting with the child during the school day. 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. Where a child has sufficient understanding, 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 themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for

washing or wiping themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and health.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected and this will be given high priority. When a child needs help with intimate care, two members of staff will ideally be present. On occasions that this is not possible, the member of staff who is undertaking the intimate care will inform another staff member that this is taking place.

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 (if the child requires a plan) or within a separate record book. 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 a named senior member of staff 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. In the event of a child having an extremely high level of needs, it may not be possible for that child to communicate any concerns or issues. In such a case two members of staff will always be present.

The protection of children

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

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 designated person for child protection. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social services and/or the Police 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.

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. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, the Statement of Procedures in the Allegations policy will be followed.