



# **Intimate Care Policy**

## Overview

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all staff at Richard Cobden School who are responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties to the highest professional standard and that all children will be treated with the utmost respect when intimate care is given. The school will aim to ensure that no child will be attended to in a way that causes them distress or discomfort. The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

Children at school often require support in personal care. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and those with physical disabilities, and learning difficulties may require assistance in managing their personal needs. Other pupils, because of an accident or illness, may also at some time require such assistance. Many pupils have support staff to assist them in all aspects of school life including personal care, such as Early Years staff or Learning Support Assistants. However, where the need arises, all members of staff should be able to assist in personal care if required.

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child will be allowed to exercise choice and will be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff will be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young person's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

All staff must undertake to help children do as much as possible for themselves and develop each child's ability to achieve independence. This must be done with support, care, sensitivity and encouragement.

All staff receive child protection training. Staff are provided with facilities and equipment to ensure safety, privacy and dignity. Support staff will receive appropriate training on the provision of intimate care.

## 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 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.

It is generally expected that children will be toilet trained and out of nappies before they start at our nursery. However, we recognise that, from time to time, some children will have accidents in toileting and self-care due to differing levels of independence and development. In such cases, parents/guardians are expected to work in partnership with the school in a consistent and determined manner to help their child to become toilet trained.

The school recognises that for some pupils with disabilities and medical needs, adult assistance in their personal and intimate care will be needed. Our SENDCos will meet with the parents/guardians of these children to draw up an intimate care plan of support.

In order to help young pupils to become more aware of their bodily needs and respond to them in time, those wishing to go to the toilet are always permitted to do so. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have free access to the toilet whenever they need to and they 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 also supervised in washing their hands after toilet use.

Although, as they get older and progress through the school, pupils are expected to use the toilet during break times unless there is a medical need or disability preventing them from doing so.

## **Procedures for staff:**

Nursery pupil toilets include a cubicle with sink for pupils who may need some assistance. Changing facilities are also available in the disabled toilet. These include a changing table and sink. There is also a stock of baby wipes, plastic bags and disposable protective gloves and aprons for staff to use.

Reception pupil toilets include a cubicle with a sink for pupils who may need some assistance. There is also a stock of baby wipes, plastic bags and disposable protective gloves and aprons for staff to use.

Pupils may also be taken to the medical room and adjoining toilet for support with intimate care. There is also a stock of baby wipes, plastic bags and disposable protective gloves and aprons for staff to use.

Staff will always wear disposable gloves and an apron when supporting a child in need of intimate care.

Each child's right to privacy needs to be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation 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. In such a case, the reason will be documented on a care plan.

When undertaking intimate care support, the member of staff should always notify another member of staff when they are going to assist a pupil. To protect the privacy and dignity of the child, staff should notify colleagues discreetly that they are taking the pupil for personal or intimate care. Where possible, a second member of staff should be on hand to support a colleague undertaking intimate care, should they be needed. Although the second member of staff must be in the vicinity and visible or audible, they do not need to be present in the specific toilet area unless there is a sound reason for them to be there.

If a pupil in EYFS soils him/herself during school time, one member of staff (taking account of the above) will help the child:

- Remove their soiled clothes
- Clean the skin (this usually includes bottom, genitalia, legs and possibly feet)
- Dress the child in their own spare clothes, or those provided by the school
- Wrap soiled clothes in plastic bags and give discretely to parents to take home.

At all times the member of staff should pay attention to the level of distress or discomfort of the child. Our intention is that the child will never be left in soiled clothing. In the event a child is reluctant and finally refuses to let an adult help them, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

If the child is ill, the parent/guardian must be contacted.

It is intended that the child will not experience any negative disciplining, but only positive encouragement and praise for her/his endeavours to master the necessary skill to use the toilet successfully. It is always our intention to avoid drawing attention to such events and positively to encourage the child in his/her efforts to gain these skills.

The child 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 him/herself as he/she can.

In the event that intimate care is necessary while children are outside of school on a visit/trip, two members of staff will be present for care and the most appropriate place identified. This event will also be logged on return to school and shared with parents.

Where a child has continuing incontinence problems (including beyond Early Years Foundation Stage) parents/guardians are expected to provide a complete set of spare clothes and baby wipes.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of ability, development and understanding. Staff will avoid physical contact unless the child needs help.

Under no circumstances will students, work experience or visitors be asked to give intimate care.

Where specialist equipment and facilities above those currently available in the school are required, every reasonable effort will be made to provide appropriate facilities in a timely fashion, following assessment by a Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking account of developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

The management of all pupils with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. Individual care plans will be drawn up for any pupil requiring regular intimate care. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/guardians and recorded on the care plan. The needs and wishes of pupils and parents/guardians will be taken into account wherever possible and practicable, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Where a care plan is not in place and a child needs help with intimate care (e.g. in the case of a toilet 'accident') then parents/guardians will be informed the same day.

Parents/guardians will be asked to give permission for intimate care as children enter Early Years Foundation Stage. The permission request outcome is kept on record. All staff working with the relevant child are informed of those children where no permission is given.

**The person providing intimate care to a pupil must inform the class teacher of this.**

## Child Protection:

The Governors and staff of Richard Cobden School recognise that disabled children are particularly vulnerable to all forms of abuse. Child Protection and Multi-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to at all times.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation (unexplained marks, bruises or soreness for example) she/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leader.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents/guardians will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of the process of reaching a resolution. Further advice will be taken from partner agencies. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, this will be investigated in accordance with agreed procedures.

There is an obligation on schools to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Richard Cobden Primary School undergo enhanced DBS checks on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. The aim of the DBS check is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society. Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school. All those working with children will be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and will only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their supervisor's/ mentor's satisfaction. It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students will only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

## Disabilities

The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

Effective From	July 2024
Review Date	September 2026



Dear Parents/Guardian,

Richard Cobden School has an Intimate Care Policy, detailing procedures for managing intimate changing and cleaning of children, which is available from the school office or on the website. If a child wets or soils themselves whilst they are at school, it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible. Staff are experienced in carrying out this task if you wish them to do so.

If you would prefer, in the event of your child needing intimate care, the school can contact you or your emergency contact to notify you that you need to attend without delay to provide intimate care for your child yourself.

Please fill out the permission slip below stating your preference for your child. Please note that this will apply during your child's time at school, unless you notify otherwise in writing.

Yours sincerely,

Scarlett Cookson  
Head of School

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Full Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned by school staff if they wet/soil themselves and if they are unable change themselves independently whilst in the care of Richard Cobden School.

I do not give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be changed and cleaned. I understand that in the event I (or the 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 the child.

Name of Parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Date:

Dear Parents/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_,

**INFORMING PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF AN INTIMATE CARE ISSUE**

This is a courtesy letter informing you that your child had a toileting accident today at school. This matter was dealt with swiftly and sensitively by \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member) in accordance with our Intimate Care Policy.

We have returned your child's clothing for washing.

Please wash and return any items borrowed from the school at your earliest convenience.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Scarlett Cookson  
Head of School

