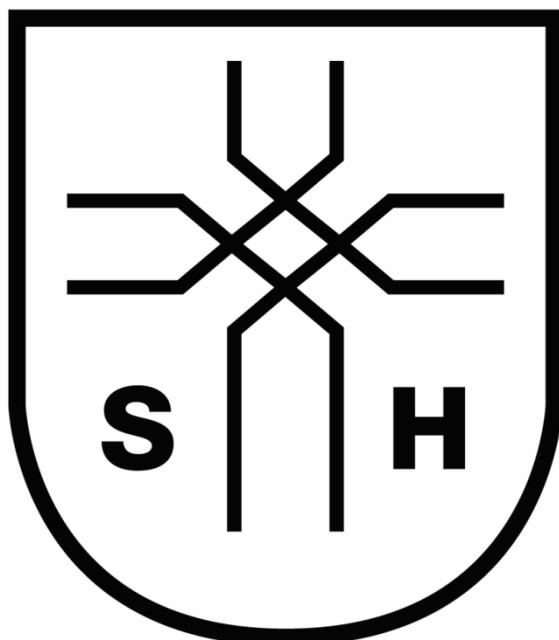


Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School



Guidance for Intimate Care

Date approved	March 2020
Date of next review	March 2022

Equality Act Statement:

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Please refer to St John the Baptist Multi Academy Trust Equality & Diversity Policy

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. Purpose and Aims

The school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

The Governing body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

2. Definition

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 pupils 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. It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

Intimate care can include:

- feeding
- oral care
- washing
- dressing/undressing
- toileting
- menstrual care
- gastrostomy feeding
- first aid
- supervision of a child involved in intimate care

This intimate care guidance should be read in conjunction with the school's policies as below;

- Safeguarding policy
- Whistle blowing guidance
- Health & Safety policy
- Special Education Needs policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Physical intervention guidance

The Governing Body 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. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have a health care plan in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.

Members of staff must be given the choice as to whether they are prepared to provide intimate care to pupils.

All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.

The Intimate Care Guidance has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

3. Principles of intimate care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the policy and guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe
- Every child has the right to personal privacy
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible

4. Best Practice - Pupils

Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have written agreements, i.e. health care plans or intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. The aim would be for the plan to be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil should also be present wherever possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips.

Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the pupil and parents/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan.

Where a care plan is not in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself).

Accurate records should also be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care; these can be brief but should, as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case. These records will be kept in the child's file and available to parents/carers on request.

Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.

All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.

The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

5. Best Practice – Staff

Staff who provide intimate care are trained in personal care (e.g. moving and handling) according to the needs of the pupil. Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the pupil and explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their ages. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication.

An individual member of staff will approach another appropriate adult when they need to assist a pupil with intimate care. Staff should never be alone when they assist with the intimate care of a pupil.

Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a pupil of the same gender, there is research which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors; ideally, every pupil should have a choice regarding the member of staff. There might also be occasions when the member of staff has good reason not to work with a pupil. It is important that the process is transparent so that all issues stated above can be respected; this can best be achieved through a meeting with all parties, as described above, to agree what actions will be taken, where and by whom.

Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.

All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Health & Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products.

6. Safeguarding

The Governors and staff at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School recognise that pupils with special needs are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

The school's child protection procedures will be adhered to.

From a safeguarding perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Safeguarding Designated Officer for Child Protection or Head teacher. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to the Local Authority Designated Officer if appropriate, in accordance with the school's child protection procedures. Parents/carers will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made but this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child at increased risk of suffering significant harm.

If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Head teacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Head teacher) and outcomes recorded.

Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue/s is/are resolved so that the child's need remain paramount.

Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Head teacher (or to the Local Authority Designated Officer if the concern is about the Head teacher) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to.

Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Head teacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

7. Working with children of the opposite sex

There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice of care worker for all their intimate care.

The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

Where possible, same sex staff should provide intimate care, particularly for post puberty young people.

8. Medical Procedures

Pupils who require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures will be discussed with the parents/carers, documented in the health care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained and are in agreement to conduct the procedure.

It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.

Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with LA guidance. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

9. Massage

Massage is now commonly used with pupils who have complex needs and/or medical needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation.

It is recommended that massage undertaken by school staff should be confined to parts of the body such as the hands, shoulders, feet and face in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and pupils. A shoulder press is a regular part of the daily sensory circuit for children attending. Every child should be given the right to refuse this section of the circuit and for adults to respect this decision.

Care plans should include specific information for those supporting children with bespoke medical/sensory needs.