



# **Roman Road Primary School**

## **The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines**

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## **AIMS**

Our policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. The policy applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children including disabled children who can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved in the intimate care of children, need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection Policy.

## **DEFINING INTIMATE CARE AT OUR SCHOOL**

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required meeting the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff at Roman Road Primary School have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting /Potty training
- Nappy changing
- Menstrual Care
- Photographs
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

## **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 views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

## **ROMAN ROAD'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff working with children must be vetted by the school. This includes students on work placement and volunteers.

Vetting includes:

- Access NI checks
- Pre-employment checks
- Two independent references
- Only named staff identified by our school will undertake the intimate care of children.

Senior Management must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. London Borough of Newham, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups .

All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.

Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).

### **RECORD KEEPING**

Intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate).

Staff will not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).

We will ensure that provisions for emergencies i.e. a staff member on sick leave additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks.

Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed at least six monthly (sooner if required).

The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), will be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

### **GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTISE**

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Staffs also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to a senior member of staff /Mrs Mattis/ their line manager.

#### **Involve the child in their intimate care**

At Roman Road we will try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care.

Where the child is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice.

Check our practice by asking the child / parent any likes / dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent where possible.

#### **Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation**

A lot of our care is carried out by one staff member / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-to-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort / safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

#### **Ensuring practice in intimate care is consistent**

A child can have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers / agencies ensures practice is consistent.

### **Being aware of own limitations**

Staff must only carry out care activities that they understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by staff that have been formally trained and assessed e.g. nappy changing in the 2 year old provision, rectal diazepam.

### **Promoting positive self-esteem and body image**

Our aim is to ensure to keep all children confident and self-assured, who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach we take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth.

Attitude to a child's intimate care is important.

Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care will be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

## **REPORTING CONCERNS**

If we observe any unusual markings, discolorations or swelling including the genital area, we will report immediately to designate child protection officers. Mr J. Gordon

If during the intimate care of a child is accidentally hurt by staff, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by staffs actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to your designated manager / or senior member of staff.

It is important to follow Roman Road Primary Schools Reporting and Recording procedures.

Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's nursing / medical notes / personal file.

## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE OPPOSITE SEX**

Principles:

There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care. The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

The practical guidelines set out below, are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.

### **General Care**

Male and female staff can be involved with children of either sex in:

- (a) Key working and liaising with families.
- (b) Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child's review

## **MEETING THE DEVELOPMENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND RECREATIONAL NEEDS**

Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents will be asked to make a choice.

The intimate care of boys / girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- (a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with school policy and procedures.

- (b) Staffs that is not governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within the school and direction and agreement must be provided by the senior member of staff / Head teacher.
- (c) When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place.
- (d) If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. We will try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- (e) Report concerns to your senior member of staff / Teacher and make a written record.
- (f) Parents / carers must be informed about concerns

### **COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN**

It is the responsibility of staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Children communicate using different methods e.g. words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing.

To ensure effective communication:

Ascertain how the child communicates consult with child, parent / carer and, if appropriate, communication needs must be recorded.

Make eye contact at the child's level.

Use simple language and repeat if necessary

Wait for response.

Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response.

Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.