

St Anne's CE Primary



Growing Together as a Family of God

Intimate Care Policy

The school is committed to upholding the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and makes good use of opportunities to address this in the context of children with Medical needs.



September 2024
To be reviewed July 2025

At St. Anne's CE school, we believe that everybody has a right to be treated equally and well. Children have the right to work, play and learn in a positive, supportive environment. All adults have the right to work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

St. Anne's CE is a UNICEF Bronze Rights Respecting School. We are proud to promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which the UK Government has signed and ensure that the whole school community learns about their rights and show respect for each other.

Article 2

The Convention applies to everyone, whatever their race, religion, abilities; whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3

All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child and they should think about how their decisions affect children.

Article 16

Children have the right to privacy.

Article 19

Children have the right to be safe.

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 should undertake the procedure (e.g. changing a catheter)

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.

POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

St. Anne's CE 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. St. Anne's CE

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. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of the individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy 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 will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many adults 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.

Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principal may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting boys in a primary school, as no male staff are available.

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

Children Wearing Nappies / Pull Ups:

We understand that children all start school at different stages of independence with regards to toileting and, whilst it is our wish that children are out of nappies and pull ups before they attend school, we accept that some children and families may need more support with the toileting process.

We recognise that some pupils may have physical needs and conditions that require them to wear nappies on a long term or permanent basis. We are committed to providing clean, comfortable and appropriate facilities in which to change pupils. We encourage pupils to become independent in dressing themselves after changing. The dignity and privacy of the pupils is of paramount concern.

Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs

At St. Anne's CE we are sensitive to the fact that some of our children with Special Educational Needs may need support with their own personal care needs. We are committed to helping pupils develop independence by use of appropriate visual and verbal support, specific to the needs of the individual.

Health and Safety:

Staff should always wear gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a soiled nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. Staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Physical Contact:

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, and will be appropriate to their age, stage of development and

background. Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

Best practice shows that physical contact which is repeated with an individual child or young person should be formally agreed by the child, organisation and those with parental responsibility. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff 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. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

Pupils in Distress:

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch, such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation. Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice, from their line manager or a designated member of staff.

Physical Education and Other Skills Coaching:

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation. Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

Changing Clothes:

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing 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 bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults 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.

Out of School Trips / Clubs:

Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with their schools' policy and any LEA Guidance regarding out of school activities.

If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.