

At Forfar Education, we recognise that intimate/personal care requires staff to be respectful of children's needs. In supporting children with their intimate care needs, we recognise that the preservation of dignity and a high level of privacy, choice and control are of paramount importance

Definition of Intimate Care

'Intimate care' refers to tasks associated with bodily functions, bodily products, personal hygiene, and direct or indirect contact with a child. Intimate care may involve one or more of the following:

- Cleaning a child who has wet or soiled themselves, or who requires changing during a session in EYFS.
- Cleaning a child who has vomited on themselves, or who feels unwell.
- Supporting a child in nursery with dressing/undressing.
- Assisting a child who requires medical care and is unable to perform this unaided.

Purpose of the Guidance

The purpose of this policy is to foster safer working practices for intimate and personal care. While respecting the dignity of the child or young person requiring adult support, it is essential to uphold the rights and principles outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This policy applies to all children in the EYFS who may require support for intimate or personal care from an adult on a daily or occasional basis. Staff must approach intimate/personal care tasks with sensitivity and care, as there is considerable variation in children's development. Staff must be respectful and aware of children's needs and always maintain their dignity.

The nursery must ensure that all staff performing intimate/personal care tasks follow best practices while adhering to the appropriate developmental level and understanding of the child.

Legislation

This policy supports staff in meeting the following legal requirements and standards:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Framework
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Education Health Care Plans 37–50.

The Equality Act (2010) prohibits discrimination in the arrangements made for deciding who is offered admission, the terms on which they are admitted, and by not admitting a person to a nursery. Nursery's are not allowed to ask parents to come to change their child if the child has a recognised disability, as this would be a violation of the Act. Leaving a child soiled for any length of time is also considered a safeguarding issue, as it puts the child at risk of harm.

Facilities

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework stipulates that providers must ensure:

- There are suitable hygienic changing facilities for all children in nappies.
- There is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, spare clothes, and other necessary items.

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Children's safeguarding needs to be balanced with their privacy. When children are having their nappies changed, or are learning to use the toilet, a member of staff has to be present. However, consideration needs to be given to who else is present and what can be seen. It is important to respect children's privacy wherever this is possible, without compromising on safeguarding.

All staff responsible for carrying out intimate/personal care procedures must have been selected and vetted according to the required standards (regulated activity DBS check). While there is no legal requirement for a second staff member to be present during the intimate care process, it is best practice to ensure that another appropriate adult is in sight or sound and aware of the task being carried out.

Management of Intimate/Personal Care Support

Staff should ensure that they have agreed on the procedure for providing support for intimate care, including discussing specific issues around toileting in a private meeting with parents/carers before the child's admission to nursery. Where reasonably practical, a child's key worker will carry out intimate care routines. It is important to note that older pupils, work experience students, parents, and volunteers should never be involved in providing intimate or personal care to students.

Procedure for Support in Nursery/Setting

In certain circumstances, and where the individual needs of a child require it, an intimate care plan will need to be agreed upon by both the nursery and parents, outlining the specific needs of the child and any necessary training for staff. If a child has complex needs, a more specialised care plan may be required in consultation with medical professionals.

Parents/carers will be consulted to create a home/nursery intimate/personal care support plan, ensuring a collaborative partnership when children are attending nursery.

Reasonable Adjustments

Nurserys should ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to meet the intimate/personal care needs of children with delayed development in the same way they would address any other developmental delay (e.g. language development). Nurseries should engage with families and take care to ensure that both the child and the parents feel supported and confident in the arrangements.

Where appropriate, nurseries should contact health professionals (e.g. health visitors) if there are concerns about a child's intimate/personal care development.

Best Practice Guidelines for Intimate and Personal Care

- Staff should adhere to the nursery's intimate/personal care policy.
- All staff should make colleagues aware of any intimate care tasks being undertaken.
- Staff should explain to the child what is happening before any care procedures begin.
- Any variations from the agreed procedure or care plan should be documented and communicated with the pupil and their parents.
- Always ensure that the child's privacy and dignity are maintained and avoid any intrusive behaviour.
- Staff should announce their intention before entering changing rooms or spaces where intimate care is provided.

Staff should only remain in the room for the duration necessary to meet the pupil's needs.

Adults Should Not

- Change or assist with toileting in the presence of other children or in full view.
- Assist with intimate/personal care tasks that the child is capable of doing independently.

Conclusion

The implementation of this policy ensures that children are treated with dignity and respect during intimate care tasks. The nursery/nursery is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory environment for all children, regardless of their intimate care needs.

Policy Owner: Group Head of Early Years

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