



Intimate Care Policy

Reviewed by: Anne Patel

Reviewed on: February 2024

Next review: February 2025

Endorsement

Full endorsement is given to this policy by:

Name: Joel Chalfen

Position: Cambridge Steiner School Trustee

Date: February 2024

Legislation / guidance that informs this document

- Safeguarding guidance for intimate care
- Early years foundation stage (EYFS)
- Birth to 5 matters

Other Cambridge Steiner School policies that should be read in conjunction with this one

- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Code of conduct for all adults working in School October

What is 'Intimate Care?'

Intimate care involves tasks of an intimate nature associated with bodily functions, bodily products, and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include:

- Support with dressing and undressing (underwear).
- Changing incontinence pads and nappies.
- Help someone use the toilet or wash intimate parts of the body.
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled themselves or vomited.

- It is also associated with other accidents requiring a child to remove their clothes. These include changes due to water play, messy play, sickness, and weather.

Statement of Intent

One aspect of care is to do with protecting our children against dangers of the world, but also about exposing them to natural and age-appropriate challenges. Helle Heckmann¹

- No child is excluded from participating in our setting who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained and who may still be wearing nappies or equivalent.
- We work with parents towards toilet training unless there are medical or other developmental reasons why this may not be appropriate at the time.
- We make necessary adjustments to our bathroom provision and hygiene practice to accommodate children who are not yet toilet trained. We prepare a clean, warm, and organised environment in advance for the care activity.
- We consider intimate care a tool to promote children's independence and autonomy towards self-care in a supportive and non-judgemental way.

Values that underpin the Cambridge Steiner School intimate and respectful care:

Care is about being there with one's presence and offering one's time and real leadership.
Helle Heckmann²

- **Cooperation** – carers create a warm and supportive atmosphere that is not rushed. Inspired by the Pikler approach, carers encourage co-operation, e.g. the young child can stand up while getting cleaned or cleaning themselves. Carers work following the maxim: with the child, not to the child.
- **Worth** - all students should be treated as of equal value regardless of their gender, race, ability, background or other characteristics.

Individuality – each child has a right to learn and develop with the support of their carer and in a way that best suits the child and their family.

The following are guidelines to assist and protect the adults working in the setting who may be required to carry out this task:

¹ Heckmann, H. (2015), *The Five Golden Keys*. Slowparenting.dk, p. 76.

² Heckmann, H. (2015), *The Five Golden Keys*. Slowparenting.dk, p76.

- Within the daily rhythm, changing times are planned for the young children who are in nappies, 'pull-ups' or practicing toileting.
- The key worker takes the responsibility to prepare the environment and activity for the intimate care.
- The child is to be changed in a calm and relaxed manner. When a child is supported with this, the team members are informed.
- Gloves and aprons are available for the adult before changing starts and the areas are prepared.
- Changing area is open and is not closed.
- Staff are to ensure that mobile phones are not on their persons while changing or supporting a child.
- It is the parents' responsibility to provide nappies/pull ups, nappy bags and wet wipes if appropriate. The school will provide nappy bins and spare clothes if the child does not have their own spare clothes.
- All staff are familiar with the hygiene procedures and carry these out when changing nappies.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it or 'have a try'.
- They are encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and towels to hand.
- Staff are gentle when changing; they avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about 'nappy content'.
- Nappies and 'pull ups' are disposed of hygienically. Any soil (faeces) in nappies or pull ups is flushed down the toilet and the nappy or pull up is bagged and put in the nappy bin. Cloth nappies, trainer pants and ordinary pants that have been wet or soiled are bagged for the parent to take home.
- If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/'pull ups' in the setting this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter. Settings have a 'duty of care' towards children's personal needs.
- This information will be relayed to the parents on collection.
- Older children are regularly offered toilet breaks and have access to the toilet when they need to.
- This Policy will be made available for all staff to read and a copy will be displayed in the changing areas for future reference.
- The same routine supports the child's learning and emotional safety: child will go to toilet, wash hands with soap and use the personal hand towel. Similarly, when getting dressed for the garden it is the same routine every day: waterproof trousers, jacket, hat and wellies near the door.

Guidance for intimate Care Needs Over and Above Accidents:

- The medical needs of the individual child would be outlined and addressed in a medical plan where the safeguarding details would be included in detail. Any child who presents themselves

in kindergarten as wet or soiled needs to be supported by an adult to change themselves as soon as it is possible. The role of the adult is to support and assist the child to change themselves, where appropriate.

- The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned.
- Where specialist equipment and facilities above that currently available in the school are required, every effort will be made to provide appropriate facilities in a timely fashion, following assessment by a Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist.
- There is careful communication with any pupil who requires intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication to discuss needs and preferences.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- Pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence possible, according to their individual condition and abilities.
- Individual care plans will be drawn up for any pupil requiring regular intimate care; Careful consideration will be given to individual situations 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 reasons will be documented.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the care plan.
- The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Child Protection:

- Child Protection and Multi-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to at all times.
- We do not use euphemisms for genitals, instead we use the correct anatomical names throughout the school: penis and vulva.
- Staff do not make inappropriate comments about children's genitals when changing their nappies or supporting older children.