

Intimate Care Policy

(Pastoral Care)

2021



Sandbrook Nursery School

Chairperson of Board of Governors: _____

Date: _____

Pastoral Care Policy

Agree Date	Review Date	Person Responsible for Review
Reviewed 2021	2023	Principal

Intimate Care Policy

The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff and follows the guidelines distributed by "Intimate Care and Policy Guidelines Regarding Children" document (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/intimate-care-policy.pdf>)

Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed every year taking into account the views of all relevant parties.

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes in Sandbrook Nursery School and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children. Our Intimate Care Policy is part of our collective pastoral care policies. This policy is in line with multi-agency guidance as found in the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Procedures Manual. (This manual replaces the ACPC Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures that were issued in 2005). It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

'Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.' (2.0, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures). In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Sandbrook Nursery 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 that there is a need to treat all our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

1. Assisting a child to **change his/her clothes**
2. **Changing or washing a child** who has soiled him / herself
3. Assisting with **toileting** issues
4. Supervising a child involved in **intimate self-care**
5. Providing **first aid** assistance
6. **Providing comfort** to an upset or distressed child
7. **Feeding** a child
8. Providing **oral care** to a child
9. Assisting a child who requires a specific **medical procedure** and who is not able to carry this out unaided. *

* In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam.) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- ✓ Every child has a 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;
- ✓ All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- ✓ All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account; and
- ✓ Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Assisting a child to change his / her clothes

On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he / she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his / her clothes etc.

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child and informed if the child becomes distressed.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
- School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare clothes for this purpose. (A supply of clean clothes should be kept on the child's peg in the hall area provided by the child's parents on their first day at school).
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will support the child in doing so (Intimate Care permission form completed in child's file by parent).
- If staff feel that it is too intimate to clean or the child does not want the staff's help then a parent will be contacted.

- If the emergency contact can come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.
- If the emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child. If none of the contacts can be reached the Principal is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.
- The member of Staff who has assisted a pupil with intimate care will

Child Protection/Safeguarding Guidelines

- Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary. Get verbal agreement to proceed - **CARE - CONCERN - COMMUNICATE.**

Pastoral Care Procedures

- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him / her.
- Be responsive to any distress shown.

Basic hygiene routines

- Always wear protective disposable gloves.
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents.

In the case of nursery children, in order to avoid any unnecessary distress, a member of staff may assist the child, with a colleague in attendance, unless a parent has requested otherwise or if the child is reluctant. Parents will be contacted as soon as it is practical to do so.

3. Providing comfort or support to a child:

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff.

Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

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 which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

4. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Our Administration of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school.

Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school. A small number of children will have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements

included in our Administration of Medications Policy will have an Individual 'Care Plan'. This Care Plan will be formulated by the relevant medical body. If required, school staff will receive appropriate training.

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children are vetted by the Education Authority. This includes students on work placement and volunteers (although they will never be left alone with a child). Vetting includes criminal record checks and two references.

Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy and other Pastoral Care Policies of the school are involved in the intimate care of children.

Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. **Only in emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school.** Parents would then be contacted immediately.

The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff.

1. **Involve the child in the intimate care.** Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and, where possible, give choices. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. **Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.** Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child.
3. **Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.** As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.

4. **Be aware of your own limitations.** Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

5. **Promote positive self-esteem and body image.** Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

6. **If you have any concerns you must report them.** If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling report it immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- Report any concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record;
- Parents must be informed about any concerns.

Communication With Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress children may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:

- Make eye contact at the child's level;
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- Wait for response;
- Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response; and treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

Sandbrook Nursery School	
Parental permission for Intimate Care	
Child:	
DOB:	
Address:	
Parent/Guardians Name:	
<p>Should it be necessary, I give permission for the child named above to receive intimate care (e.g. help with changing or following toileting).</p> <p>I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to be independent.</p> <p>I understand that I will be informed discretely should the occasion arise.</p> <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Adult with parental responsibility for: _____</p> <p>Additional information:</p>	

Record of Intimate Care



Childs Name: _____

Date and time	Incident - what, where etc	Action Taken	Staff involved	Parents signature	Phone call to parent	Note sent home Doc no:

Appendix 3

Sandbrook Nursery School		
INTIMATE CARE PLAN		
Pupil:	DOB:	
Details of assistance required:		
Timetable:		
Persons assisting:		
Alternative arrangements:		
Location/Equipment:		
	Signature	Date
Parent		
Staff		
Staff		
Staff		
Principal		

Sandbrook Nursery School Incident Form

Childs name:
Date:
Teacher/Assistant Attending:
Nature of Incident:
Details of Incident:
Incident log completed: yes/no
Staff Signature:
Staff Signature:
Parent/Guardian Signature:

Changing and Intimate Care Statement

(Included in Induction Information)

At Sandbrook Nursery School, we provide a purely play based curriculum to very young children. We recognise that wetting/soiling accidents may occur from time to time, necessitating a change of clothing to ensure the comfort, well being and health of the child.

These 'accidents' may arise from toileting issues/mishaps or may occur during curriculum activities such as messy/water based /outdoor play. Whatever the reason, all staff at Sandbrook Nursery School are equipped to provide appropriate care when assisting a child in the Nursery School with a change of clothing should it be required.

Both bathrooms -keep a stock of clean, dry clothes and undergarments should a child need a set of clothing to change into, however, these are a limited stock. We also encourage parents to supply their own change of clothing as we recognise that some children may feel reassured by being changed into their own, familiar clothing. This change of clothes should be kept in the red bag on their child's coat peg. Before beginning a changing procedure, staff will always check to see if a change is available on the child's coat peg- if not, school clothing is used for the change. If no clothing is available staff will contact parents. Only permanent staff members will assist a pupil with a clothing change. In order to safeguard the child and the staff member, another staff member is always made aware that a changing procedure is about to commence.

Whilst children in the Nursery may be at differing developmental stages regarding toileting or managing clothing, staff will always offer an appropriate amount of assistance with changing, (staff do not routinely provide assistance such as wiping bottoms for example), matching it to the child's developmental level in toileting and managing clothing. Staff at all times provide a loving, caring approach to supporting progress the child's towards independence.

A log is kept noting the date, time and details of change reason/action taken- this is countersigned by the observing staff member. Parents are given a written slip at the end of the session, detailing the change and the reason why it was necessary.

Should it become apparent over a period of time that a child is not fully toilet trained and is having frequent toileting accidents then this will be raised with parents by the class teacher with a view to putting a suitable plan in place to support the child's developmental progress in toilet training. In some circumstances this may mean reducing the school day so that the child can benefit from an emotionally and developmentally appropriate toilet training experience. Parents will also be advised to contact their Health Visitor for advice and support.

Parents offering toileting support to their own child in school

Staff of Sandbrook Nursery School will be alert to situations which may arise at the beginning/end of school day or during school events where parents may accompany their own child into the school bathrooms when another child is present in the bathroom. Parents are issued guidance at the beginning of the school year that they should not place themselves into such a situation, but should ask a staff member who would be happy to accompany them in the bathroom area. Should a staff member be aware that a parent is in the bathroom at the same time as

another child, they should ensure that they enter/join the parent in the bathroom area to provide safeguarding support.

Intimate Care which may include Nappy Changing

Sandbrook Nursery School is an inclusive school and welcomes children with a wide range of needs. This may include children who are not fully toilet trained for developmental or medical reasons.

When a pupil of Sandbrook Nursery School has identified needs which mean that he/she requires nappy changing during the school day, this will be discussed with the child's parents prior to beginning school, and an appropriate Intimate Care Plan drawn up in consultation/agreement with the parents this is also in line with the Phased Induction Policy.

We recognise that every child has different needs and each intimate care plan will be flexible and responsive in order to meet these needs.

**Full copy of policy available on website and school office*