



## Intimate and Personal Care Policy

**Last review date:** July 2023

**Latest review date:** July 2024

**Staff responsible:** Fiona Green (Head of EYFS), Carey Buxton (Sister) and Florence Clayton (DSL)

### **Overview**

This policy applies to all staff undertaking personal care tasks with children, particularly those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition to this, there are other groups of children that may require support with personal care on either a short, longer term or permanent basis due to SEND and disability, medical needs or a temporary impairment.

The Head is responsible for ensuring that all staff read and understand the policy and the Head of EYFS is responsible for ensuring that all members of the nursery are aware of their responsibilities under it.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- *Safeguarding and Child Protection policy*
- *Medical (First Aid) policy*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy*

### Rights Respecting School policy statement

Our school's vision and values have at their heart the importance of treating each other as we would want to be treated ourselves, with Care, Consideration and Courtesy for all. This is one of the reasons why the work of UNICEF and Rights Respecting Schools is so significant to us. We are committed to respecting, upholding and promoting the rights of every child.

This policy links specifically to our commitment to the the following articles:

- *Article 3 - Best interest of the child*
- *Article 4 - Making rights real*
- *Article 12 - Respect for children's views*
- *Article 16 - Protection and privacy*
- *Article 19 - Protection from violence*
- *Article 34 - Protection from sexual abuse*

### **Introduction**

St Michael's School will ensure that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is recognised that there is a need to treat all children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff that provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of



safeguarding issues. Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which can demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals.

Intimate care includes:

- feeding
- oral care
- washing
- changing clothes
- toileting, including cleaning after soiling
- first aid and medical assistance
- menstrual management
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

### **Principles**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care that our policy guidelines are based on:

- 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 appropriate and consistent
- every child has the right to give or withdraw their consent for intimate care

Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. A record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned. The Nursery and Reception staff keep a record of toilet support which is witnessed and signed by another member of staff.

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual pupil's care plan. The views of parents, carers and the pupil, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering. A member of staff will be present in a separate area of the changing room in order to ensure behaviour is maintained by the children.

This means that staff should:

- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins



- consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour where there are changing rooms
- announce their intention of entering
- always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this

This means that adults should not:

- change or use the toilet in the presence or sight of pupils
- shower with pupils
- assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

### **Health and safety**

Staff should always wear gloves and if necessary, an apron when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a child. Any soiled waste should be double bagged and placed in a bin immediately. The bin should be emptied on a daily basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Hot water and soap is available to wash hands as soon as possible and paper towels are available to dry hands. In the event of the spillage of bodily fluids, the cleaning team will be informed.

### **Partnership working**

Partnership with parents is an important principle at St Michael's. Much of the information required by the school to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from the parents. Regular consultation and information sharing remains an essential feature of this partnership. For children entering Nursery or Reception classes, this often starts at the initial home visit or welcome meeting at school. In a very small number of cases, the process for the management of a child's personal care needs may need to be further clarified through a Toilet Management Plan or Health Care Plan. Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, if appropriate, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent when a child begins their education at St Michael's School and stored in the child's file. Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school. Parents would then be contacted immediately. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report this to the DSL.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an important issue. Sensitive information about a child should be shared only with those who need to know, such as parents or other members of staff who are specifically involved with the child. We ensure that where staff have concerns about a child's wellbeing or safety arising from something said by the child or an observation made by the staff, then the school's DSL will be informed. This may lead to the procedures set down in the school's Safeguarding Policy being implemented. If a child becomes distressed or



unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of the process in order to reach a resolution; staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved.

Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young person's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

### **Resources**

Spare clothing and underwear are available in Nursery, Reception and with the school nurse. Sanitary disposal / products are available in the medical room.

### **Residential trips**

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting and when in loco-parentis. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. To ensure pupils' safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on residential trips. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.