



WIDNES
ACADEMY

ASPIRING AND ACHIEVING

Intimate Care Policy 2026-2027

Ratified by Governors: Spring 2026

Next Review Date: Spring 2027

Link: Mrs L.kirchin

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PLACE
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1. Policy statement

This policy sets out the principles and procedures for intimate care at **Widnes Academy**. It is intended to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of children, support staff, and ensure that intimate care is carried out with **sensitivity, respect, privacy and dignity** at all times.

This policy has been agreed by staff and governors and applies to all members of staff involved in providing intimate care.

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- safeguard the rights and best interests of children
- ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect
- make sure intimate care is a positive and reassuring experience wherever possible
- protect staff who may be required to support children in sensitive situations
- provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- inform parents and carers about how intimate care is managed
- ensure parents and carers are consulted appropriately about their child's intimate care needs

3. Principles

Every child is an individual and should be treated with care, respect and understanding. Intimate care should be carried out as gently and sensitively as possible. Wherever appropriate, children should be encouraged to do as much for themselves as they are able to do.

Staff should remember how they would feel in the child's position and should always act in a way that protects the child's dignity, privacy and self-esteem. With the right approach, intimate care can also help children to:

- develop independence
- build confidence and self-esteem
- learn about personal safety and body awareness

Matters relating to intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively. The child's privacy and dignity must be maintained at all times.

4. Definition of intimate care

For the purposes of this policy, intimate care may include:

- supporting a child with dressing or undressing
- providing comfort or support for a distressed child

- assisting a child with a medical need who is unable to carry out the task unaided
- cleaning a child who has soiled themselves, vomited or is unwell

5. Supporting dressing and undressing

There may be occasions, particularly in Nursery and Early Years, when staff need to help a child with dressing or undressing.

In these situations:

- staff should always encourage the child to try to dress and undress independently wherever possible
- support should be given in a way that protects the child's dignity
- assistance should be appropriate to the child's age, stage of development and level of need

6. Providing comfort or support

Children, particularly in Nursery and Reception, may seek physical comfort from staff. Where this happens, staff must ensure that:

- physical contact is kept to a minimum
- contact is child-initiated wherever possible
- reassurance is given in a professional and appropriate manner
- the member of staff's hands remain visible
- the child is not positioned in a way that could be considered intimate or inappropriate

7. Soiling, vomiting and other intimate care needs

Written parental consent must be obtained prior to the school providing regular intimate care (e.g., for pupils with SEND or medical needs). This should be recorded on the Intimate Care Plan and reviewed at least annually or sooner if needs change.

If a pupil soils themselves and no written consent exists, staff should attempt to obtain verbal consent from the parent/carer. If parents cannot be reached and the pupil requires immediate help, staff should act in the pupil's best interests, record the actions taken and the attempts to contact parents, and notify parents as soon as possible.

- If a parent, carer or emergency contact can attend within a short time, the child will be kept calm, supported and away from other children to preserve dignity until they arrive.
- The child must **never** be left alone.
- The child will remain dressed at all times and must not be left partially clothed.

If the parent, carer or emergency contact cannot be reached, staff will seek verbal consent where possible. This permission must be sought on each occasion if written consent has not already been provided.

If parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the Principal must be informed. If a child is at risk and the situation is urgent, staff must act appropriately in the child's best interests. Where physical contact is necessary to support or protect the child, it must be limited to what is needed to manage the situation safely and sensitively.

When supporting a child with intimate care, staff must:

- wear protective gloves
- explain what is happening in a calm, friendly and reassuring way
- encourage the child to do as much for themselves as possible
- keep physical contact to the minimum necessary
- provide privacy appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- dispose of waste appropriately
- place soiled clothing in a plastic bag, unwashed, and send it home with the child

All spills of vomit, blood or excrement must be cleaned up promptly and disposed of safely.

For trips and outings, the school will arrange intimate care in advance through the Intimate Care Plan. Parents will be asked to sign specific consent for off-site intimate care, and appropriate changing facilities, staffing ratios and PPE provisions will be confirmed prior to the trip. Staff will ensure confidentiality and dignity are maintained off-site and will carry a record of care in sealed, confidential format.

8. Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection and must follow basic hygiene procedures at all times. Protective disposable gloves must be available and used where appropriate.

9. Protection for staff

Staff must take appropriate precautions to reduce the risk of allegations being made against them. These precautions include:

- where possible, obtaining verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- allowing the child, wherever possible, to express a preference for who supports them
- encouraging the child to say if they are uncomfortable with the member of staff supporting them
- allowing the child some choice in the sequence of care
- remaining alert to the child's reactions and responding appropriately

10. Safeguarding children

The school has a duty to ensure that all staff who have substantial and unsupervised access to children are suitable to work with them.

At Widnes Academy:

- all staff are subject to DBS checks before they can undertake tasks within school
- personal and professional references are required
- unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work in the school

Volunteers should not carry out intimate care procedures. Students may only do so under the direct supervision of a trained member of staff.

If a staff member has a concern or the pupil makes a disclosure during intimate care, they must stop the intimate care procedure if it is safe to do so, ensure the pupil is comfortable, and immediately report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL (Laura Kirchin or Anna Myles) alongside the member of staff will record the concern on the school's safeguarding system CPOMS and follow procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the school's Child Protection Policy.

11. Intimate care permission and planning

Before starting Nursery, Reception, or other classes where required, parents and carers will be contacted to gain consent regarding intimate care.

For children who need regular support with toileting, washing or changing, an **Intimate Care Plan** should be completed. This plan should record:

- the type of intimate care needed
- how often the care will be given
- any training staff will need
- where the care will take place
- what resources and equipment are required, and who will provide them
- how procedures will differ on trips or outings
- the name of the senior member of staff responsible for ensuring the plan is followed
- the name and relationship of the parent or carer
- signatures and dates for parent/carer and child, where appropriate

Information recorded about intimate care is personal data and will be processed and stored in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and GDPR. Access to intimate care plans and logs will be restricted to staff who need to know. Records will be retained and disposed of in line with the school's retention schedule.

12. Child involvement

Where appropriate, children should be involved in discussions about their intimate care. This may include asking:

- how many staff they would prefer to help
- whether they would like to talk while they are being supported with intimate care

Children's views should be listened to and respected wherever possible.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed in **Spring 2027**, or sooner if guidance or school practice changes.