



Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Reviewed by:	Maria Poultney / David Bower
Date of Review:	September 2025
Ratified by Governors:	Delegated
Review Cycle:	Annual
Next Review:	September 2026

From the smallest seeds grow the biggest trees

OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed. A man plants the seed in his field. That seed is the smallest of all seeds. But when it grows, it is one of the largest garden plants. It becomes a tree, big enough for the wild birds to come and make nests in its branches.”

Matthew 13:31-32, International Children’s Bible

We believe each child is like a mustard seed, growing and thriving in our Church school family. All children are nurtured here and flourish through our teaching and care. We empower children to seek out the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life; children are inspired to be the best that they can be. Everyone is valued and able to grow in the love of God.

Whoever you are, you are welcome here.

Introduction and Aims

Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation takes seriously our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. This policy is designed to safeguard both staff and pupils, and to help the whole school community understand the expectations and processes connected to intimate care.

WHAT IS INTIMATE CARE?

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure on or around intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but some pupils are unable to do because of their age or additional needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management, changing nappies, as well as tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing. It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care. It might be a regular support required for a pupil, or a one-off need.

Good, thoughtful intimate care should:

- be carried out gently, sensitively and respectfully;
- make the pupil feel safe;
- respect the pupil's privacy and dignity;
- allow the pupil to be as involved as possible;
- encourage the pupil to develop independence;

Staff must aim to:

- undertake their duties in a professional and empathetic manner at all times;
- recognise that they are in a position of great trust;
- treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity, with respect when intimate care is given;
- ensure that the pupil's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance;
- ensure that no pupil is attended to in a way that causes distress or pain;
- work in close partnership with parents/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

The purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the processes and procedures that staff need to follow, and the attitudes and approaches that they need to embody.

Roles and Responsibilities

WHAT DO WE EXPECT STAFF TO DO?

Body confidence:

Confident, self-assured children who feel that their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to abuse. The approach taken to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a pupil about their body worth, so staff attitudes to a pupil's intimate care is very important. Staff should aim for care processes to be relaxed, celebrating achievement and keeping comments and interactions as positive as possible, promoting body positivity.

Communication:

- Staff must consider their own language during intimate care, ensuring that they are using language appropriate to the individual pupil.
- It is important that staff don't 'announce' to the room that they are undertaking intimate care – tact and dignity should be considered.
- Whilst undertaking intimate care, staff should narrate to the pupil what they are doing (and *why* if appropriate) in appropriate language, to help them to understand what is happening and to feel part of the routine.
- Wherever possible, staff should ask permission from pupils before carrying out procedures.
- Pupil voice is always important: pupils should be given opportunities to use their expressive language skills as appropriate e.g. making simple choices of clothes; staff members who help them; communicating the need to be changed and having their voice heard.
- It is important to consider how a pupil is supported to understand where they are going for intimate care. For example, when going to the toilet, some pupils can be told verbally, some might need to see a symbol, and others might need an object of reference.
- Staff should be aware of and respond to how individual pupils communicate their responses to events or stimuli, such as noticing a cold wet wipe being used, being cared for by unfamiliar staff, or dislike of clothing being removed.

Doors: Doors should not be locked, but may be closed if needed to provide privacy. This is an important safeguarding practice. 'Busy' signs can be used, and screens and curtains can be used when appropriate. Pupils can lock doors if they are using the toilet or changing independently.

Dysregulation:

Some pupils might find intimate care challenging and might become dysregulated whilst it is being carried out. In these instances, a risk assessment might need to be completed to ensure the right level of support to safeguard both the staff and pupil, for example, some pupils might need access to motivators or reward systems.

Families:

Staff must be aware of any relevant information that has been shared by families around supporting their child - as per the 'what do we expect our families to do' section below – and must implement this consistently. If there is a problem with this, it should be discussed directly with the class teacher, or SLT.

Independence:

At Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation, physical development is acknowledged as a core area of our curriculum, so staff must aim to actively teach and build up as much independence as possible for individual pupils during intimate care routines – this will look different for every pupil. Therefore, staff will need to be patient and where possible, build in time for pupils to develop and practise independence.

Individuality:

Staff must remember that every pupil is an individual. It is important to respect individuality and not to expect all pupils to engage in intimate care in the same way.

Infection control:

- Staff will have access to disposable gloves for intimate care procedures.
- Staff will have access to disposable aprons if required.
- Staff will have access to cleaning products, including cleaning foam and wipes.
- Any clinical waste must be put into a yellow bin – wipes must not be flushed away.
- Staff must follow rigorous hand hygiene routines (<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>).

Medical advice/procedures:

Some pupils will have toileting programmes or guidance in place from either the continence team or the specialist nursery nurse team – this should be followed. If there are any issues, teachers must discuss this with the relevant professional.

Recording:

Different classes and pupils will have different systems for recording intimate care procedures, especially toileting. It is particularly important that this is recorded for pupils who cannot advocate for their own intimate care needs, to avoid their needs being overlooked. It is important that staff are aware of the processes in their class.

Safeguarding: Staff must pay consideration to the 'safeguarding implications' section below.

Staffing:

- Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's needs to determine how many staff might need to be present when a pupil needs help with intimate care.
- Ideally, two members of staff will assist with an intimate procedure, however we recognise at Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation that this is not always practical for a number of reasons.
- If a member of staff is going to assist a pupil with intimate care by themselves, they should advise another staff member.
- Volunteers must never be involved in intimate care; it will only be employees of the school with all robust safer recruiting checks in place, including DBS.
- Wherever possible, pupils should be involved in a discussion around who supports them for intimate care.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FAMILIES TO DO?

- Whilst Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation will provide cleaning items and PPE for staff, we expect our families to provide the products that their child or young person uses, and to ensure that class have a sufficient stock to meet their needs.
- We expect our families to share information with staff that enable them to carry out intimate care appropriately and effectively, as per the child's individual needs.
- We expect families to liaise with staff if there are any changes that might affect intimate care for their child
- We recognise that some families will have religious or cultural practices that impact on intimate care
- Some families will have had personal experiences that impact on intimate care. If this is the case, we ask that families liaise directly with teachers to share this information.

Legal Framework & Statutory Guidance

This policy links to:

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- Health & safety policy
- Manual handling policy
- Safeguarding & child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct

National documents:

- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Education Act (2011)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Health Act (2006)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, current version
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>)

Equalities and Inclusion

It is vital that the above guidance is followed in order for all pupils to have their needs met in an appropriate way, affording them the care, dignity and comfortable access to education that they deserve. If there is any concern that staff need extra advice or training in order to meet a pupil's intimate care needs, this should be discussed with the Headteacher, who can help to signpost to the most appropriate support.

Safeguarding Implications

Children and young people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. It is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for pupils and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely, but at Wrestlingworth Infant and Dunton Junior C of E Schools Federation best practice will be promoted and all staff will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.