



Mission statement:

**'Opening minds, unlocking potential, celebrating success together'**

## Intimate Care Safe Touch Policy

This policy represents the agreed principles for intimate care safe touch throughout the school.

This policy has been agreed by all staff and governors within the school.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate of care of their children

### **Principles**

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 should be allowed to exercise choice and should 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 should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young persons' right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

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## Physical contact other than to control or restrain

Intimate care safe touch is one of the following:

- assisting in the washing of young children who have wet/soiled themselves or assisting children who have vomited or feels unwell.
- intimate care risk assessments for certain children with medical needs or disabilities.
- using physical contact to demonstrate exercises or techniques, for example, in PE, sports coaching or other practical subjects.
- administering First Aid or assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- supporting younger children and children with special needs who may need physical prompts or help
- giving appropriate comfort to a child who is distressed
- recognising that physical contact is a sensitive issue for some cultural groups
- acknowledging that physical contact becomes increasingly open to question as children reach and go through adolescence
- ensuring a consistent approach where staff and pupils are of different genders
- acknowledging that innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued
- having a prescribed handling policy for children requiring complex or repeated physical handling, with specific training for staff who deal with them.
- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing

### Supporting dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed, particularly in Pre School/ Reception. Staff will not be alone with child in this situation. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

### Providing comfort or support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Pre School/Reception year). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

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### **Medical procedures (See Policy on Medicines)**

If it is necessary for a child to receive medicine during the school day parents must fill out a permission form from the school office and discuss their child's needs with a member of staff before the school agrees to administer medicines or medical care. It must be made clear to parents that staff administration of medicines is voluntary. Any member of staff giving medicine to a pupil should follow the administering medication policy check:

- The pupil's name
- Written instructions provided by parents or doctor
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry date

Particular attention should be paid to the safe storage, handling and disposal of medicines.

The Head Teacher has prime responsibility for the safe management of medicines kept at school. This duty derives from the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). School staff are also responsible for making sure that anyone in school is safe. Medicines should generally be kept in a secure place, not accessible to pupils but arrangements must be in place to ensure that any medication that a pupil might need in an emergency is readily available.

### **Soiling**

Intimate care for soiling should only be given to a child after the parents have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents who have children in reception year may sign a permission form so that the staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling themselves (Appendix 1 and 1a).

If a parent does not give consent, the school will contact the parents or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives. Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, the school seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Head Teacher will be consulted. If put in an impossible situation where the child is at risk of becoming distressed, staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

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When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Another member of staff is aware and within sight/sound and the procedure is recorded and witnessed.
- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are dealt with in accordance with the spillage policy and protocols
- If the staff member is willing to, any excrement that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child

### **Hygiene**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic

hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

### **Protection for staff**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Staff involved to record and sign on the intimate care record when they support a child who is soiled/wet
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

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### **Safeguards for children**

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Hamsterley Primary School are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. The DBS's aim 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 should be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and should only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their supervisor's satisfaction.

**It is not appropriate to ask them or for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures.**

Apprentice teaching assistant should only carry out intimate care procedures under the supervision of the class teacher.

Student teachers should only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier if necessary.

**This policy was updated in March 2020**

**Lynn Cowans  
Headteacher**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Mark den Hollander  
Chair of Governors**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

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(Appendix 1).

**Permission form for the Provision of Care**

(To be filled out before starting Reception)

If a child wets or soils themselves while they are at school it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible. Our staff are experienced and trained at changing wet clothing if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, the school can contact you on your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Hamsterley Primary has an Intimate Care Safe Touch Policy which is available to view on our website or ask for a copy from the office.

Please fill out the permission slip below stating your preference.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Cowans

Head Teacher

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Name of Child.....Class.....

**Please tick as appropriate**

I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned by staff if they wet themselves while in the care of Hamsterley Primary School. I understand that the school will contact me if my child soils themselves and I will arrange to have my child changed without delay.

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

Signature of Parent/Carer.....

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