

BADDOW HALL INFANT SCHOOL



Intimate Care Policy

Ratified by Governing Body: Date July 2022

Signed Nick Banister- Dudley

Review Date: July 2025

Intimate Care policy

Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Intimate care policy for Baddow Hall Infant School

Baddow Hall Infant 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. The school recognises 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 or pain.

Our approach to best practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned and recorded (appendices 1 & 2). The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual care plans (Appendix 1) will be drawn up for all children requiring intimate care, as appropriate, to suit their individual circumstances.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

It is not always practical or possible for two members of staff to assist with an intimate procedure. It is advisable, however, for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers

The Protection of Children

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

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 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, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Soiling

Intimate care for soiling should only be given to a child after the parents have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents give this permission when their child starts school (Admissions paperwork).

If a parent does not give consent, the school will contact the parents or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives. Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the Head Teacher will be consulted. If put in an impossible situation where the child is at risk, staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Where possible two members of staff are present
- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet

- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child or disposed of appropriately if heavily soiled.

First Aid and Intimate Care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil's dignity must always be considered. Where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. the removal of wet /soiled clothes) another member of staff must be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken. Wherever possible the child should pull down their own tights, trousers, etc. for first aid to be administered or to change out from wet/soiled clothes into clean ones.

Protection for staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

Children who have suffered previous abuse or neglect

In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Where ever possible ensuring that a witness (adult where possible) is present to protect staff from such allegations will be common practice.

Safeguards for children

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Baddow Hall Infant School are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school.

All those working with children should be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and should only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their line manager's satisfaction.

It is not appropriate for volunteers or students to carry out intimate care procedures.

Statement on the use of Physical Interventions (from Essex Touch Policy)

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age);
- to gently direct a pupil;
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc);
- in an emergency to avert danger to the pupil or pupils;

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the pupil's age and level of understanding;
- the pupil's individual characteristics and history;
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present).

Within Baddow Hall Infant School this means that a member of staff may physically guide, touch or prompt children in appropriate ways at appropriate times

Why Do We Use Touch?

We may choose to use a physical intervention with children for a variety of reasons, but in general terms we would normally do so for either comfort, reward or guidance.

How Do We Use Touch?

Hugging

At Baddow Hall Infant School, we encourage staff that are using touch for comfort or reward to use a 'school hug'. This is a sideways on hug, with the adult putting their hands on the child's shoulders. This discourages 'front on' cuddling and the adult's hands on the shoulders limits the ability of the child to turn themselves into you.

Hugging can be used either standing or seated

Hand-Holding

We recognise that children sometimes enjoy being able to hold hands with adults around them. This is perfectly acceptable when the hand holding is compliant. However, if the hand-holding is being used by an adult as a method of control to move children, this can become a restraint. Therefore, we encourage the use of the 'offering an arm'. This is done

by the adult holding their arm out, and the child is encouraged to wrap their hand around the adult's lower arm. The adult's other hand can then be placed over the child's for a little extra security if it is required.

In summary, it is generally deemed appropriate to touch others on the upper arm and shoulders.

Lap-Sitting

At our school we actively discourage lap-sitting as children settle into school. Children should be taught to seek comfort/attention through other means, such as a shoulder hug. If a child attempts to sit on an adult's lap, they will explain and ask them to sit next to them if it is appropriate.

At times, children may be in such crisis or distress that they hold adults in a way which is not described as above (e.g. 'front on' hug/lap sitting). In these circumstances staff should sensitively direct the child to a more appropriate position, without causing further distress. Staff will monitor the amount of times a child seeks this support from staff and to analyse the child's unmet need.

Appendix 1

Intimate Care Plan

Child's name..... Year Group.....

Class.....

Name of support staff

involved:.....

Date of plan:.....Review Date:

<i>Area of need</i>	
<i>Equipment required/by whom</i>	
<i>Location of suitable facilities</i>	
<i>Support received</i>	<i>Frequency of support</i>

Working towards Independence

<i>School will...</i>	<i>Parents will...</i>	<i>Child will try to...</i>	<i>Target achieved (date)</i>

*Signed*Parents/Carers

*Signed*Member of staff

*Signed*SENCO

Appendix 2

Intimate Care Record Form

[illegible]