Bushfield Road Infant School

Intimate Care Policy

Date approved: November 2026
Review date: November 2027

1. Purpose

Bushfield Road Infant School is committed to treating every pupil with kindness and respect. Intimate care must protect a pupil's dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing while helping them become as independent as they can.

This policy covers personal care involving a pupil's intimate body areas, including:

- changing nappies or pull-ups;
- helping a pupil clean themselves after using the toilet;
- changing wet or soiled clothing;
- support with continence needs;
- other personal care agreed with the school and the pupil's parent or carer.

It applies to all staff and volunteers who may be involved in intimate care, including in the early years and key stage 1.

2. Principles

Staff will:

- explain what they are going to do in words the pupil can understand and seek their cooperation;
- respect the pupil's privacy and dignity, keeping them covered as far as practicable;
- encourage the pupil to do as much as they safely can for themselves;
- provide care calmly, sensitively and without showing embarrassment or disapproval;

- respect the pupil's age, understanding, communication needs, cultural and religious needs;
- follow the pupil's care plan where one is in place;
- report and record concerns, injuries or unusual behaviour in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Intimate care will never be used as a punishment, or withheld to shame or pressure a pupil.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that suitable procedures, facilities and staff arrangements are in place.

The DSL is responsible for responding to safeguarding concerns or disclosures arising during intimate care and ensuring these are recorded and followed up under the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff providing intimate care must:

- follow this policy and any individual care plan;
- use only agreed, necessary care procedures;
- protect the pupil's dignity and privacy;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- make accurate records where required and report concerns promptly.

Parents and carers should share relevant information about a pupil's care needs, routines, communication, medical needs and any changes that may affect care at school.

4. Individual care plans

Where a pupil has regular or additional intimate care needs, the school will work with the parent or carer to agree a written care plan. The pupil should be involved in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.

The plan should record, where relevant:

- the care the pupil needs and when it is likely to be needed;
- the pupil's preferences, communication and signs of discomfort or distress;
- what the pupil can do independently and what support is required;
- any relevant medical, allergy, skin-care or mobility information;
- the agreed procedure and suitable facilities;
- arrangements for spare clothing, nappies or other supplies;
- who is authorised and trained to provide the care;
- how parents or carers will be contacted and how care will be recorded;

- the date for review and who will take part.

Plans will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if the pupil's needs change. A care plan does not replace the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

5. Routine care and unexpected accidents

Not every toileting accident can be planned for. Staff may provide reasonable, immediate assistance to maintain a pupil's comfort, hygiene and dignity. They should inform the parent or carer and record the care provided in line with school procedures.

If a pupil regularly needs intimate care, or their needs change, the school will speak with the family and consider whether an individual care plan is needed.

A pupil who is soiled or wet will not be left in that condition while the school waits for a parent or carer to arrive. If the pupil needs care beyond what staff can safely provide, staff will contact the family promptly and agree how the pupil's immediate needs will be met.

6. Safe working practice

Before providing care, staff should explain what will happen and invite the pupil to cooperate. Staff should pay attention to the pupil's verbal and non-verbal responses. If a pupil becomes distressed or refuses, staff should pause where it is safe to do so, reassure the pupil and consider whether another familiar member of staff can help. Staff must not force a pupil or continue in a way that is not necessary to meet an immediate hygiene need.

When providing care, staff should:

- use the designated changing or toilet area where available;
- ensure the pupil is appropriately supervised while maintaining privacy;
- follow hygiene procedures, including handwashing and using suitable protective equipment where needed;
- use the pupil's own supplies where appropriate;
- avoid taking photographs or using personal devices;
- dispose of nappies, wipes and soiled materials safely and hygienically;
- clean the area and equipment after use;
- return the pupil to learning or play as soon as they are comfortable.

Where possible, staff should work in a way that is open and accountable, for example by ensuring a colleague knows they are providing care. This does not mean compromising the pupil's privacy. A second adult is not routinely required for every care episode, but the school may make different arrangements where an individual risk assessment or care plan indicates this is necessary.

7. Recording and communication

Staff should record regular intimate care in the school's agreed record. Records should include the date and time, the care provided, the staff involved and any relevant observations or concerns. Parents or carers should be informed in accordance with the pupil's care plan and school arrangements.

Any unexplained injury, unusual mark, significant change in behaviour, disclosure or concern arising during care must be reported to the DSL without delay. Staff should record the facts as soon as possible, using the school's safeguarding recording system and procedures. They must not investigate or promise confidentiality.

8. Safeguarding and professional boundaries

Intimate care must only be provided by staff acting within their role and following this policy and the pupil's care plan. Staff must maintain professional boundaries and avoid unnecessary physical contact or exposure.

If a pupil makes a disclosure, shows distress or behaves in a way that causes concern, staff must respond calmly, listen and report the matter to the DSL in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Any allegation or concern about an adult's conduct must be reported through the school's procedures, including to the headteacher or appropriate safeguarding contact as required.

9. Staff training and support

The school will ensure that staff who provide intimate care understand this policy, relevant care plans, hygiene expectations and safeguarding procedures. Additional training will be arranged where a pupil's needs require specific skills or knowledge.

10. Review

The headteacher will review this policy annually, and sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance, school arrangements or pupils' needs. The school will consider feedback from pupils, parents and staff when reviewing how intimate care is provided.

Sources

- Department for Education, *Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers* (current version).
- Department for Education, *Keeping children safe in education 2025*. (gov.uk)