Sunnybrow Primary School

Toileting & Personal/Intimate Care Policy

September 2024

This policy sets out procedures for dealing with toileting and personal/intimate care tasks with utmost professionalism, dignity and respect for the child and the maintenance of highest health and safety standards possible. The aim being to safeguard pupils, parents, staff and the educational setting by providing a consistent approach within a framework which recognises the rights and responsibilities of everyone involved.

Introduction

The vast majority of children will be toilet trained and able to manage their own personal care needs competently before they start school. However, some children may not be at that stage due to a number of reasons including: developmental delay, medical needs, behavioural issues, physical or learning disabilities. On the other hand, some children may be continent, but still have personal/intimate care needs due to difficulties accessing toileting facilities or dealing with their personal care independently afterwards. These children have an educational entitlement irrespective of their difficulties with toileting and personal care.

The Children Act 2004

The Children Act 2004 provides the legal basis for how agencies deal with issues relating to children. These guidelines have been laid down so that all individuals who are involved in the looking after children, be it in the home, the work place, school or other area are aware of how children should be looked after in the eyes of the law.

Principles of the Act:

The Children Act 2004 was designed with guiding principles in mind for the care and support of children. These are:

- To allow children to be healthy
- Allowing children to remain safe in their environments
- Helping children to enjoy life
- Assist children in their quest to succeed
- Help make a contribution – a positive contribution – to the lives of children
- Help achieve economic stability for our children's futures

This act was brought into being in order for the government in conjunction with relevant bodies to help work towards these common goals.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities of daily living. Anyone with a condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against. It is also unacceptable to refuse admission to children who have toileting needs.

Educational providers have an obligation to meet the needs of pupils with delayed personal development in the same way as they would meet the needs of pupils with any other

developmental delay. Children should not be excluded from any normal pre-school or school activities because of incontinence and intimate/personal care needs.

Any admission policy that sets a blanket standard of continence, or any other aspect of development is discriminatory and therefore unlawful under the Act. All such issues have to be dealt with on an individual basis and educational establishments are expected to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each pupil.

It is essential to note that asking parents to come into the school or educational setting to change their child is a direct contravention of the Equality Act, as is leaving the child in a soiled/wet nappy/pad for any length of time pending the return of a parent a form of abuse/neglect.

Inclusive Culture

At Sunnybrow Primary School, there is a commitment from everyone involved in the education and care of children to develop attitudes which support inclusive practice. We recognise that pupils with toileting or personal/intimate care needs, who receive support and understanding from those acting in loco parentis, are more likely to achieve their full potential across the range of activities within the school.

Intimate Care

Intimate/Personal Care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, requiring close personal contact involving an individual's personal space, associated with bodily functions, personal hygiene and procedures due to medical conditions – which require direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals.

Examples include care associated with continence, toileting, catheterisation, menstrual management as well as tasks such as washing and bathing. The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Safeguarding children

● Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The normal process of changing a child who has soiled should not raise child protection concerns and there are no regulations that indicate that two members of staff must be present to supervise the changing process to ensure abuse does not take place. Few educational establishments have the staffing resources to provide two members of staff for this; therefore one member of staff is adequate to carry out the straight

forward task of changing a child. The exception to the rule needs to be when there is a known risk of false allegation by a child, then a single practitioner should not undertake the changing task.

● Two members of staff may be required for more complex type of care procedures, this will need to be assessed on an individual basis in joint consultation with nursing teams, health colleagues and OT for SEND Team. However, it is important to note that no unnecessary staff should be present and no other staff should interrupt the care procedure.

● All adults carrying out intimate care or toileting tasks should be employees of the school and enhanced DBS checks should already be in place to ensure the safety of children. Staff employed in childcare and educational establishments must act in a professional manner at all times.

● Students on work placement, voluntary staff or other parents working at the school/setting should not attend to toileting or intimate care tasks.

● Where the child is of an appropriate age and ability, their permission must be sought before any task is carried out.

● Staff carrying out the intimate care/toileting should notify a colleague when they are taking the child out of the classroom for this purpose, this should be done discretely and sensitively.

● Parents should be made aware of the intimate care/toileting policy and must give consent for the child to be changed or the intimate care procedure to be carried out when they are under the care of the educational establishment. Parents must also be made aware of the fact that it may only be one member of staff carrying out the changing task and there should be a written, agreed and signed consent form in place. (Appendix 1)

● A written log should be kept of all personal and intimate care interventions that take place. (See Appendix 2)

● The school or setting should remain highly vigilant for any signs or symptoms of improper practice as they would for all activities carried out onsite.

● Any issues for concern, such as – physical changes in the child's presentation, any bruising or marks or any comments made by the child, should be recorded and reported to the line manager or head of establishment immediately. All normal Child Protection procedures should be followed.

● There should be careful communication between the child and key worker; the child should be made aware of the procedures according to their ability to understand. If the child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter should be looked into immediately and addressed with parents, appropriate agencies and all necessary procedures should be followed.

● Child Protection training should be an ongoing part of staff training.

● Younger children should not be left alone or unattended during toileting or changing procedures. Great care must be taken if the changing unit is any distance off the floor.

● Some older cognitively able children may prefer to be left alone for privacy when toileting. Staff need to adapt their input according to the needs of the child.

● When carrying out intimate/personal care in out of school premises, privacy and safety should be the main concern and part of the planning process.

Manual Handling/Specialist Training

When pupils with physical disabilities require manual handling, all staff undertaking these duties should have appropriate training and instruction to ensure they are competent and confident in their role. The Occupational Therapist for Physical difficulties SEND Team should be contacted to ensure all procedures are carried out in accordance with best practice and maximum degree of safety for the staff and child being cared for.

Some children will enter the educational setting with complex difficulties and long or short-term medical conditions, which indicate the need for special procedures or intimate care arrangements. In this instance multi-disciplinary teams will need to be involved for the appropriate advice, training and any necessary equipment and adaptations. Parental consent and involvement will be required to ensure parents are in agreement with the plans that are put in place.

In this instance it is important to draw up written care/management plans and risk assessments so that all staff involved are aware of their roles, responsibilities and all risks are considered and addressed.

Children Wearing Nappies

The parent should provide nappies/wipes and should be made aware of this responsibility. Schools are responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Health and Safety /Infection control procedures

Staff members will have access to:

• PPE gloves (apron and face mask optional) for use during intimate care

• Staff and children to clean their hands for at least 20 seconds before any changing/care is undertaken.

• Nappy/soiled underwear changing is undertaken in the appointed changing room on the changing bed.

• Parents/carers are informed of all nappy changes/soiling accidents.

• A new set of gloves, apron and mask to be worn for every nappy/soiled underwear changing.

• The changing mat must be cleaned using anti-bacterial cleaner prior to any changing.

• Child to be placed on bed during a nappy/underwear change.

• Soiled nappies to be placed in nappy disposal bags which can be securely tied. This bag should then be placed in the dedicated nappy disposal bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste (located in the changing room). Staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety Policy.

• Any soiled clothes to be sent home in separate waste disposal bags.

• All cleaning wipes to be placed in double polythene waste bags for disposal.

• Before dressing the child dispose of all personal protective equipment in a waste disposal bag in the appropriate bin.

• Both staff member and the child must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds before returning to class.

• Changing mat should be thoroughly cleaned using anti-bacterial spray and cleaning cloths.

Intimate Care Plans

Where regular intimate care is required, an Intimate Care Plan will be written in consultation with parents/carers. Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a long-term basis. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers and recorded in a care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staff and equal opportunities legislation.

As well as consent from parents, our intimate care plans should specify:

● Type and level of care required.

● Who will change the child or carryout the toileting/personal care tasks.

● Where the care tasks will take place.

● What resources will be used

● How the nappy/pad or other medical aids will be disposed of.

● What infection control measures are in place

● What action will be taken if the child becomes distressed, or if the staff member notices any marks or injuries

● Any School-Home-Professional agreement/toileting plan required.

● Agreement by parents to provide spare nappies, cleaning wipes, underwear or clothing. (Nursing staff are not able to provide nappies or wipes for use in an educational setting)

It is recognised by school that on some occasions it will not be possible to ensure that a child is properly cleaned or that on multiple occasions of soiling a child may wish to be bathed or showered at home. In these situations, school will contact parents.

Any requests from parents for use of medical ointments/creams, should be prescribed by the GP and clearly labelled with the child's name. These should not be shared between other children and should be stored in a locked storage facility in line with the school's storage of medicines policy.

Pupils in Distress

The school recognises that there may be times when a pupil is distressed and needs to be comforted and reassured and this might include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation. Judgment will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from the headteacher, SENDco or other appropriate person.

Menstruation

Girls who are in the early stages of puberty may need support from a female member of staff. Where such assistance is required, girls will be provided with sanitary towels and treated sensitively.

Out of School Trips, Clubs etc

Staff will take particular care when supervising pupils on trips or a residential setting or after-school activity to ensure that all intimate care needs continue to be met with dignity and will liaise closely with parents in these instances.

Signed: C.Sim 03.10.24

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