



St George's Catholic Primary School

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Achieve, Believe, Care

Safeguarding Statement

At St George's Catholic Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at St George's Catholic Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

This policy will be reviewed every year or as required by changes in legislation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent will undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam).

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the pupil's needs. The pupil's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There should always be a high awareness of possible safeguarding and child protection issues. As such, staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents, guardians and where appropriate, health professionals, to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible. The following document is based on best practice in school settings.

St George's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise there is a need to treat **all** pupils with respect especially when intimate care is given. No pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

The management of all pupils with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The pupil's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care will be trained to do so (including Safeguarding, Child Protection and Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and be fully aware of best practise. Where an assessment made by a physiotherapist/occupational therapist determines special apparatus should be used to assist such care, this will be accommodated. Staff will be supported to adapt their practise in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes.

Each pupil will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each pupil to do as much for his/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the pupil responsibility for washing themselves.

Where appropriate, individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for each individual pupil to suit their individual circumstances.

Each pupil's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a pupil is toileted.

Wherever possible, one pupil will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound rationale for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented.

2. THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

St George's Catholic Primary School safeguarding procedures and Worcestershire procedures will be adhered to at all times. All pupils 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 designated named persons for child protection. If a pupil becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be investigated and outcomes recorded. If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary safeguarding and child protection procedures and protocols will be followed. Parents/guardians will be contacted and informed as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Where deemed appropriate, staffing schedules will be altered until there is a resolution to the issue(s). During this time the child's needs remain of paramount importance. School will seek further specialist advice from outside agencies where necessary to maximise best outcomes for the child.

3. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Health and Safety

When attending to the intimate care of pupils, staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety policy. Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a pupil who has soiled. Any soiled waste (urinary or faecal) should be placed in a yellow clinical waste disposal bag, which will be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied regularly and it will be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service.

Special/complex health needs

Pupils with special/complex health needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each pupil. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the pupil, those with parental responsibility and the school should be easily understood and clearly recorded.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements in place for those who require assistance) in regular reviews of these intimate care arrangements.

Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children, need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with children this will be in response to the child's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the pupil, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always make considered judgements when executing their duties, be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact will be open to scrutiny.

Any physical contact with an individual pupil is likely to be open to question unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the pupil, the school and those with parental responsibility.

Children with complex health and/or special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each pupil. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Consultation with colleagues and, where possible, parents/guardians will take place where any deviation from the agreed arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it will be fully documented and reported.

Extra caution is required by staff where it is known a pupil has previously suffered abuse or neglect. In this case the pupil may view physical contact to be associated with such previous experiences and may result in staff being more vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children may present as extremely needy and actively seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the pupil, minimising any negative experience. In such cases ensuring supervision will help to protect staff from possible allegations.

Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases trained staff should use the minimum force necessary for the minimum length of time required for the pupil to regain self-control using accredited training techniques. In all cases of restraint each incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of and adhere to all school's policies on the use of force to control or restrain and positive handling.

Under no circumstances is it permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment, to modify behaviour, or to make a pupil comply with an instruction. Physical force of this nature is unacceptable and is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

Pupil in distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and is not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the pupil needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. It may be more suitable to involve the pupil's relative, school's pastoral support staff or, if available, a counsellor. To minimize the risk of misinterpretation/allegation, particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice, from Mrs R Palfreyman (Acting Headteacher) and / or the designated named persons in school.

The named persons are:

- Mrs R Palfreyman
- Mrs J. Cooper

First Aid and intimate care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other pupil is present. The pupil's dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and must be made aware of the task being undertaken. Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. For conditions known to school, administered first aid procedures should be in line with agreed care plans.

Changing clothes

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless the pupil's needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising pupils in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore, staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct.

Out of school trips, clubs, etc

Employees should take particular care when supervising and providing intimate care for pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting, off site visit or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff and volunteers involved in such activities should be familiar with all relevant school policies and all Worcestershire guidance regarding out of school activities. To ensure pupil's safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on field trips, residential etc. It is important to exercise caution to ensure a pupil is not compromised or that the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

4. MONITORING

This policy, its implementation and effectiveness is regularly monitored by the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body and is reviewed/ratified each year. This ensures we meet our statutory obligations.

Appendix 1

(Letter to parent(s) outlining policy/procedures and their consent to carry out 'intimate care')

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding occasions when your child may need support with intimate care* routines. We have drawn up the attached guidelines to ensure that your child's needs are met in a professional and dignified manner at all times.

***Definition of Intimate Care**

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

Further information may be obtained in the Intimate Care Policy which can be found on the school website.

I would be grateful if you could sign and return the slip below once you have read the guidelines and agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' procedures when necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

I have read a copy of the School's 'Personal and Intimate Care Policy.'

I agree to the school carrying out 'intimate care' on my son/daughter when necessary.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Name of child: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

TOILET TRAINING/CHANGING RECORD
(To be completed after each 'intimate care' activity)

Page No. _____

Child's Name	Date and Time	Comment e.g. what was done to the child.	Completed by