



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Neath Port Talbot

Model Intimate Care Policy for Schools

September, 2022

Foreword

This guidance is designed to support schools in implementing their own Intimate Care Policy unique to their context.

There is often an expectation that children entering nursery or reception will be independent in meeting their own continence needs, however, for various reasons, this is not always the case. It is important that any continence need is supported sensitively and effectively in the setting and is in line with the child or young person's development. It must also be understood that delayed continence is not necessarily linked with learning needs or disabilities. For children with continence needs it can have an impact on their ability to take part in everyday school life. However, when needs are supported appropriately, children should not be disadvantaged in any way.

In line with the Equality Act (2010) children cannot be refused entry into settings on the grounds that they have continence needs. Any admissions practice that sets a blanket standard of continence would be discriminatory and, therefore, unlawful. Settings must make adjustments in order to include children with continence needs and should not exclude or treat them differently because of this.

The Welsh Government issued 'Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs' Guidance for schools in March, 2017
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/supporting-learners-with-healthcare-needs.pdf>. Many learners have a short-term healthcare need at some point which may affect their participation in educational activities. Other learners may have significant or long-term healthcare needs affecting their cognitive or physical abilities, their behaviour or emotional state. The guidance emphasises the need for a collaborative approach from education and health professionals, placing the learner at the centre of decision making. The guidance states that: *'The education setting should have an intimate care policy. It should be followed, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed, and recorded in the learner's Individual Healthcare Plan'*.

The following example will assist schools with writing their own policies.

NEATH PORT TALBOT **INTIMATE CARE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS**

Introduction

Ysgol Carreg Hir School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment, discomfort or pain. The child or young person's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance and every child and young person's privacy will be respected.

The Governing Body will act in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance 'Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs' (2017) alongside 'Keeping Learners Safe' (2022) and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners and staff.

The Governing Body also recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act (2010) and the need to treat all learners, regardless of their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given.

In order to meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, the school must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate learners with disabilities, which may include the provision of personal and intimate care. The learner's welfare is of paramount importance and their experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one.

Rationale

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out procedures that:

- Safeguard children, young people and staff by providing a consistent approach within a framework, and
- Recognise the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in providing intimate care for children and young people.

We recognise that intimate care raises complex issues. Whilst it may not be possible to eliminate all risks, the balance should be on the side of dignity, privacy, parental and where appropriate pupil choice and safety.

All employees regardless of their position are obliged to take reasonable care to ensure their own and others health and safety and to work within policy and procedural guidelines.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some learners are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs.

Intimate care can include:

- Washing
- Dressing and undressing (including swimming)
- Toileting & Menstruation
- Cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Learners are encouraged to be able to meet their own personal care independently wherever possible.

Principles of best practice:

The learner who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child/young person's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. The school will ensure:

- The individual will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage independence and encourage him/her to carry out aspects of intimate care as part of his/her personal and social development. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves and targets may be set in developing these life skills.
- Provide facilities appropriate to the child or young person's age and individual needs.
- Consideration is given to ethnicity, culture, beliefs and religion, and any special requirements relating to intimate care should be identified and documented.

- Awareness of and be responsive to the learner's reactions, their verbal and non-verbal communication and any agreed signals.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present, (e.g.) when physical disability necessitates more than one member of staff to provide care, or when there is a need to safeguard staff. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented. To discourage over familiar relationships, best practice would recommend a rota of staff that are able to undertake this task with the child/young person. This will depend on staff ratios in individual schools.
- There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved in the care of children. However, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the gender of the member of staff to undertake the intimate care tasks.

Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and if appropriate, by the child. Intimate care agreements are signed by the parent 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.

Some pupils will require an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) these are written by the school in conjunction with healthcare professionals. They may involve:

- Supported eating e.g. gastrostomy (peg feeding)
- Administering medication
- Physiotherapy/Occupational Therapy Programme
- Manual handling
- Massage/Intensive Interaction
- Applying topical medicines (e.g. eczema creams)

NB. Nasal gastric feeding is to be undertaken by health care professionals.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Ysgol Carreg Hir is responsible for providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which should include: Nitrile disposable gloves, disposable aprons, bin and liners to dispose of waste. Staff should always wear PPE when dealing with any child who is bleeding, wet or when changing a soiled nappy/clothing.

Parents should provide clean change of clothing, nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat etc. and parents must be made aware of this responsibility.

Intimate Care Agreement and Consent

Permission must be sought from the parent/carer before any form of intimate care can be undertaken, unless there is an emergency need to provide the intimate care. All those staff working with the child or young person should know that permission has been given before undertaking any Intimate Care. (Appendix: A)

The Protection of Children

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 and the school/setting Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be adhered to.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child, young person's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. they will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/designated safeguarding person for child protection.

Designated Safeguarding Officer Mrs L Hynes

If a learner becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be considered and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 will be followed alongside the schools/settings Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This policy was written in consultation with staff and the governing body and was approved on:-

Date: 15/11/2022

This policy will be reviewed on: November 2023

Signed: Headteacher L Hynes

Signed: Chair of Governor Mr P Nedin

Appendix A, B & C are attached and schools can opt to use these or devise their own as appropriate.

APPENDIX A

Intimate Care Agreement & Consent Form

The purpose of the Agreement and Consent form is to ensure that parents/carers and professionals are in agreement with what care is to be given and that staff have received any appropriate training that may be relevant. Teaching of certain care procedures may be carried out by the parent/carer or by the professional experienced in that procedure. When the parent/carer and/or professionals are agreed that the procedure has been learned or where routine intimate care is to be provided, the details will be recorded fully below and all parties must sign this record and be provided a copy; an additional copy is to be retained on the learners file in school and a copy is to be provided for the child's medical record (if appropriate).

Child's Name	DOB	Date Agreed

Reasons why intimate care is to be provided: (e.g. lack of training / development delay / medical need)	
Who will provide this care: (staff names and roles)	
Details of care to be provided:	
Consent provided by:	
Parent/carer Name (please print)	
Parent/carer Signature	
Agreement signed by:	
Parent/carer signature	
School:	
Name of Staff Member	
Role	
Signature	
Date Agreement to be reviewed:	
Review Date	
Outcome of Review	

APPENDIX B**Toileting Plan**

Child/Young Person's Name	D.O.B.	Date Agreed

	Details	Action
<u>Working Towards Independence:</u> e.g. taking child/young person to toilet at timed intervals, using sign or symbols, any rewards used		
<u>Arrangements for nappy/pad changing:</u> e.g. who, where, when, arrangements for privacy		
<u>Staffing Requirements:</u> e.g. how many, who, when		
<u>Level of Assistance Needed:</u> e.g. undressing, dressing, hand washing, talking/signing to child/young person		
<u>Infection Control:</u> e.g. wearing disposable gloves, arrangements for nappy/pad disposal		
<u>Resources Needed:</u> e.g. special seat, nappies/pull ups/pads, creams, disposable sacks, change of clothes, toilet step etc		
<u>Sharing Information:</u> eg if child/young person has nappy rash or any marks, cultural or family customs, birthmarks etc		

Date of Plan	
Parent Name	
Parent Signature	
Staff Name	
Staff Signature	
Review Date	

