ACORN INTEGRATED

PRIMARY SCHOOL

& NURSERY UNIT

PERSONAL/INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Date of next policy review	**See policy review framework**
Name of persons responsible for this policy	**Governors, Mrs J. Fuller, Mrs A. Davis, Mrs A. Rolloos and Mrs S. McIlmail**
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Date of Review	**See policy review framework**

Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit Personal/Intimate care Policy

INTRODUCTION

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes in Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children. Our Personal/Intimate Care Policy and guidelines are part of our set of pastoral care policies and has been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the personal/intimate care of children.

This policy is in line with multi-agency guidance as found in the Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). This policy must be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of personal/intimate care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for personal/intimate care
- To inform parents/carers in how personal/intimate care is administered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the personal/intimate care of their children.

PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL/INTIMATE CARE

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based on the fact that every child has the right to:

- Be safe
- Personal privacy
- Be valued as an individual
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Be involved and consulted in their own personal/intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Express their views on their own personal/intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Have levels of personal/intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Responsibilities of Staff involved with personal/intimate care

Members of staff need to be aware of the potential danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk.

These should include:

- If staff are providing personal/intimate care two members of staff will be in the vicinity at all times e.g. the second staff member could be in the adjacent room with the adjoining door open.
- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary.
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to give verbal consent to the person assisting them.
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care.
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions
- All staff working with children must be vetted including students on work placement and volunteers.
- Only named identified staff should undertake the personal/intimate care of children

Further:

The Principal/Designated teacher for child protection must ensure that all staff undertaking the personal/intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Personal/intimate care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

All staff must be trained in the specific types of personal/intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Personal/intimate care Policy and guidelines within the context of their work.

Personal/intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).

Personal/intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).

An individual **Intimate and Personal Care Plan** will be written for children where necessary. This will be agreed and signed by parent/carers, principal and staff (Appendix 1). A **Record of Personal/intimate care** will be kept (Appendix2).

Staff should not undertake any aspect of personal/intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).

Additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific personal/intimate care tasks in the event of a staff member being on sick leave.

Personal/intimate care arrangements will be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), will be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

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 personal/intimate care of children.

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

Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use personal/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:

- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's personal/intimate care practice they must report this to their designated teacher
- Involve the child in the intimate care and encourage independence
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy as appropriate to the child's age and circumstances
- Make sure that the practice in intimate care is consistent
- Be aware of your own limitations with regard to your competence to carry out procedures
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image
- Report any concerns to the Designated Teacher (DT) e.g. if you observe any unusual markings or swelling or if a child exhibits an unusual response to intimate care
- When working with a child of the opposite sex, the child has the right to dignity and privacy, therefore use appropriate coverings/screens. If the child appears to be uncomfortable then stop the care immediately and reassure the child and try to find out why they are distressed. Report concerns to the DT using the record of concern form

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
- Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect

DEFINITION of PERSONAL/INTIMATE CARE

Personal/intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the personal/intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Personal/intimate care can include:

- helping with toileting issues
- helping a child to change his/her clothes
- changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself
- supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
- providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
- providing first aid assistance
- feeding a child
- providing oral care to a child
- assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

TOILETING ISSUES/CHANGING CLOTHES

Pastoral Care Procedures

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

Children in the Nursery Unit, in case of a toileting accident, will have a named bag of spare clothing in their bathroom provided by their parents. Spare clothes will be provided by staff in Foundation/Key Stage 1 & 2.

Assisting a child to change his / her clothes

This is more common in our Foundation Stage and Nursery Unit. 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 uniform for this purpose. A supply of clean underwear and spare uniforms are available in the Medical Room.
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the emergency contact is able to 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 personal/intimate care will complete a **personal/intimate care record form**

Basic hygiene routines

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

If the child has a medical condition which requires daily changing a signed agreement will be made between the parent/carer and staff member (see Appendix 1.)

Please note: the well-being and dignity of the child will remain paramount at all times during any incident requiring personal/intimate care.

PROVIDING COMFORT TO A CHILD

There are situations where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years and Nursery Unit). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum and is child initiated. 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. For example, comforting a nursery/foundation age child who is upset during the settling in period.

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.

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 personal/intimate care needs relating to their child.
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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors must ensure that the following key policies have been approved and are being implemented:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Personal/intimate care
- Pastoral Care
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Positive Behaviour

The Principal provides the Governors with a report about the management of personal/intimate care incidents in the school (standing item with the safeguarding report). The school keeps confidential records of all personal/intimate care incidents.

The Principal

The Principal ensures that:

- The school's Personal/intimate care Policy is understood and operated correctly by the staff
- Staff are trained and aware of the school's policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Adequate training is in place to ensure that the best interests and needs of the pupils are met

All Staff

All staff should:

- Read this policy and work within its guidelines and procedures
- Monitor arrangements for personal/intimate care within each class
- Be responsible for supporting safeguarding arrangements
- Keep records of personal/intimate care provided
- Ensure that children's needs are being met and if necessary raise concerns with the Safeguarding Team

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians should:

- Be aware of the school's guidelines and procedures with regard to personal/intimate care as outlined in this policy
- Make staff aware of any personal/intimate care needs pertaining to their child
- Complete the consent form if their child requires personal/intimate care (Appendix 1).

SWIMMING

- Primary 4 – 7 classes engage in swimming lessons at the Amphitheatre leisure centre.
- The children are entitled to privacy when they are changing their clothes. However, this needs to be balanced with the correct level of supervision to provide safeguards to the children and to ensure that the expected level of behaviour is followed.
- The changing facilities at the Amphitheatre allows for the required levels of privacy and supervision.
- Where a child has needs indicating the requirement for additional support for changing, this will be agreed with the parent/guardian in writing.

PE ACTIVITIES

- Primary 1 and 2 children change into plimsolls to participate in PE lessons
- Primary 3-7 pupils change into the school PE kit. The children do not change in mixed areas and staff arrange suitable accommodation for them to use to ensure children's privacy as far as possible. Staff should avoid being in rooms where children are in a state of undress as far as possible.
- children will come to school in PE kit on the days that they have PE lessons, as has been the practice during the current pandemic.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

- It has been the practice that Primary 6 and Primary 7 children undertake a residential visit in the summer term.
- Particular care must be taken when supervising children in these more informal settings.
- The Personal/Intimate Care Policy must also be followed in these settings.
- When pupils are showering or (un)dressing, staff **should not** be supervising pupils
- Staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct and should not change or shower in the same place as the children
- Children's bedrooms are private places, anyone wishing to enter must knock to show their intention of entering the room
- Should a member of staff need to enter the children's bedrooms e.g. in the case of an incident then they should be accompanied by another member of staff. In such an incident, a written report must be completed and given to the Principal
- Such incidents may include:
  - Assisting a child to change their clothes
  - Change a child who has soiled themselves
  - Providing comfort to a child who is distressed
  - Assisting a child with a medical procedure
- In such incidents all guidelines and procedures outlined above must be followed with the support of another member of staff.

Appendix 1

Intimate and Personal Care Plan

Child's Name:	**Date:**
Nominated Carer's Names:	
Main Areas of Need: 1. 2. 3. 4.	
Detailed Plan (Please refer to any toileting, dressing, undressing and medical needs)	



This Plan was written by _____Date:_____

This was agreed with parents/carers on (date) _____

The child's view were sought for this plan on (date) _____
(If not please say why)

Signed: Principal _____ Date: _____

Signed: Support Staff _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

Signed by Parents/Carers _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Basic and Intimate Care Record

Date and Notes	Basic Care Signature 1	Intimate Care Signature 1	Intimate Care Signature 2