

Intimate Care Policy



Approved by Governors Date: STILL TO BE RATIFIED
Review date: September 2026

Phoenix Primary School

Overview

Phoenix Primary 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. Phoenix Primary recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given.

Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

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 insulin.) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Rationale

Intimate care/assistance and activities requiring close personal contact can be identified as any personal care/assistance that involves an individual's personal space.

In addition to care, safety and hygiene, the procedures must have due regard for dignity and privacy and take into account age, gender, culture and physical and developmental needs.

Principals:

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure.
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual.
- Every child has the right to remain healthy.
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs.
- Every child has the right to information and support that will enable him or her to make informed and appropriate choices.
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.
- Every child has the right to information and procedures for any complaint or queries he or she may have regarding intimate care.

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Purpose

The purpose of the policy at Phoenix Primary School is to:

- Uphold pupils' rights to privacy and dignity.
- Identify situations, which have elements of intimate / close personal contact.
- Recognise the responsibilities of adults involved.
- Safeguard pupils and adults from any misinterpretation of action.
- Ensure consistency of action whilst being sensitive to individual needs.
- Dispose of waste safely.

Guidelines

The guidelines must be followed in the context of Child Protection, Health and Safety and Police Clearance Procedures. It must be accepted that there has to be a degree of flexibility and judgement within some situations.

DBS Clearance

All adults participating in any activities including intimate/close personal contact will have undergone statutory DBS checks.

(See section referring to student/volunteer helpers).

Child Protection

All child protection matters must be reported to the designated person in school responsible for child protection. Procedures should follow the Child Protection Policy.

The designated people are; P.Kelly, A El-Saiegh, C Barlow, H Cowan, N. Kavanagh

Health and Safety

All staff should be aware of and adhere to the general health and safety guidelines as documented by the LEA and the schools Health and Safety Policy. Any health and safety concerns or queries should be taken up with Mr P Kelly who will act upon the information.

The Roles of Students/Volunteer Helpers

Students/volunteer helpers/parents:-

- Should not assist with toileting pupils.
 - May assist with helping pupils change for PE if supervised by a member of school staff.
 - Must be supervised and not put in a situation where they are alone with pupils except in extreme/emergency situations.
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Assisting a child to change his/her clothes.

This is more common in our Foundation Stage and Enhanced Provision. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he/she has urinated / soiled, 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.

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 is available.)

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 Headteacher 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 complete 'The intimate Care Log' (Kept in the Office for KS1 & KS2. Foundation Stage and Enhanced Provision keep their own log.)

Guidelines for toileting/changing

The following must be taken into consideration:

- The need for privacy, whilst being aware of the need to protect staff from allegations and pupils from possible inappropriate touching. When one member of staff is attending to a child, **another member of staff in the vicinity should be made aware of the task being undertaken.**
- Where possible one pupil will be catered for by one adult unless there is sound reason for having more adults present e.g. assisting with showering.
- Contact parents at the earliest convenience if child is too distressed to be cared for.
- Consistency of approach with necessary information communicated to all appropriate staff.
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process.
- Encourage as much independence as possible using the progression of skills:

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Opportunity/Dependence/Co-operation/Participation/Supervised independent action/Independence

- Be aware of assistants' own personal hygiene and use of appropriate equipment – gloves, aprons, handwash/gel.
- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her.
- Be responsive to any distress shown.
- Be aware of general hygiene and disposal of waste. Double bag soiled waste and place in designated bin (Situated in KS1 toilets). Bin emptied daily.
- Give sufficient time for the pupil to achieve, to be aware of expectations and be familiar with the type and frequency of prompts.
- Ensure females (and boys who catheterise) are cleaned front to back.
- Appropriateness of male/female assistance with boy/girl pupils to be agreed upon.
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

Secure documented parental agreement to procedures. Agreement form for parents to sign, according to requirements (Appendix 1).

Changing Facilities and Equipment Provision

Changing facilities are located in the Foundation Stage sluice room and Class 7C and include:

- Gloves, aprons, disposable bags, wipes, changing mat and changing station.
- A shower and towels.
- Designated waste bin.
- Limited supply of underwear/clothing.

For pupils still in nappies, parents will be made aware that it is their responsibility to provide nappies, disposable bags and wipes.

Physical Assistance

- Give verbal prompts/instructions before touching, moving or handling pupils.
- Have due regard for instructions given by therapists regarding individual pupil movement/transfer etc.
- Always use equipment recommended to assist with moving/transfers.

Pupils may have individual bathroom/physical assistance regimes, which will be reviewed and amended as required, following advice.

Providing Comfort or Support.

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Foundation Stage). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and 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 which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

Swimming

All children from Year 1 upwards will participate in a swimming programme at some point in the year. They attend Liverpool Aquatics Centre at Wavertree Sports Park. Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

At Wavertree the children usually change in two communal rooms (boys and girls separated) and are supervised by two members of staff in each area. In the event the rooms are being used by another school there are three rows of cubicles that are blocked off for school use. This supports effective and discrete supervision and privacy for our children when changing. The cubicles next to the communal changing facilities are used by some children who, for religious reasons need their own changing area. Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal healthcare plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence.

Residential Trips

Residential educational visits are an important part of our school experience. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in this less formal setting. As with extra curricular activities staff are guided by our Child Protection Policy and procedures and Positive Behaviour Policies. Some specific Intimate Care issues may arise in a Residential context.

Showering

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations, and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

This means that staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore Staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. adults must not change in the same place as children or shower with children.

It is best practice in our school that when an incident has taken place that has necessitated a member of staff to be present when children are changing that an incident report is made.

Night Time Routines

It is established practice that the children's bedrooms are private spaces and anyone else wanting to enter the room should knock and announce their intention to enter.

At bedtime, children are given a set amount of time to change and prepare for bed and will be told when the supervising teachers will visit the rooms to check all is okay and switch off the lights. A reciprocal arrangement is in place in the mornings.

There are occasions when incidents take place during the night and the need arises to:

1. Assist a child to change his / her clothes
2. Change a child who has soiled him / herself
3. Provide comfort to an upset or distressed child
4. Assist a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. Guidance as above will be followed with the support of an additional member of staff in attendance.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with school procedures for the review of all policies or sooner if national and/or local information impacts upon it.

Updated June 2023

Review July 2024

Other Policies

Medicines in school Policy / Supporting children with medical conditions

Positive handling policy

Safeguarding Policy

Health and Safety Policy.

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There may be occasions in school when a child needs assistance with their intimate care, for example, help with toileting, cleaning themselves or dressing. Here at Phoenix Primary we are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Phoenix Primary recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given and we encourage all children to achieve independence. If a child is to be distressed to be cared for, parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

We welcome spare school uniform and underwear and would kindly ask that any clothes borrowed from school after your child has been changed are returned.

I agree to my child receiving assistance with his/her intimate care when necessary.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

