Woods Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

Please note that parents/guardians will be notified at the earliest opportunity if their child has had a toileting incident (this may be at the end of the school day). It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the people noted on the contact list on the Data Collection Form will be telephoned in the order that their names appear.

Introduction

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard all children and staff in Woods Primary School. It applies to anyone involved in the intimate care of children.

What does Intimate Care mean?

Intimate Care refers to any activity which may be required to meet the personal care needs of an individual child. It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child. The staff, in turn, have a responsibility to work in partnership with the children and parents/guardians.

This can involve;

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing.
- Providing comfort or support for an upset or distressed child.
- Assisting a pupil who is wet/soiled or has vomited.
- Assisting a pupil who requires medical care who is unable to help themselves.

Aims

The aim of the policy is to;

- Safeguard all children considering their individual needs.
- Ensure each child is treated with dignity and respect and given as much privacy as is appropriate to their age and situation.
- Safeguard all adults who are required to be involved in any aspect of a child's intimate care needs.
- Ensure each child is involved and consulted in their own personal intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Ensure that levels of intimate care are as consistent as possible.

- Ensure that parents/guardians are consulted with regards to the intimate care of their children.

Principles and Procedures in the event of your child requiring Intimate Care

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop safety skills and enhance their self-esteem. In all matters arising concerning intimate care the issues will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and the young person's right to privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times.

(1) Supporting dressing/ undressing (due to wetting/ soiling/ illness)

- Staff should always encourage children to attempt undressing/ dressing unaided.
- Staff should always ensure they have notified another colleague of what is taking place and, if possible, the colleague remains nearby.
- Always give the child the opportunity to change in private.
- *If staff are concerned in any way parents/guardians will be consulted or sent for and asked to assist their child.*

(2) Providing Comfort or Support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly in the Foundation Stage).

- Where a child requires physical support, staff need to be aware that **physical contact must be kept to a minimum.**
- *When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff must ensure that at no time the act can be considered intimate.*
- If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is **suitable to the age, gender and the situation of the child.**
- *If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way that communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.*
- If a child requires physical comfort from a member of staff, this should **always be done in the presence of others.**

(3) Wetting and Soiling

Please note that parents/guardians will be notified at the earliest opportunity if their child has a soiling incident. The school will contact the parents/guardians or other emergency contacts giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child.

- If a child refuses assistance at any stage and cannot or will not change themselves then a parent/guardian will be contacted. The child will be supervised, comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent/guardian arrives.

- *If a parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot attend, the school will seek the verbal consent from a parent/guardian for staff to clean and change the child.*
- A small supply of underwear and school clothing will be kept in school.
- If a child's underwear and clothing needs to be changed due to a wetting or soiling incident, the child will be asked to change themselves in private and carry out the act themselves.
- If a child is unable to change their underwear perhaps due to soiling (as is likely P1/2 and perhaps KS1), the child will be asked if they would like help with this and two adult staff members will assist them with this.
- In all instances a record of the incident will be kept in the school and the parent/guardian will be informed by telephone or at home time.
- Wet/soiled clothing will be put into a plastic bag and sent home with the child. The 'borrowed' school clothing should be washed and sent back to school as soon as possible.

- *When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.*
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Medical Care

- Pupils requiring short term or long term medical care, involving intimate care, will receive this care in line with the individual child's 'Care Plan'. The content of any 'Care Plan' will be **discussed and agreed with the relevant medical body and parents/guardians beforehand.**
- If it is necessary for appropriate staff in school to provide the level of medical care required, the staff member/ members, **if in agreement**, will receive the appropriate training.
- Written permission must always be received from the person with parental responsibility before any medical procedure can be 'carried out' or any medication administered.

- *If needed, the school will seek the necessary advice from medical professionals or the EA.*

Guidelines for Staff

If a child requires assistance involving intimate care, as previously outlined and list of contacts are unavailable, staff will ensure:

- Parents/guardians are informed as soon as possible.
- Another member of staff is informed and/ or involved about the action required.
- Protective gloves are worn (as appropriate).
- The child is consulted and their wishes/feelings are respected at all times.

- *They are aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.*
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible.
- All physical contact should be kept to a minimum when assisting a child. However, a staff member may be required to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.
- Privacy is given to the child at all times.

- *They complete a record of the incident on an intimate care form (in Staff Room).*
- *Phone call made to parents to inform of wetting/soiling incident (or minor incidents can be reported to parents at Home Time).*

Hygiene

All staff are familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection and must follow basic hygiene procedures to avoid risk.

They have access to protective, disposable gloves which are stored in the Staff Room.

Safeguarding Staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and must therefore take precautions to avoid this possibility. In addition to the Guidelines outlined previously they should:

- *Ensure all parents from P1-P4 sign a permission slip at the beginning of each academic year to give consent for help to be given to their child, (See Appendix 1).*
- Complete an 'Intimate Care Form' and date and sign what has taken place.
- Report any marks, bruises, discolouration's or swelling observed to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT).
- Report any unusual emotional or behavioural responses by the child to the DT.
- If they themselves accidently hurt a child when assisting with any form of Intimate Care they must reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the DT.

Safeguarding Children

All staff members working unsupervised with the children in Woods Primary School are vetted and must gain 'Access NI' clearance before beginning to work in the school. Children's rights to privacy will always be respected when dealing with matters of intimate care.

Review

The procedures within this policy will be reviewed bi-annually as part of our overall Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Please note

In relation to a soiling incident if parents/guardians do not wish for their child to be treated as outlined within this policy, we ask that they note this in writing for the attention of the school Principal.

COVID 19 Guidelines

- *A mask/visor should be worn when a child requires assistance to change.*
- *Hands should be washed prior to and after giving assistance.*
- *Uniform that is returned to school should be aired for 72 hours before it is put away or used again.*

Signed: _____ (Principal)

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

Date: _____

Woods Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

Dear Parent/Guardian

As part of our duty to safeguard your child/children we have an Intimate Care Policy. This policy refers to any activity which may be required in school to meet the personal care needs of an individual child. Please read the policy on the school website.

This policy applies to children within P1-P4. Parents/Guardians are asked to complete the consent form for the new academic year.

Mrs K White

Principal

I _____ (parent/guardian) of

_____ (child) give permission

for any of the Staff in Woods Primary School to aid my child in their intimate care as outlined in the policy.

I have read and understood the Intimate Care policy.

Signed: _____ (parent/guardian)

Date: _____