Blanchelande College

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Nursery Intimate Care Policy

Policy statement

At Nursery, we are committed to ensuring that every child in our care feels safe, respected, valued, and supported. We recognise that intimate care is an important part of early years practice and that children should receive support in a way that protects their dignity, promotes independence, and respects their individual needs and rights.

Intimate care refers to any care task that involves personal hygiene, bodily functions, or physical contact of a personal nature. This includes:

- Supporting children with toileting and toilet training.
- Assisting with nappy changing.
- Supporting children who are not yet fully toilet trained or who require additional continence support.
- Helping children clean themselves after using the toilet or following toileting accidents.
- Supporting children with dressing and undressing.
- Helping with washing, cleaning, and maintaining personal hygiene.

Toileting and Toilet Training

At Nursery, we understand that children develop toileting skills at different ages and stages. Toilet training is a partnership between the child, nursery, and parents/carers. Staff will work closely with families to ensure consistency between home and nursery wherever possible.

Staff will:

- Support children who are beginning toilet training with patience, encouragement, and reassurance.

- Follow each child's individual toileting routine and family preferences where possible.
- Encourage children to recognise when they need to use the toilet and develop independence at their own pace.
- Provide children with appropriate support to manage clothing, wiping, handwashing, and personal hygiene.
- Use positive language and avoid making children feel embarrassed, rushed, or ashamed about toileting.
- Praise children for their efforts and progress while recognising that accidents are a normal part of development.
- Support children who continue to require nappies or pull-ups due to their stage of development or individual needs.

Respect for Dignity and Privacy

Staff will always provide intimate care in a way that maintains the child's dignity, privacy, and emotional wellbeing.

Staff will:

- Provide care in designated areas that allow for privacy while maintaining appropriate safeguarding practices.
- Explain what they are doing using simple, age-appropriate language.
- Respect the child's personal boundaries and individual preferences.
- Be mindful of the child's feelings and respond sensitively to any signs of discomfort or distress.
- Encourage children to take an active role in their own care wherever appropriate.

Children's dignity must be protected at all times, and intimate care should never be rushed or carried out in a way that could cause embarrassment or distress.

Individualised Care

Every child is unique, with different abilities, levels of understanding, development, and personal circumstances. Staff must adapt their approach to meet each child's individual needs.

Staff should:

- Work with parents/carers, the Nursery Manager, and Nursery SENCO where additional support or advice is required.
- Follow individual care plans where a child has specific toileting, continence, medical, or additional needs.
- Consider cultural, religious, and family preferences regarding intimate care wherever possible.
- Encourage children to develop independence and confidence in managing their own personal care.
- Ensure that children who require additional support receive care that promotes inclusion and self-esteem.

Hygiene Standards and Infection Control

Staff must follow strict hygiene procedures when providing intimate care to protect both children and staff from illness and infection.

Staff should:

- Wear appropriate protective clothing provided by the nursery when required.
- Make reasonable adjustments if a child is uncomfortable with protective clothing, following discussion with the Nursery Manager and Nursery ALNCO where necessary.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after providing intimate care.
- Clean and sanitise changing mats and any equipment after each use.
- Dispose of nappies, wipes, and other waste appropriately using nappy sacks and designated bin.
- Change bin bags when bins are full or if there is an unpleasant smell.
- Place wet or soiled clothing into a sealed nappy sack and return it to the child's bag.
- Inform parents/carers at the end of the session/day if their child has had a toileting accident, soiled clothing, or required additional support.

If a child has an accident involving bodily fluids on the floor, furniture, or equipment:

- The area must be made safe and restricted from use immediately.
- Appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures must be followed.
- Furniture or equipment should be removed and cleaned appropriately where necessary.
- The area must remain unavailable until it is fully cleaned and dry.

Children's Consent and Communication

Children should always be treated with respect and support to have a voice in their own care.

Staff will:

- Explain what is happening before carrying out any intimate care task.
- Encourage children to communicate their needs, preferences, and feelings.
- Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal signs of discomfort or distress.
- Stop and reassure a child if they become upset or uncomfortable.
- Seek advice from the Nursery Manager or Nursery ALNCO if a child consistently refuses care or additional support is needed.

Children should be encouraged to understand their own bodies, personal boundaries, and the importance of hygiene in an age-appropriate way.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is a fundamental responsibility of all staff, particularly when providing intimate care. Due to the nature of intimate care, staff must ensure that all procedures are carried out professionally, transparently, and in line with safeguarding guidance.

Staff must:

- Follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures at all times.
- Be aware of signs and indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Report any concerns about a child's welfare immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Ensure intimate care is never carried out in a secretive or inappropriate manner.
- Maintain professional boundaries during all care routines.

Any concerns relating to a child's response to intimate care, changes in behaviour, unexplained marks or injuries, or inappropriate comments must be recorded and reported according to safeguarding procedures.

Staff Responsibilities and Professional Conduct

All staff involved in intimate care must demonstrate professionalism, sensitivity, and respect.

Staff providing intimate care will:

- Have appropriate background checks and safeguarding training.
- Understand the nursery's intimate care procedures.
- Treat every child with kindness, patience, and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding children's personal care needs.
- Support children to become as independent as possible.

Students and volunteers must not provide intimate care.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are key partners in supporting children's personal care development. The nursery will work collaboratively with families to understand each child's routines, needs, and progress.

Parents/carers should inform the nursery of:

- Current toileting routines and expectations.
- Any changes in a child's toileting needs.
- Any medical conditions or additional support requirements.
- Preferred approaches used at home where appropriate.

The nursery will communicate openly with families to ensure children receive consistent, respectful, and supportive care.