

Boxford CEVCP School

Intimate Care Policy

Sept 25
Next review Sept 26

This policy document sets out the school's aims, principles and strategies regarding intimate care.

At Boxford CEVC Primary School, we recognise that all children have different rates of development and differing needs during their time at school.

The School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The school recognises that there is a need to treat all individuals with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in any way which causes distress.

Staff who work with children will recognise 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 issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Boxford CEVCP School work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

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) and are 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 themselves as they can from the start of school. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing 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.

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any educational setting and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious/cultural sensitivities.

Prior permission must be obtained from parents before intimate care procedures are carried out.

Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with individual Health Care Plans and any other plans that identify the support of intimate care.

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. The intimate care of a child will be overseen by a second adult.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of different carers.

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 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.

Protective clothing in the form of gloves (and disposable aprons) will be used by staff attending to a child. All waste will be disposed of through medical waste bins and bags.

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Pupils' Needs

All needs will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately. Any child who has personal care or continence needs will be attended to in a designated area within school. Parents will only be contacted in extreme cases where soiling is severe and/or linked to illness eg. sickness and diarrhoea, or when a child refuses to let a member of staff help change their clothing.

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 manager/ designated person for child protection. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social care 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, all necessary procedures will be followed [see Child Protection Procedures].

This policy forms part of our safeguarding policies. For further guidance please read our Safeguarding Policy.