

Intimate Care & Toilet Needs Policy & Guidance

Yew Tree Primary School



Date of Policy:	January 2025
Responsibility:	SEND/CO/SLT
Review Date:	January 2028
Consultation:	This policy was developed in consultation with staff & governors following best practice advice.

ETHOS STATEMENT

It is the aim of the Governor Board of Yew Tree Primary School to support the implementation of policies and procedures which develop the skills our children need to achieve our vision of:

'Learning without limits'

INTRODUCTION

The staff and governors of Yew Tree Primary School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act, which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against. We recognise that there is a need for children to be treated with respect when intimate care is given and no child will be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

Intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children carry out themselves, but which some are unable to do.

Intimate care tasks are associated with bodily functions, and personal hygiene. Examples include support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing nappies, helping someone use the toilet or washing intimate parts of the body. It is generally expected that most children will be toilet trained and out of nappies before they begin at school or nursery. However, it is inevitable that from time to time some children will have accidents and need to be attended to.

In addition to this an increasing number of children and young people with disabilities and medical conditions are being included in mainstream settings. A significant number of these children require adult assistance for their personal and intimate care needs. In order to help the children to become aware of their bodily needs and respond to them in time, those who wish to go to the toilet are always allowed to go, although they are encouraged as they progress through the school to use the toilet during break times.

AIMS

This policy:

- Identifies the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers
- Sets out the principles of good practice
- Provides practical guidance
- Clarifies the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Acts
- Sets guidance for all children including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Emphasises the employer's duty to safe-guard the health and safety of pupils and staff
- Provides child protection/safeguarding advice
- Raises awareness of the need to protect the dignity of the child.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Open and supportive communication with parents and carers is fundamental to planning for and meeting the child's toileting or intimate care needs effectively and sensitively. Many parents/carers may feel anxious that their child is not able to use the toilet independently and may have already experienced some difficulties with toilet training and/or experienced negative attitudes from others towards the issue. For some children, their toileting needs may be relatively short term and related to initial toilet training whereas others may require a long-term toileting programme. Parents/carers will need to feel confident that the school is able to support their child's toileting or intimate care needs. They should be encouraged to be open about this and feel able to discuss any concerns in this area.

Where a child has continuing incontinence issues parents/carers are expected to provide a complete set of spare clothes, 'baby-wipes' and any other agreed items. The school also keeps a stock of spare clothes in various sizes.

PARTNERSHIP WITH CHILDREN

The active involvement of the child in their toileting programme, or management of intimate care needs, is vital to make sure they have ownership and understanding of their targets and support.

If a child soils him/herself during school time one member of staff, or two where necessary, (teacher, support staff,) will help the child:

- Remove their soiled clothes
- Clean their skin (this usually includes bottom, genitalia, legs, feet)
- Dress in their own replacement clothes or those provided by the school
- Double wrap soiled clothes in plastic bags and give to parents/carers to take home

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

“All children have an educational entitlement irrespective of their difficulties with toileting or intimate care needs.”

At all times, the member of staff must pay attention to the level of distress and comfort of the child. If the child is ill, and/or in distress with care being provided by staff, the school office should telephone the parent/carer and SLT should be notified.

In the event that a child is reluctant and/or refuses care, the parent/carer will be contacted for advice and support. Our intention is that the child will never be left in soiled clothing so, as soon as the member of staff responsible for him/her is aware of the situation, she/he will clean the child. The member of staff responsible will check the child regularly to ensure that he/she is clean before leaving to go home.

Our staff will ensure that the child will not experience any negative discussion or discipline for any toileting issues, but only positive encouragement and praise, for his/her endeavors to master this necessary skill. We shall avoid drawing any unnecessary attention to any issues in order to protect the dignity of the child. Our approach to best practice for ultimate care needs goes over and above simply providing the support needed to change. We also want to support the child in maintaining confidence and dignity at all time by following these principles or procedures:

- Children who need assistance with toilet training or special toileting arrangements must be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity
- Some children who cannot achieve continence and independent toileting will require high levels of assistance which is to be delivered in a proactive manner, i.e. not simply waiting for an accident to happen
- School staff should work in partnership with parents and carers when planning for toileting needs and effective toilet training (acknowledging that continence and independent toileting may not be achieved by some children)
- Working in partnership should ensure that we adopt consistent approaches which are used both at home and at school
- School staff should, in partnership with parents/carers, the child and any other professionals involved, make and review care plans which work towards achieving maximum independence of the child with toileting needs
- School staff, supported by SLT and the ECM team as well as other professionals, should positively address issues raised by toileting needs in a constructive and problem-solving way
- School staff should be provided with access to appropriate resources and facilities and be supported by clear plans, policy guidelines and training. All staff supporting pupils with toileting difficulties must receive appropriate information and specific training as required
- SLT and other leaders should be aware of, and ensure implementation of, appropriate health and safety procedures and risk assessments
- SLT and other leaders should be aware of their duties to comply with the SEND Code of Practice and Disability Discrimination Acts
- DSLs must consult or liaise with the allocated social worker or relevant professionals whenever planning toilet training or special toileting arrangements for children on the Child Protection Register/in care of the Local Authority
- It is important to alert the ECM Team if any school attendance difficulties develop as a consequence of toileting concerns.

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned:

- Where specialist equipment and facilities, beyond that currently available in the school are required, every effort will be made to provide appropriate facilities in a timely fashion following assessment by a Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist
- There is careful communication with any child who requires intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication to discuss needs and preferences, i.e. we must remember the child's voice and right to be involved
- Children will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence possible, according to their individual condition and abilities
- Individual care plans will be drawn up for any child requiring regular intimate care.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the care plan
- The needs and wishes of children and parents/carers will be taken into account, wherever possible, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation
- Where a care plan is not in place and a child has needed help with intimate care (in the case of a toilet 'accident') then parents/carers will be informed the same day

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY IN THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA)

The DDA provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment or medical condition that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The effect must be substantial and long-term. It is clear therefore that anyone with a named condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against.

However, it is also unacceptable to refuse admission to other children who are delayed in achieving continence. Delayed continence is not necessarily linked with learning difficulties. However, children with global developmental delay, which may not have been identified by the time they enter nursery or school, are likely to be late achieving independence with toileting; some may never achieve independence with toileting.

ATTENDING SCHOOL

Children with toileting difficulties should be admitted into nursery and reception classes with their friends in the same way as any other child. At this stage it is not possible to assume that failure to achieve independence with toileting is in itself an indication of special educational needs. However, there are some children who enter nursery or reception with special educational needs and/or medical conditions which indicate the need for special toileting arrangements or toileting training. These children fall within the terms of the SEN and Disability Discrimination Acts and the school must take “reasonable steps” to support them.

Before the child begins attending it is important to:

- Gather information from parents/carers, the child and any professionals involved
- Establish effective partnership with parents/carers, the child and any professionals involved
- Focus on health and safety implications and determine whether a risk assessment is required
- Decide, in consultation with parents/carers, whether you need further advice from Health or Children’s Services
- Arrange for any specialist advice, training, resources to be in place before the child begins attending
- Agree a plan with parents/carers and the child and make a written note of the agreement
- Make sure that all staff are informed and clear about their responsibilities.

It is important for all parties to monitor and review the plan regularly to ensure it is still appropriate and meeting the changing needs of the child.

It is reasonable to discuss the level of independence with toileting before a child starts school. However, it is not acceptable to deny, delay or reduce attendance at school simply because a child has special toilet requirements or intimate care needs. It is important to agree a plan which will work towards maximum independence and support the child’s attendance in the educational school.

If a toileting need becomes apparent once a child has been admitted all of the above points would still apply. However, it may be necessary for additional parent/carer support whilst the above points can be actioned.

TIPS & ADVICE FOR SUPPORTING TOILETING OR INTIMATE CARE NEEDS

Each child and situation is, of course, unique.

It is anticipated that existing staff will volunteer to support pupils with toilet training or special toileting arrangements in school. Where incontinence is caused by an underlying impairment, it is a necessary reasonable adjustment for staff to carry out personal care. Leaders should ensure that staff carrying out such procedures feel confident and supported by relevant training and protocols to ensure the dignity of the pupil and protection of the staff.

If the child is not able to use the toilet independently on entry to school, the following tips or advice should be noted:

- Gather as much information as possible from the parents/carers and child. How have they tried to introduce toilet training at home? What happens at home? Has the child any regular routines or daily patterns which could inform the routine set up by the school? Have the parents/carers noticed any particular difficulties or phobias which the school should be aware of? Can the parents/carers suggest a strategy or procedure for dealing with the problem?

- An appropriate toileting programme will need to be discussed and agreed so that the child, parents/carers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The plan must have regular monitoring and review arrangements. The plan should give careful consideration to choosing which adults should be involved in toileting care. School should give a written copy of the programme to the parents/carers.
- Clothes should be easy for the child to pull up and down. Wherever possible it is better to train the child with appropriate clothing rather than continuing to rely on the nappy/pad or training pants.
- No child should be left wet or dirty for a parent/carer to change later
- It is not reasonable to expect parents or carers to be on emergency stand-by to change children during the school day
- Staff should ask parents/carers to provide the school with a couple of appropriate changes of pants/trousers etc in case of accidents
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to deal with wet/soiled clothing. Staff should liaise accordingly and make the necessary arrangements
- Organise that a member of staff familiar with the child is given the responsibility of taking the child to the toilet at fixed, appropriate intervals throughout the morning/day. Careful observations and discussions with the child may identify when the child "needs to go".
- Ensure that the routine established in school is strictly maintained from the start and try hard to avoid accidents. If necessary shorten the time between visits to the toilet so that the child gets into the habit of being dry.
- Children may be anxious and pre-occupied by toilet difficulties but usually respond to praise, encouragement and confidence building. It is important to promote self-esteem in other areas.
- Drinking water easily accessible for all children and encourage them to have "little and often" rather than in huge amounts at a time
- Reminders to use the toilet should be discreet and staff may consider the use of signs, pictures or code words
- Make little fuss over accidents that do occur and ensure that they are dealt with swiftly, appropriately, sympathetically and in a calm, low-key way. Give extra attention when they have made the effort to go to the toilet independently.
- After a period of training it may be sufficient to remind the child to go to the toilet on their own. Be positive and patient and praise the child for effort.
- It is important to anticipate toileting needs for these pupils before planning off site activities. Children should not be excluded from off-site activities because of their toileting needs.

Where difficulties persist, there may be more complex issues to consider and further guidance and support may be needed from other professionals. It is important to discuss continuing concerns with parents/carers and seek their agreement before involving further professional guidance and support.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

In addition to the good practice described above the following considerations may apply:

- In consultation with parents, health service staff will provide any relevant medical information, training and advice
- It may be appropriate to consult other professionals involved in the child's care for advice and support as well as guidance and assessment with risk assessments

HEALTH & SAFETY

- The Head Teacher and Governing Body have a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff. The school follows infection control guidance as part of our health and safety policy and will follow these when managing a child with toileting needs. The site team have attended training related to this area of need and can offer advice where necessary.

SAFEGUARDING

- If a member of staff is concerned about any physical or emotional changes, such as marks, bruises, soreness, distress etc. they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. The Safeguarding Policy will then be implemented.
- The normal process of changing a nappy/pad should not raise child protection concerns, and there are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available. However, it is strongly recommended that two members of staff should be present to supervise personal care procedures if staffing resources permit

CHILDREN WITH OCCASIONAL TOILETING NEEDS

General Principles

- Children should be treated with dignity and respect at all times
- Children should be encouraged to change in to clean clothing with supervision as appropriate to the needs and age of the child concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment



Yew Tree Primary School

INTIMATE CARE PLAN

Child's name..... Class.....

Nature of intimate care required, health conditions and background:

Agreed procedures for administering the required care, including home and school commitment to supporting toilet training etc:

Resources required (to be provided by the parent or carer):

Pull-ups/Nappies

Wipes

Nappy sacks for disposal

Spare clothes

Signed Parent / Carer

Date signed: _____

Signed..... School Representative

Date signed: _____

Review date:

Date of next review:

Intimate care will be given in line with that outlined in Intimate Care and Toileting Policy