



Supporting Children with Medical Needs

Approved by:	Headteacher	Date: December 2025
Last reviewed on:	December 2025	
Next review due by:	December 2026 (annual)	

An increasing number of children with disabilities and medical needs are being included in mainstream educational settings and early years and childcare settings in the private, voluntary and independent sector. A significant number of these require assistance with intimate care tasks, especially toileting. Other children may also experience difficulties with toileting for a variety of reasons.

All of the children we work with have the right to be safe, to be treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect, and to be able to access all aspects of the education curriculum.

We have an obligation to meet the needs of children and young people with delayed personal development in the same way as they would meet the individual needs of those with delayed language, or any other kind of delayed development. Children should not be excluded from normal school activities solely because of incontinence, neither should they be sent home to change, or be required to wait for their parents or carers to attend to them at school. However, if children are so badly soiled (for example, if all their layers of clothing are soiled extensively or they have not told an adult and have been in soiled underwear for a long time) that they cannot be cleaned effectively and there are concerns that this could lead to soreness or infection, parents/carers will be asked to collect them so that they can be bathed or have a shower.

The aims of this policy and associated guidance are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose contracts include intimate care.
- To assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.
- To remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination, and ensure inclusion for all children as pupils.

Definition of Intimate Care

'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.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified as relevant at Kingswood Primary School include:

- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Helping someone use the toilet
- Wiping intimate parts of the body

Definition of Personal Care

'Personal Care' generally carries more positive perceptions than intimate care

Those personal care tasks specifically identified as relevant here include:

- Skin care/applying external medication
- Feeding
- Administering oral medication
- Hair care
- Dressing and undressing (clothing)
- Washing non-intimate body parts

- Prompting to go to the toilet

Basic Principles

Children's 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 should therefore be part of a general approach towards facilitating participation in daily life.

Staff should bear in mind the following principles:

- Children have a right to feel safe and secure.
- Children have a right to an education and schools have a duty to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils of all abilities and needs.
- Children should be respected and valued as individuals.
- Children have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff when meeting their needs.
- Children have the right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices.
- Children have the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.
- Children have the right to express their views and have them heard. Schools must have complaints procedures that children and young people can access.
- A child's Intimate/Personal care plan/Education Health Care Plan should be designed to lead to independence.

Vulnerability to Abuse

Children and young people with disabilities have been shown to be particularly vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school or settings Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy and procedures, with agreed procedures within this policy and with the child/young person's own care plan.

The following are factors that increase the child or young person's vulnerability:

- Children with disabilities often have less control over their lives than is normal.
- They do not always receive sex and relationship education, or if they do, may not fully understand it, and so are less able to recognise abuse.
- Through residential, foster or hospital placements, they may have multiple carers.
- Differences in appearance disposition and behaviour may be attributed to the child's disability rather than to abuse.
- They are not always able to communicate what is happening to them.

Intimate care may involve touching the private parts of the child/young person's body and therefore may leave staff more vulnerable to accusations of abuse. It is unrealistic to eliminate all risk but this vulnerability places an important responsibility on staff to act in accordance with agreed procedures.

Good Practice Guidance

Working with parents and carers

Establishing effective working relationships with parents/carers is a key task for all schools and is particularly necessary for children/young people with specific care needs or disabilities. Parents/carers are encouraged and empowered to work with professionals to ensure their child's needs are properly identified, understood and met. Although they are made welcome, and given every opportunity to explain their child's particular needs, they are not made to feel

responsible for their child's care in school or for making teaching staff disability aware. They are closely involved in the preparation of Individual Medical Plans or Toileting Plans.

Cross gender care. There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved in intimate/personal care tasks, however, the school recognises that it may make some parents, carers or the child uncomfortable, to have a carer of the opposite sex to attend to toileting or other intimate needs. The school will work in partnership with parents/carers and the child to ensure that their views and needs are respected and where possible an adult of the same sex as the child will meet their intimate care needs.

Examples of positive approaches to intimate/personal care which ensure a safe and comfortable experience for the child:

- Get to know the child beforehand in other contexts to gain an appreciation of his/her mood and systems of communication
- Have a knowledge of and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivities related to aspects of intimate care
- Speak to the child by name and ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity. Address the child in age-appropriate ways.
- Give explanations of what is happening in straightforward and reassuring way
- **Agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions** that will be used by staff and encourage children to use these terms appropriately – this forms part of the toileting plan
- Encourage the child to undertake as much of the procedure for themselves as possible, including wiping intimate areas and dressing/undressing
- Seek the child's permission before undressing if he/she is unable to do this unaided
- Provide facilities that afford privacy and modesty

Procedures:

Kingswood Primary School recognises that an individual's intimate care requirements do not always conform to regimental timetables and will therefore allow children to have access as appropriate without adverse comment.

Children are encouraged to go to the toilet during break and lunch times, although this depends upon individual needs and circumstances.

Children may be accompanied to the toilet by a member of staff as needed. The adult will wait a discrete distance from the toilet entrance.

Toileting Plans

If a child is in school without being toilet trained, a meeting will be arranged with the child's parent/carers within the first half term to put a toileting plan in place to enable the child to gain independence. (see appendix 1)

Facilities:

Kingswood Primary School actively supports the provision of open access to well-maintained, clean, private and safe toilet facilities throughout the school day.

Toilets are checked to ensure cleanliness throughout the school day. All toilet areas have properly maintained supplies at a convenient height.

Toileting Accidents:

Discretion and sensitivity are important, as many children are embarrassed by wet or soiled underwear. Independence is encouraged when children are changing, cleaning and drying themselves. If necessary, a member of staff can assist.

- The Reception/Year 1 toilet has a box containing wipes, disposable gloves and spare underwear.
- PPE is available- masks, disposable gloves and wipes are available from the office
- There is a nappy disposal unit for the disposal of heavily soiled items.

Unless they have been contacted because a child has needed washing, parents are informed at the end of the day if a child has had a toileting accident. Wet / soiled clothing will be put into a plastic bag and returned discretely. If clothing is heavily soiled and parents have requested it, it can be disposed of in the nappy bin provided.

Parents may provide extra clothing for their child if it is known that they have regular accidents. Kingswood Primary School provide spare clothing for unexpected emergency needs.

Children who have soiled or wet themselves severely are usually dealt with by two adults to assist in the changing and care of the child. This will take place in the reception toilet area. Usually, one adult cares for the child in the cubicle and the other adult assists in getting any necessary clothes, wipes etc thus ensuring the toilet area is free from other children. PPE should be worn during the coronavirus pandemic.

The member(s) of staff who accompany the child must complete the 'record of personal care intervention' (appendix 2).

If any member of staff has concerns relating to child protection issues, they should advise the lead DSL or deputy DSL immediately.

Note:

In line with Disability Discrimination legislation, no child will be excluded from school or not admitted to school because of issues related to toileting. In this case an individual plan is devised.

Parents are informed immediately and advised to collect their child, if it is considered that the soiling is due to illness or the child may continue to be embarrassed or uncomfortable.

Curriculum:

The children are encouraged to respect the toilet facilities and each other via PSHE lessons and Citizenship sessions.

Hand washing is a consistent part of the toilet routine and good hand washing procedures are encouraged and taught. This policy also links with

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Equality Policy

Health and Safety policy

Administration of Medicines Policy

"Intimate Care and Toileting Guidance for Early Years settings and Schools" Surrey County Council July 2014

Appendix 1 Toileting plan

Record of discussion with parents/carers
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Child/young person's name:	Date of birth:	Date agreed:
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	Details	Action
Working towards independence: Such as taking child/young person to toilet at timed intervals, using sign or symbol, any rewards used		
Arrangements for nappy/pad changing: Such as who, where, arrangements for privacy		
Level of assistance needed: Such as undressing, dressing, hand washing, talking/signing to child		
Infection control: Such as wearing disposable gloves, nappy disposal		
Sharing information: Such as if the child/young person has a nappy rash or any marks, any family customs/cultural practice		
Resources needed: Such as special seat, nappies/pull-ups, creams, disposable sacks, change of clothes, toilet step, gloves		
Language to be used: To agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions so that a common language is shared between home and school		

Signed: Parent: Key member of staff:	Review date:
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c.c. Parent/carer

Appendix 2 Record of personal care intervention

Child's name:

Date	Start Time	Incident	Staff signature	Comments	End Time