

Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

Morpeth First School is responsible for the care of all children, whatever their needs or difficulties, including children with additional learning and physical needs who have an increased dependency and require practical support with their intimate care needs at school.

This 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 the need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given and that no child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or discomfort.

The staff at Morpeth First School recognise that Intimate Care is a high risk activity in terms of abuse and it is particularly important that there are clear guidelines in Intimate Care to protect those being cared for and those staff providing this care. The purpose of the Intimate Care Policy is therefore to ensure the safeguarding of children and staff alike, and apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children at Morpeth First School.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate Care is any care which involves supporting or carrying out a personal care activity (such as washing, toileting or cleaning after a toileting accident), that many children are able to carry out for themselves, but which some children are unable to do because of physical disabilities or special education needs, including learning needs, medical needs or conditions, or developmental issues.

Care may also involve help with drinking, eating, dressing, changing or administering medicine such as insulin injections, Epipens or other medications that require invasive procedures.

In most cases, Intimate Care will involve procedures to support personal hygiene. In other cases, such as the administration of medicines, a person suitably trained and assessed will undertake the procedure. Additional training will be addressed through the school and relevant outside agencies.

It is generally expected that most children will be toilet trained and out of nappies before they begin at school or nursery. However, it is inevitable from time to time that some children will have accidents and need to be attended to. In addition to this, an increasing number of children and young people have medical conditions or additional needs that result in their need for adult assistance for personal and intimate care tasks.

Aims

- To outline good practice during Intimate Care tasks so that we can distinguish between good and poor care practices
- To protect the children and the staff involved in Intimate Care procedures and tasks
- To outline an effective system, therefore ensuring a consistent approach throughout the school and by all staff
- To work with parents to make a plan to meet the Intimate Care needs of children

Principles underlying Intimate Care Policy

This document strongly embraces the principles of Every Child Matters to ensure that:

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual
- Every child has the right to remain healthy
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs
- Every child has the right to information and support to enable him or her to make informed and appropriate choices
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs
- Every child (and parent) has the right to information about procedures for any complaint or queries he or she may have about Intimate Care.

This document also recognises the responsibilities of all professionals in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act, which requires that any child with additional needs affecting his/her ability to meet their own needs and carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

Our Approach to Best Practice

To ensure that consistent, respectful and supportive Intimate Care is given to any child requiring this level of support, Intimate Care is carefully managed and reviewed regularly by staff, parents and outside agencies.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), it is expected that most children will be toilet trained. In order to help children to become aware of their bodily needs and respond to them in time, children needing the toilet are allowed to go, although as they move into Reception they are encouraged to go at regular times such as break times. The school will always seek to support toileting plans or programmes implemented at home or by outside agencies and GPs.

Permission to clean and change a child is sought as children enter the EYFS and slips are kept on record. All EYFS parents and carers are encouraged to provide spare clothing, but where a child continues to have toileting accidents, parents and carers will be asked to provide multiple changes of clothing and baby wipes. At all times, staff pay attention to the needs and comfort of all children and therefore a child will never be willingly left in soiled clothes. It is always intended that the child will not experience any negativity following toileting accidents but only positive encouragement and praise for any progress made. We believe that this will support the child in developing personal care skills for themselves.

Throughout the school, general good practice is needed in order to be prepared for any times when Intimate Care is needed. However, in the case of some children it may be that Intimate Care is regularly required and therefore the first step is to identify these children and then prepare an Intimate Care Plan specific to that child. Careful consideration will be given to such plans and arrangements will be agreed by all care-givers and children.

Guidelines

1. Children and their parents should have confidence in the staff

All staff involved in Intimate Care routines will have been police checked and will receive appropriate training to carry out this aspect of their work. Parents will receive a copy of the School's Intimate Care Policy and will be offered an opportunity to discuss their child's needs with an appropriate member of staff.

2. Carers should be aware of the abilities of the child

The child should be enabled and encouraged, as far as is reasonably possible, to contribute to his/her own intimate care

3. Ensure privacy, appropriate to the child's age and gender

The school takes the view that the issue of privacy is important. Many Intimate Care tasks are carried out by two people, that the child knows well and is comfortable with, particularly when changing and cleaning children with additional needs other than medical or physical.

4. Children have the right to be respected

Respect of the child's body and integrity should be included in all care procedures. Ideally, someone who has a positive long-term relationship with the child should carry out intimate care tasks. New members of staff should get to know the children in the classroom context before getting involved in Intimate Care tasks.

5. A strong focus should be evident on choice and decision making skills

Wherever appropriate, decision making should be an integral part of the process - e.g. Do you want to go to the toilet or not? Should we wash your hands or face first? Can I help fasten your trousers?

6. Pupils will be prepared and involved in what is going to happen

Staff will raise the child's awareness of the process. Objects of reference, symbols, signs, gesture and verbal explanation will be given as appropriate

7. Intimate Care tasks are not an interruption to the timetable

These practices should be valued as part of each child's essential curriculum. They are an opportunity to develop independent and age-appropriate skills, increase dignity and to raise self-esteem.

8. Never do any task unless you are confident in your ability to do it

Never guess; ask a colleague to help.

9. If you are concerned - report it

Intimate Care tasks should never be approached light heartedly. If a child has soreness or something to cause you concern, follow School's Child Protection Procedures.

10. Health and Safety Issues

Barrier materials will always be used e.g. disposable gloves. Appropriate Lifting and Handling Procedures will be followed when necessary. Screens and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the child is not seen by more staff than necessary and not by other children.

Intimate Care Resources

School will seek parental views on practices at home and liaise closely with parents and carers to ensure consistency, support and progress for the child. Preferred materials will be used and parents will be encouraged to resource their child's needs whenever possible, though the school endeavours to provide clothing for emergencies.

This Policy was agreed by the staff and Governing Body of Morpeth First School on

It will be reviewed by February 2018

Signatures

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors

Date