Intimate Care Policy 2026-27

St Paul's CofE Primary School & Nursery

August 2026

Statement of intent

St Paul's C of E Primary School & Nursery understands the importance of its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Pupils may require assistance with intimate care as a result of their age or due to having SEND. In all instances, effective safeguarding procedures are of paramount importance.

This policy has been developed to ensure that all staff responsible for providing intimate care undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and treat children with sensitivity and respect.

The school is committed to providing intimate care for children in ways that:

- Maintain their dignity.
- Are sensitive to their needs and preferences.
- Maximise their safety and comfort.
- Protect them against intrusion and abuse.
- Seek the child's cooperation and assent wherever possible, explain what is happening in an age- and developmentally appropriate way, and respond sensitively if the child is distressed or refuses care.
- Encourage the child to care for themselves as much as they can.
- Protect the rights of all others involved.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Equality Act 2010

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Childcare Act 2006

Education Act 2002

Education Act 2011

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)

DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education' (effective from 1 September 2026)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

Administering Medication Policy

Complaints Procedures Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Infection Control Policy

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, “intimate care” is the hands-on, physical care in personal hygiene, as well as physical presence or observation during such activities.

Intimate care includes the following:

Helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability

Body bathing other than to the arms and face, and to the legs below the knee

Application of medical treatment other than to the arms and face, and to the legs below the knee

Toileting, wiping and care in the genital and anal areas

Dressing and undressing

Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

Ensuring that intimate care is conducted professionally and sensitively.

Ensuring that the intimate care of all children is carefully planned, including the creation of individual plans following discussions with the parent and the child, with input from the SENCO.

Communicating with parents in order to establish effective partnerships when providing intimate care to children.

Handling any complaints about the provision of intimate care in line with the school’s Complaints Procedures Policy.

Organising training for the provision of intimate care.

All members of staff who provide intimate care are responsible for:

Undergoing training for the provision of intimate care.

Undertaking intimate care practice respectfully, sensitively and in line with the guidelines outlined in this policy.

Parents are responsible for:

Liaising with the school to communicate their wishes in regard to their child’s intimate care.

Providing their consent to the school’s provision of their child’s intimate care.

Adhering to their duties and contributions to their child’s intimate care plan, as outlined in this policy.

Procedures for intimate care

Where a child benefits from planned or prompted toileting/changing, this will be recorded in their individual care arrangements. Care will remain needs-led: children will

be supported whenever necessary and will never be left in wet or soiled clothing or nappies simply because it is outside a planned time.

Intimate care will be provided by appropriately authorised, suitable and trained staff. Staff responsibilities will be allocated in line with their role, competence, training and the child's individual care arrangements.

Staff who provide intimate care will conduct intimate care procedures in addition to the designated changing times if it is necessary; no child will be left in wet/soiled clothing or nappies.

Where a child has identified familiar adults for intimate care, reasonable continuity will be maintained. If a usual member of staff is unavailable, another appropriately authorised and trained member of staff will provide the necessary care in accordance with the child's plan.

Each child using nappies will have a clearly labelled box allocated to them in which there will be clean nappies, wipes and any other individual changing equipment necessary.

Staff will follow current infection-prevention and COSHH arrangements, including use of appropriate disposable gloves and aprons, safe cleaning of the changing area and suitable disposal of waste.

The changing areas are warm and comfortable for the children and are private from others.

Suitable handwashing facilities, liquid soap and hygienic hand-drying arrangements will be available. Staff will wash their hands before and after intimate care and clean the changing area after use using the school's approved products and procedures.

The changing area has paper towels available for members of staff to dry their hands.

Any soiled clothing will be placed in a tied plastic bag on the child's peg and will be returned to parents at the end of the school day.

Used nappies and other continence waste will be disposed of safely through the school's current sanitary-waste arrangements.

Any bodily fluids that transfer onto the changing area will be cleaned appropriately.

If a pupil requires cream or other medicine, such as for a nappy rash, this will be provided in accordance with the Administering Medication Policy, and full parental consent will be gained prior to this.

Older children and those who are more able will be encouraged to use the toilet facilities and will be reminded at regular intervals to go to the toilet.

Members of staff will use the Toilet Introduction Procedures, as outlined in the appendices of this policy, to get children used to using the toilet and encourage them to be as independent as possible.

Children will be reminded and encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet, following the correct procedures for using soap and drying their hands. Intimate-care events will be recorded where required by the child's plan or school procedure, including the care provided and any significant observations, concerns or changes that need to be communicated.

Evergreen Class Considerations

Evergreen Class caters for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), some of whom may require intimate care support beyond the age typically expected. We recognise that many pupils in Evergreen Class may need additional support with their self-care and personal hygiene.

Intimate care in Evergreen Class is delivered respectfully and sensitively, with full regard to the individual's dignity, privacy, and developmental needs.

All staff providing intimate care in Evergreen Class are trained and familiar with pupils' specific needs and care plans. Procedures are agreed with families and documented in individual care plans, which are regularly reviewed with the SENCo. Visual supports, structured routines, and social stories are used to promote pupil understanding and participation where appropriate. Staff always aim to encourage independence and work gradually towards developing self-care skills in line with EHCP targets. Safeguarding and dignity remain central, and all intimate care is carried out in line with school policy and with at least one other adult aware of the procedure taking place.

Parental engagement

The school will liaise closely with parents to establish individual intimate care programmes for each child which will set out the following:

What care is required

Number of staff needed to carry out the care

Any additional equipment needed

The child's preferred means of communication, e.g. visual/verbal, and the terminology to be used for parts of the body and bodily functions

The child's level of ability, i.e. what procedures of intimate care the child can do themselves

Any adjustments necessary in respect to cultural or religious views

The procedure for monitoring and reviewing the intimate care plan

The information concerning the child's intimate care plan will be stored confidentially, and only the parents and authorised staff will have access to the information.

Parents or carers will normally be asked to agree the child's intimate care plan and sign the Intimate Care Parent/Carer Consent Form. The school will seek partnership and consent wherever practicable. However, a lack of immediately available parental consent will not result in a child being left in a situation that compromises their health, hygiene, dignity or welfare; necessary care will be provided in the child's best interests, recorded and communicated to parents or carers as soon as practicable.

If a child without an agreed intimate care plan unexpectedly requires intimate care, staff will contact parents or carers where practicable. If they cannot be reached promptly, staff will provide the minimum necessary care to protect the child's health, hygiene, dignity and welfare, using the same safeguarding and recording principles as planned intimate care.

Any changes that may need to be made to a child's intimate care plan will be discussed with the parents to gain consent and will then be recorded in the written intimate care plan.

Parents will be asked to supply the following items:

Spare clothing

Spare underwear

Safeguarding procedures

The school adopts rigorous safeguarding procedures in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and will apply these requirements to the intimate care procedures.

Relevant personal care of a child, including physical help or prompting and supervising with toileting, washing or dressing because of the child's age, illness or disability, is regulated activity when it falls within the statutory definition. Staff carrying out regulated activity will be subject to the appropriate safer-recruitment checks, including an enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information where legally required.

Staff members working directly with children will receive safeguarding training as part of their mandatory induction, in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

All staff will receive safeguarding and child-protection training at induction and regular updates thereafter in accordance with current Keeping Children Safe in Education. Safeguarding updates will be provided as required and at least annually.

Any safeguarding concern arising during intimate care, including an unexplained injury, mark, disclosure, change in presentation or concern about an adult's conduct, must be reported promptly in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Concerns about an adult working with children will follow the school's allegations/low-level-concerns procedures; whistleblowing arrangements remain available where appropriate.

Any concerns about the correct safeguarding of children will be dealt with in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Toilet Introduction Procedures

As children develop bladder control, they will pass through the following three stages:

The child becomes aware of having wet and/or soiled pants

The child knows that urination/defecation is taking place and can alert a member of staff

The child realises that they need to urinate/defecate and alerts a member of staff in advance

During these stages, members of staff will assess the child over a period of two weeks to determine:

If there is a pattern to when the child is soiled/wet.

The indicators that the child displays when they need the toilet, e.g. facial expressions.

Staff will implement the following strategies to get children used to using the toilet and being independent:

Familiarise the child with the toilet, washing their hands, flushing the toilet and referencing other children as good role-models for this practice

Encourage the child to use the toilet when they are using their personal indicators to show that they may need the toilet

Take the child to the toilet at a time when monitoring has indicated that this is when they would usually need the toilet

Ensure that the child can reach the toilet and is comfortable doing so

Stay with the child and talk to them to make them more relaxed about using the toilet

Don't force the child to use the toilet if they don't want to, but still encourage them to do so using positive language and praise

Deal with any accidents discreetly, sensitively and without any unnecessary attention

Be patient with children when they are using the toilet, and use positive language and praise to encourage them

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if required by changes in legislation, provision, or best practice guidance.

Date of Policy: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

Policy Lead: Headteacher – St Paul's CofE Primary School & Nursery

Approved by: Headteacher and Governing Body

Intimate Care

Parent/Carer Consent Form (Only if unable to complete on Arbor)

PERMISSION FOR SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE		
Name of child		
Date of birth		
Name of parent/carer		
Address		
I give permission for the nursery/school to provide appropriate intimate care to my child (e.g. changing soiled nappies/clothing, washing and toileting)		☐
I will advise the school of anything that may affect my child's personal care (e.g. if medication changes or my child has an infection)		☐
I understand the procedures that will be carried out and I will contact the school immediately if I have any concerns		☐

I understand that I can discuss any restrictions, preferences or concerns about intimate care with the school and that these will be recorded in my child's care arrangements wherever practicable. Where an unexpected intimate-care need arises, the school will contact me or my emergency contact where practicable. I understand that if the school cannot reach me or my emergency contact promptly, staff may provide the minimum necessary intimate care in accordance with the school's policy to protect my child's health, hygiene, dignity and welfare, and will inform me as soon as practicable.		☐
Parent/carer signature		
Name of parent/carer		
Relationship to child		
Date		