



From mountain to sea

Tarves Primary School and Nursery

Intimate Care Policy



Updated	Review Date	Version
January 2020	January 2021	2020.01

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

INTIMATE CARE BEST PRACTICE

At Tarves Primary School and Nursery, we follow the rules of best practice when supporting a child with intimate care. The adult supporting a child or young person with intimate care should consider both their **attitude** and **actions** within the approach.

Principle elements of safe and healthy intimate care:

- *Trust and duty of care to safeguard the child*
- *A person centred approach*
- *Promoting the development of positive self-esteem, body image & self confidence*
- *Promoting the development of appropriate relationships, sexual and personal safety*
- *Integrating social and cultural values and beliefs*
- *Promoting positive lived experience and feelings of intimate care*
- *Promoting cleanliness and personal hygiene; preventing infection and disease*
- *Provision of education and training*

Child focused principles of intimate care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the policy and guidelines are based:

- *Every child has the right to be safe.*
- *Every child has the right to personal privacy.*
- *Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.*
- *Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.*
- *Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.*
- *Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such view taken into account.*
- *Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.*

Definition

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing. It also includes supervision of, or being in close proximity to pupils involved in intimate self-care.

Pupils who require regular, specific assistance with intimate care have written Individual Education Plans (IEP) agreed by staff, parents and any other professionals actively involved. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a MAAP meeting at which all key staff, parents and the pupil should also be present particularly if circumstances change, e.g. where there is an improvement in a medical injury or condition.

Where an IEP is not in place, parents will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' or wet or soiled his/herself). It is recommended practice that information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in person, by telephone or letter, not through the home/school diary or the child.

Trust and duty of care to safeguard the child

Safeguarding is of paramount importance. The person providing intimate and personal care to a child or young person is placed in a position of trust and has a duty through their responsibilities as a parent or as an employee to provide care which always promotes the health, wellbeing and safety of the child or young person. This includes protecting the child from abuse.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) states that:

Article 16: (Right to privacy) Children have the right...to privacy

Article 19: (Protection from violence, abuse and neglect) Children have the right...to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 23: (Children with a disability) Children have the right...to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

Article 34: (Sexual exploitation) Children have the right...to be free from sexual abuse.

The following statements set out guidance and examples of practice for staff followed at Tarves Primary School and Nursery:

1. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy

- Intimate and personal care should be provided with dignity and respect ensuring privacy, this includes care being given gently and sensitively.
- Adults should take into account the child's views and feelings throughout any procedure or intervention and give careful consideration to what the child is used to and what is appropriate, given their needs, culture and beliefs.
- Information about a child's intimate and personal care needs is both private and confidential. Information sharing relating to intimate care should be for a legitimate purpose and with the consent of the child or where a child lacks capacity, the parent or guardian.
- Privacy should be appropriate to the child's age, gender and situation. Privacy is an important issue. Children have a right to privacy and staff must recognise that right and take steps to ensure this it is upheld. It is important to ensure that activities such as toileting, changing clothes etc. are carried out in a safe and respectful manner.
- Privacy can be respected by allocating one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. Where this is the case, the reasons should be documented on the child's pastoral notes.
- Consider off site provision (for school trips) well in advance of any visit. It is recommended the facilities are inspected and included in your usual risk assessment evaluation.

2. Involve the child in their own intimate care and be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

- The child should exercise choice as far as possible throughout.
- Any touch which is intended as "help" (e.g. helping a child with toileting needs) is to be as enabling and empowering as possible and the child should be permitted to do

as much by themselves as possible. Involve the child as far as possible in their own intimate care and if the child is able to help, give them every opportunity to do so. It is important to avoid doing things that the child can do alone or with support. If a child is fully dependent on you, talk with them about what you are doing and give them choices wherever possible.

- Children should always be consulted about their views regarding touch and physical contact. Staff should check their practice by asking the child, particularly a child they have not previously cared for, e.g. “Is it ok to do it this way?” “Can you wash there or do this yourself?”
- Follow a child’s individual guidelines alongside your intuitive knowledge and experience of the child you are caring for and verbally report and document any changes in the child’s behaviour or their reactions to intimate care in the pastoral notes file. Inform the Head Teacher of any noticeable changes.

3. Encourage the child to have a positive image of their own body

- Providing intimate care with the right attitudinal approach with clear good practice actions provides ongoing opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, develop self-confidence and a positive self-esteem. The approach adults take in providing intimate care to a child should convey messages that their body and they are respected; a sense of value.
- Early year’s role modelling of good practice in intimate care experiences provided important personal safety learning for children. Understanding appropriate touch/care behaviours throughout childhood enable the child to differentiate more easily when they experience abusive touch/care behaviours.
- The adult care giver should take into account the child’s age, developmental history, cultural beliefs and values and the expressed views of the child and/or parents and should be documented within the child’s plan.

4. Make sure practice in intimate care is as consistent as possible

- The management of all children who require support with their intimate care needs to be carefully planned. A person centred approach to providing intimate and personal care promotes both individual and consistent patterns of care. The provision of intimate and personal care always has to be considered within the context of the individual person who requires assistance to meet their intimate and personal care needs.
- Any intimate care documentation should be agreed by the child (if age appropriate) parents/carers, designated staff and professionals. The intimate care plan should be reviewed regularly at MAAP meetings as the child needs change.
- The Head Teacher has a responsibility for ensuring the staff have a consistent approach.

Elements of consistency for each individual child include:

- **Language** – Using recognised words or other cues and agreed terminology.
- **Physical touch** – Always washing intimate parts with a wash cloth/wipe and not bare hands and wearing gloves
- **Documentation** – Following the child’s individual intimate care plan

- Consistency of approach can be helped by checking with the child their carers/staff who know the child well and reading any relevant medical documentation. If something needs changing in a procedure, it is important to let all those who are involved in their care know about the changes.

5. Never do something unless you know how to do it

- All staff who provide intimate care should receive training to promote good practice. No one should ever undertake a task unless they know how to do it. Adults providing intimate care should consider their own attitudes and behaviour. If staff have concerns about providing this type of care we would encourage you to speak to the Head Teacher.
- Equipment used for intimate care must be cleaned between uses as per Aberdeenshire Council infection control standards. Generally, this would mean wiping down toilet seats or changing beds with an antibacterial spray or wipes and taking universal precautions as necessary when providing the care (gloves, aprons etc.)

Supporting Documents

Scottish Government (2017) "Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools" <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/consultation-paper/2017/01/supporting-children-young-people-healthcare-needs-schools-draft-guidance-nhs/documents/00513141-pdf/00513141-pdf/govscot%3Adocument>

Aberdeenshire Council (2017) "Intimate Personal Care Draft guidance for schools, parents, children and young people"

<http://asn-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Intimate-Personal-Care-vs-1.9-Sept-2017.pdf>

This policy will be reviewed annually.