

Panshanger Primary School
Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

This policy contributes to pupil's safety, well-being, enjoyment and achievement within the context of the school aims. The policy has been informed by advice and guidance from Hertfordshire Children, Schools and Families.

At Panshanger School we 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 and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We are committed to ensuring that children are treated with sensitivity and respect.

What is 'Intimate care'

Intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children and young people carry out for themselves, but which some are too young to or are unable to do. Intimate care tasks are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demands direct or indirect contact with, or contact with intimate personal areas. Examples include support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing incontinence pads and nappies, helping someone use the toilet or washing intimate parts of the body, cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself or vomited. It is also associated with other accidents that may require a child to remove their clothes. These include changes required as a result of water play, messy play, sickness and weather. Very young or disabled pupils may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.

Practicalities

It is generally expected that most children will be toilet trained and out of nappies before they begin at school (including the nursery class). However, we recognise that children will join the school, having reached differing levels of independence and development in toileting and self-care.

Therefore, it is inevitable that from time to time some children will have accidents and need to be attended to.

Children in the EYFS have access to the toilet whenever they need to and are encouraged to be as independent as is age and developmentally appropriate. They are reminded at regular times to go to the toilet and are always encouraged to wash their hands after the toilet.

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 pupils 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.

Role of Panshanger staff

Staff in the nursery have access to a changing area with a toilet and hand basin with warm water. There is a stock of baby wipes, plastic bags and disposable protective gloves for staff to use. If a child soils him/herself during school time, one member of the team (teacher, nursery nurse, teaching assistant) will help the child:

- Remove their soiled clothes
- Clean skin (this usually includes bottom, genitalia, legs, feet)
- Dress in the child's own clothes or those provided by the school

- Wrap soiled clothes in plastic bags and give to parents to take home.
- Complete school record.

At all times the member of staff will pay careful attention to the level of distress and comfort of the child.

If the child is ill the member of staff will telephone the parent/carer.

In the event of a child being reluctant to be changed and this is causing distress, the parent/carer will be contacted immediately.

Role of parents/carers

Parents/carers may be asked to give permission for intimate care as children enter Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The permission slips are kept on record. All staff are informed of those children where no permission is given. A note will be sent home to inform parents that their child has been changed that day. Where a child has continuing problems (including children beyond EYFS), the school will also involve health visitors and/or the school nurse, as appropriate, to support parents.

Our approach to best practice

Careful consideration will be given to individual situations to determine how many adults should be present during intimate care procedures. Where possible, one pupil will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. Another member of staff will always be informed when a child is being changed.

Individual care plans will be drawn up for any pupil requiring regular intimate care.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers and recorded on the 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.

Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from the physiotherapist or occupational therapist as required. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children.

The Protection of Children

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to. All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding. 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 appropriate designated senior person for child protection.

Changing facilities

The designated disabled toilet is equipped with facilities for changing children of any age.

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, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

If a child seeks out inappropriate physical contact staff will deter the child without causing a negative experience.

Pupils in distress

On occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance staff will remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation. Particular care will be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

First Aid and Intimate Care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. When assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing, another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Physical Education

Some members of 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.

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. Children who are unable to change themselves may be supported by an additional adult in the privacy of the disabled toilet (with the door left open).

Out of school trips etc.

School staff 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 school's/establishment's policy and all LEA Guidance regarding out of school activities.

To ensure pupils' safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on field trips, holidays etc. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises where a chaperone will not be present, are not permitted unless specific approval is obtained from the head teacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority. Staff should not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a child.

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.

Permission form for intimate care

Dear Parent/ carer,

If a child wets or soils themselves whilst they are in school, it is important that measures are taken to have them changed and if necessary cleaned as quickly as possible. Our staff are experienced at carrying out this task if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, the school can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Please fill out the permission slip below stating your preference.

Name of Child..... Class.....

I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves whilst in the care of Panshanger Primary School

I do not give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet or soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that in the event that I or my emergency contact cannot be contacted, the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid my child.

I understand that if my child becomes distressed / is reluctant for school staff to change him / her the school will contact me / my emergency contact number who will be expected to come to school as soon as possible.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date.....

