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## **Barnham CEVC Primary School**

### **INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

#### **Intent**

At Barnham CEVC Primary School, a Thrive School of Excellence, we are committed to creating a nurturing environment where every child can flourish and reach their full potential, becoming “the best they can be for themselves, for others, and for God's world.” We aim for all children to feel valued, respected, and secure as active contributors to our school community.

Barnham CEVC Primary School is an inclusive setting where the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of children are our highest priorities. This policy supports our commitment to safeguarding by outlining how we meet the intimate care needs of children in a safe, respectful, and professional manner. Intimate care is an essential aspect of supporting children's health, comfort, and independence, and it must be delivered in a way that protects both children and staff.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, governors, and professionals working with children on behalf of the school, including during off-site activities. It should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Administration of Medicines Policy, SEND Policy, and Staff Code of Conduct.

We recognise that sensitive, respectful care is vital to children's physical, emotional, and social development. This policy sets out the principles and procedures for providing intimate care, ensuring that children's needs are met with dignity, privacy, and consistency, and that positive partnerships with parents and carers are maintained.

The school follows current statutory guidance, including:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2025)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2018, updated 2023)
- *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings*(DfE, 2022)

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- Relevant sections of the Education Act 2002 and the Equality Act 2010

## **Definition of Intimate Care**

Intimate care includes any personal care that involves washing, touching, or assisting with private areas of the body. This may include:

- Toileting, changing, or continence care
- Menstrual management
- Assistance with dressing or undressing
- Supervision of intimate self-care

Children may require intimate care due to age, physical ability, medical conditions, or additional needs.

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure children with disabilities are not discriminated against and are supported to participate fully in school life.

## **Principles of Practice**

Barnham CEVC Primary School is committed to:

- Treating all children with dignity, respect, and sensitivity, regardless of age, gender, disability, culture, or religion
- Working closely with parents and carers to provide consistent care
- Promoting the child's independence wherever possible
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis

## **Key Guidelines**

- Staff will communicate with the child using age-appropriate methods which may include using visuals or a social story. Staff will also seek consent where possible
- Health Care plans or Learning Plans will document regular intimate care needs if it is required
- In the absence of a care plan, parents will be informed the same day if intimate care is provided
- The number of staff present during intimate care will be limited, and consideration will be given to the child's privacy and cultural/religious needs
- Only school staff who are DBS-checked may provide intimate care
- For children with complex needs, two members of staff may assist, or at minimum, another adult should be aware when care is being provided

## **Consent and Communication**

Children should be involved in decisions about their own intimate care wherever possible. Staff must explain what they are going to do in a clear, age-appropriate way and seek

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the child's verbal or non-verbal consent before providing assistance. For children with additional needs, communication should be adapted using gestures, symbols, or visual prompts to ensure understanding. Children should be encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible, and their preferences respected, helping to promote autonomy, confidence, and dignity.

## **Assisting with Toileting and Accidents**

- Staff may need to assist children who have toileting accidents, including changing clothing and helping with personal hygiene, such as wiping after using the toilet.
- Assistance should be provided in a way that preserves the child's dignity and privacy, ideally behind a closed door or screen.
- Children should be encouraged to do as much as possible for themselves according to their age and ability.
- Staff must use disposable gloves and appropriate hygiene procedures, including handwashing before and after assisting the child.
- Soiled clothing should be handled discreetly, bagged, and sent home for cleaning.
- Parents/carers should be informed on the same day if their child has had an accident and required intimate care.
- Two members of staff should assist only if the child has a documented care plan indicating the need; otherwise, a single staff member may provide care with another adult aware that assistance is being given.
- Staff should maintain professional boundaries at all times, ensuring sensitive communication with the child to reassure and support them.

## **Hygiene Procedures**

Staff providing intimate care must follow strict hygiene practices to protect both children and themselves. Disposable gloves and aprons (where necessary) should be worn for all intimate care tasks, including assisting with toileting, changing clothing, or handling soiled items. Hands must be washed thoroughly before and after providing care. Soiled clothing and hygiene waste should be handled discreetly, placed in sealed bags, and returned to parents or disposed of according to school procedures. Surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected after care is provided, and staff should follow any additional guidance for managing medical equipment or bodily fluids to maintain a safe and hygienic environment.

## **Parental Involvement**

Barnham CEVC Primary School recognises that parents and carers are partners in supporting their child's intimate care needs. For children with ongoing requirements, health care plans or learning plans should be developed jointly with parents, staff, and relevant professionals to ensure consistency and continuity of care.

Parents should provide information about their child's needs, routines, and any preferences, as well as necessary supplies such as spare clothing, wipes, or sanitary products.

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Parents will be informed promptly if their child has required intimate care due to an accident or unexpected need during the school day, maintaining clear and respectful communication at all times.

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

Children with additional needs may be more vulnerable to abuse. Staff must be vigilant and follow school safeguarding procedures.

- Any concerns about marks, injuries, or changes in behaviour must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Allegations against staff will follow the school's safeguarding and disciplinary procedures
- Staff should not touch children unnecessarily and must maintain appropriate professional boundaries

Children will be supported to learn personal safety skills appropriate to their development.

## **Medical and Physiotherapy Procedures**

- Only trained staff may carry out medical procedures such as catheterisation or administration of rectal medication
- Physiotherapy exercises may only be assisted by trained staff following guidance from a qualified physiotherapist
- Staff must not create their own physiotherapy programs or exercises
- Any concerns about equipment or the child's response should be reported immediately to the physiotherapist or relevant health professional

## **Massage and Sensory Support**

- Massage may be part of therapy programs to support sensory awareness or relaxation
- School staff may only deliver massage to hands, feet, or face, and only as instructed by a qualified therapist
- Staff must maintain professional boundaries and ensure the child's comfort and dignity at all times
- Our school has a nurturing/ safe touch policy that will also explain further how we approach this at Barnham.

## **Record Keeping**

- A written record should be maintained for all intimate care or physiotherapy sessions, noting date, time, staff involved, and any observations, this will be using the system CPOMS.
- As with all CPOMS entries, records should be factual and objective, avoiding subjective comments

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## **Equality and Cultural Considerations**

- Staff should respect the child's gender preferences wherever possible
- Religious or cultural values influencing intimate care should be acknowledged and accommodated
- Care plans should reflect these considerations in partnership with families

## **Staff Training and Support**

- All staff who provide intimate care will receive appropriate training and guidance
- Staff will be supported to adapt care practices to meet individual children's developmental and health needs
- Supervision, advice, and reflective practice opportunities will be available to maintain professional standards

## **Complaints Procedure**

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that any concerns or complaints regarding the implementation of this Intimate Care Policy are addressed fairly, promptly, and transparently. Anyone raising a concern will have the opportunity to explain their case, receive a written response including the rationale for any decisions, and be informed of their right to appeal in accordance with the school's standard complaints procedure.

In the first instance, parents, carers, or staff with a concern about intimate care practices should speak to the child's class teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If the concern is not resolved, it should be escalated to the Headteacher, following the school's established complaints procedure.

Any allegation relating to inappropriate or unsafe intimate care by a member of staff will be managed in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **Evaluation & Review Procedures**

The Governing Body will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of this Intimate Care Policy by assessing:

- How children respond to intimate care practices and whether their dignity, comfort, and wellbeing are maintained.
- The promotion of independence and confidence in self-care and personal hygiene.
- How effectively staff are supported to provide intimate care safely, consistently, and professionally.

The Governing Body will also consider:

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- Allocation of resources and support to meet children's individual intimate care needs.
- Staff training (INSET) related to intimate care, hygiene, safeguarding, and medical procedures.
- Accuracy, clarity, and consistency of records relating to intimate care and any incidents or concerns.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or best practice recommendations.

<b>Review Term:</b>	Every two years
<b>Led member of staff responsible for review:</b>	Rachel Bacon (Deputy Headteacher, SENDCo, ADSL)
<b>Lead governor responsible for review: (Full GB to approve)</b>	
<b>Date adopted:</b>	
<b>Dates policy reviewed</b>	
<b>Dates policy amended in between reviews</b>	