



Blue Hills Federation



INTIMATE CARE POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2023

The Blue Hills Federation

The Blue Hills Federation is a collective of three primary schools – Clunbury CE Primary School, Newcastle CE Primary School and St Mary's Bucknell CE Primary School. All three schools share one Executive Headteacher and one Governing Body. When using the term 'Blue Hills Federation' within this policy, it is in reference to all three schools. When policy only applies to one school that school will be named specifically. Newcastle CE Primary School does not have a nursery or a preschool, therefore any references to nursery or pre-school do not apply to Newcastle CE Primary School.

Our Vision

Proverbs 22:6 - Good News Bible

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.'

We are a caring Church Federation bringing together and serving many communities. We provide nurturing environments that facilitates learning for all. We encourage everybody to become confident, sociable and responsible citizens who achieve to the best of their ability in preparation for a fulfilling future.

Our Values

Trust and Truth; Joy and Happiness; Love and Respect; Thankfulness;
Friendship and Family; Perseverance and Resilience

Review Date: September 2026

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Principles

1.1 The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (DfES 2006) to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school.

1.2 This Federation takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

1.3 The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

1.4 This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Schools Code of Conduct or guidance on safe working practice
- Whistleblowing Policy

1.5 The Blue Hills Federation 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. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

1.6 The Blue Hills Federation recognises that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation, with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

1.7 Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

1.8 This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Definition

2.0 Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

2.1 It also includes supervision of children involved in intimate self-care.

Best Practice

3.0 Staff who provide intimate care at the Blue Hills Federation are trained to do so including child protection and are fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

3.1 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.

3.2 As an additional safeguard, staff involved in meeting intimate care needs will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the same children, wherever possible.

3.3 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 their needs and preferences. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

3.4 All 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 his/herself as possible.

3.5 Children who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) or care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be noted and taken into account.

(NB More information regarding care plans and risk assessments for children with complex medical needs can be found in 'Including Me: Managing Complex Health Needs in Schools and Early Settings' by Jeanne Carlin, published by the Council for Disabled Children and DfES, 2005)

3.6 Where a care plan or EHCP is not in place, parents/carers will be informed confidentially the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and soiled him/herself).

3.7 Every 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. Adults who assist children one-to-one should be employees of the school and be DBS checked at the appropriate level.

3.8 It is not always practical for two members of staff to assist with an intimate procedure and also this does not take account of the child's privacy. It is advisable, however, for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

3.9 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. In the schools, usually the child is assisted with intimate care in the toilets, with 2 members of staff supporting. In Pre School and Nursery there is a changing table used for nappy changing and a toilet area for older children to access. Staff close the blinds at the Pre School and Nursery window for privacy before using the changing table and there are always 2 members of staff in attendance. Following any form of intimate care both the school and nursery have an intimate care log where the procedure is recorded and signed.

3.10 Wherever possible staff should care for a child of the same gender. However, in some circumstances this principle may need to be waived; for example, female staff supporting boys in a primary school as no male staff are available. Male members of staff should not normally provide routine intimate care (such as toileting, changing or bathing) for adolescent girls. This is safe working practice to protect children and to protect staff from allegations of abuse.

3.11 The religious views and cultural values of families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

3.12 All staff should be aware of the schools' confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

3.13 If necessary, advice should be taken from the local council regarding disposal of large amounts of waste products.

3.14 No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Child Protection

4.0 The Governors and staff at the Blue Hills Federation recognise that children with special needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

4.1 The schools' child protection policy and procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

4.2 From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely but our schools, best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.

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

4.4 If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, soreness etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Leads for Child Protection in that individual school.

A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to SSP if necessary, in accordance with inter-agency procedures. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless it is considered that to do so will place the child at risk of harm.

4.5 If a child becomes distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Executive Headteacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Executive Headteacher) and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order 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 if necessary.

4.6 If a child makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, this will be investigated by the Executive Headteacher (or by the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Executive Headteacher) in accordance with the agreed procedures.

4.7 Any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Executive Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Executive Headteacher.

Physiotherapy

5.0 Children who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the EHCP that a member of the school staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly.

5.1 Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

5.2 Adults (other than the physiotherapist) carrying out physiotherapy exercises with pupils should be employees of the Federation.

5.3 Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

Medical Procedures

6.0 Children with disabilities might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the EHCP or care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.

6.1 Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

Massage

7.0 Massage is now commonly used with children who have complex needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation. Staff at the Blue Hills Federation may be involved in delivering aspects of programmes devised by therapists.

7.1 It is recommended that massage undertaken by school staff should be confined to parts of the body such as the hands, feet and face in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and children.

Record Keeping

8.0 It is good practice for a written record to be kept in an agreed format every time a child has physiotherapy or requires assistance with intimate care, including date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. Following any form of intimate care both the school and nursery have an intimate care log where the procedure is recorded and signed.