



# Intimate care Policy

*Hurst Green School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.*

**2023**

Next Review:2026



# HURST GREEN INFANT SCHOOL & NURSERY

## INTIMATE CARE POLICY

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<b>Governor Lead:</b>	Chair of Governors
<b>Nominated Lead Member of Staff:</b>	Head Teacher
<b>Status &amp; Review Cycle:</b>	Statutory/every three years
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	January 2026

### INTRODUCTION

Staff who work with young children or children who have special needs realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and requires staff to be respectful of children's needs.

This policy aims to:

- safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of the children;
- provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose role includes intimate care procedures;
- assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.

'Intimate care' can be defined as 'care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the sexual parts of the body.' Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management, as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Intimate care tasks may include:

- dressing and undressing (including underwear)
- helping someone to use a toilet
- changing nappies
- cleaning, wiping or washing intimate parts of the body

Personal care tasks may include:

- feeding
- administering oral medication
- hair care
- dressing and undressing (clothing)

- washing non-intimate body parts
- prompting to go to the toilet

Children's dignity will be preserved, and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery work in partnership with parents and carers to provide continuity of care for children wherever possible.

Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

Children's individual intimate care needs cannot be seen in isolation or separated from other aspects of their lives. Encouraging them to participate in their own intimate or personal care is part of our general approach towards facilitating participation in daily life.

Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. They are aware that children with additional disabilities are particularly vulnerable. Staff involved in these children's intimate care will be sensitive to their specific needs.

**At Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery, we recognise the need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child will be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.**

## **TOILET TRAINING**

As with all developmental milestones in the EYFS, there is a wide variation in the time at which children master the skills involved in being fully toilet trained. For a variety of reasons, children may:

- be fully toilet trained
- have been fully toilet trained but regressed a little while, due to the excitement and stress of starting at a setting
- be fully toilet trained at home but have accidents in the setting, or vice versa
- be nearly there but need some reminders or encouragement
- not be toilet trained, but respond well to a structured toilet training process
- be fully toilet trained but have a serious disability or learning difficulty
- have developmental delays but, with additional support, will master these skills
- have SEND and might require help with some or all aspects of personal care

## **OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE**

All children who require intimate care are always treated respectfully. The child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance. Children are encouraged to express choice and to have a positive image of their bodies.

**Confident, self-assured children who feel that their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse.**

- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and are fully aware of best practice.

Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following any assessment from the physiotherapist or occupational therapist, as required.

- There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is made aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- As a basic principle, children 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 or herself as possible. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing him or herself.
- Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child, through consultation with parents. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and health. Parents will be given a copy of their child's individual intimate care plan, along with a copy of this policy for further reference. A signed copy of the intimate care plan will be returned to the school and kept on file.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult, unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.
- At Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery, we have decided that where a child is heavily soiled and/or needs an adult to clean them, an additional adult will be present outside the toilet cubicle to act as an extra safeguard for both the child and the carer. A parent will be informed as soon as possible after the event where this has happened.
- Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Parents will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis. A clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any constraints; e.g., staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each child will have an assigned senior member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

## **THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to a member of the school's DSL team, using CPOMS. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to social care and/or the police, if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary, prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into, and outcomes recorded. Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies where necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed as outlined in the school's Child Protection Policy.

## **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

- Child Protection policy
- Early Years policy
- Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Whistle-blowing policy
- Allegations against a member of staff
- Safe working practice guidance
- Staff code of conduct
- Health, Safety and Welfare policy

## **FURTHER USEFUL RESOURCES AND WEBSITES**

- [eycspractitioners@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:eycspractitioners@surreycc.gov.uk)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- <https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>
- <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/teachers-and-education-staff/educational-advice-and-support/safeguarding>
- Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS): [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)