



# INTIMATE & PERSONAL CARE POLICY



**Wood Bank School**  
From strong roots we grow and blossom

Policy Ratified	June 2024
Review Date	June 2027
Signed (Headteacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	

## **Philosophy**

Wood Bank 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 undertaken. All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity and are entitled to respect and privacy at all times. No child should be attended to in a manner which may cause distress or pain.

Most children who attend Wood Bank require some help and support with intimate and personal care including toileting, medical care, feeding, drinking, dressing, undressing and washing. Some children are completely dependent on adults for all aspects of their intimate and personal care. Nonetheless, it is essential that intimate and personal needs should be met whilst at the same time allowing the highest standards of safety, privacy, respect and dignity to be maintained. All children dependent on their abilities, age and maturity will be encouraged to act as independently as possible.

The nature, circumstances and context of the contact that adults have with children should comply at all times with professional codes of practice and professional standards. Adults need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and policies and be mindful of the needs of the children with whom they work.

## **Procedures/Practice**

- Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals.
- Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as help with washing or bathing.
- Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of safeguarding issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny, and staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.
- The school provides a bespoke personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education along with a personalised RSE curriculum to support individual need. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.
- In Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1 and 2, intimate care may be appropriately delivered by cross gender support (where all parties feel comfortable with that arrangement).
- All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including access to Safeguarding and Health and Safety training in Moving and Handling) and are fully aware of best practice.

- Where necessary, apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements, as set out in their individual Moving & Handling Risk Assessment e.g. hoists, slings, standing blocks
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes and the specific instructions specified within individual Moving & Handling Risk Assessments.
- There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, sign, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences.
- The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it where possible.
- As a basic principle, children 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 themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.
- The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care.
- By necessity a number of staff will need to be trained to deliver such care although attempts will be made to restrict daily contact to the same familiar faces.

### **Safeguarding the Child**

- Local Authority Safeguarding Procedures and Inter-Agency Safeguarding procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.
- Where appropriate, 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 ~~manager~~ Designated Safeguarding Lead. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social services and/or police if necessary.
- Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at increased risk of harm by doing so.
- 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 may be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice may be obtained from external agencies as necessary.
- If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, the school will follow the procedures set out in the government guidance document "Keeping Children Safe in Education – Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff" and the School Safeguarding and Managing Allegations Policies.

### **Responsibilities**

Parents/Carers must sign the form (Appendix 1) to state they allow staff at Wood Bank to provide intimate care where appropriate to their child.

All adults at Wood Bank will

- Adhere to this policy and to Individual Plans, Moving and Handling Plans, Behaviour Plans and Feeding Plans
- Make other staff aware of intimate and personal care tasks being undertaken
- Explain to the child what is happening
- Discuss with line manager, member of the leadership team and parents/carers any variations from the agreed policy or plan and record this
- Ensure that changes to the agreed individual plans are discussed, agreed and recorded
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually invasive behaviour
- Announce their intention of entering changing rooms e.g. at the swimming baths, toilet areas
- Encourage appropriate behaviour by children with other children and adults at all times
- Behave appropriately with children at all times
- Ensure that toilet doors are closed and screens are pulled over when children are using these facilities
- Use and encourage appropriate language between themselves and children at all times

Adults at Wood Bank **will not**

- Change in the same place as children
- Use any mobile phones in bathrooms/changing areas
- Shower or bathe with children
- Assist with any intimate or personal care task which a child can undertake by themselves
- Engage in inappropriate behaviour with children

**Permission for school to provide intimate and personal care**

Child's Full Name	
Male/ Female	
Date of Birth	
Parent/Carer's Full Name	
Address	

I understand that;

Subject to the conditions laid down in the school Intimate and Personal Care policy, I give permission for the school to provide appropriate intimate and personal care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting assistance as necessary.

I will advise the Headteacher of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to Child** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_