

Ottershaw Christ Church CofE Infant and Junior Schools

An Academy in the Good Shepherd Trust

Intimate Care and Toileting Policy

This policy is prescribed by The Good Shepherd Trust and all reference to 'the Trust' includes all Trust schools, the central team and subsidiary organisations.

Date adopted:	Last reviewed:	19.12.25
Review cycle: 3 yearly	Is this policy statutory?	No
Approval: Headteacher	Author:	Headteacher
Local approval*: n/a	Local author*:	n/a

*Local approval will either be the local committee, the head teacher, or the CEO (refer to policy schedule)

Introduction

The school aims to provide an inclusive learning environment that supports children with a wide range of needs. The school recognises that the vast majority of children are appropriately toilet trained and able to manage their own needs competently before they start school. This policy will apply to pupils who, for whatever reason, require toilet training or special arrangements with toileting in school. This policy is written in line with KCSIE (2025), Dept for Education Guidance (Jan 2025), NSPCC Guidance (2025).

This policy:

- Recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers
- Sets out the principles of good practice
- Clarifies the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Acts
- Sets guidance for all children including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Emphasises the employer's duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff
- Provides Child Protection advice
- Raises awareness of the need to protect the dignity of the child
- Sets out the procedure to follow when supporting a child who has wet or soiled themselves

Definition of Intimate Care (School have adopted the NSPCC definition September 2025):

Intimate care is a term used to describe activities involved in meeting the personal care needs of a child. It includes providing care which requires direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, private parts of the body, such as:

- changing nappies, underwear, continence pads or sanitary wear
- helping a child use the toilet
- bathing, showering or washing
- providing some forms of specialist medical care (such as inserting suppositories or pessaries).

It can also involve other forms of physical care, sometimes referred to as 'personal care', including:

- feeding
- changing outer layers of clothing
- applying or administering external or oral medication
- hair care
- washing non-intimate body parts
- prompting children to go to the toilet.

Partnership with Parents/carers

Open and supportive communication with parents and carers is fundamental to planning for and meeting the child's toileting needs effectively and sensitively. Many parents may feel anxious that their child is not able to use the toilet independently and may have already experienced some difficulties with toilet training and/or experienced negative attitudes from others towards the issue. For some children their toileting needs may be relatively short term and related to initial toilet training, whereas others may require a long term toileting programme. Parents will need to feel confident that the setting is able to support their child's toileting needs and is positive about doing so, and should be encouraged to be open about and able to discuss any concerns in this area.

Partnership with Pupils

The active involvement of the child in their toileting programme is vital to make sure they have ownership and understanding of their targets, as appropriate to their age.

Principles of Good Practice

The school recognises that each child and situation is of course unique and will work to ensure that reasonable steps are made to support the child's toileting needs. Staff may volunteer to support children with toileting needs;

however, in the situation where they do not, the school is required to make reasonable adjustments for staff to carry out personal care. When recruiting new staff the school will highlight duties relating to personal care. The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that all staff carrying out such procedures feel confident and supported by relevant training and protocols to ensure the dignity of the pupil and protection of the staff. All children have an educational entitlement irrespective of their difficulties with toileting.

- Children or young people who need assistance with toilet training or special toileting arrangements will be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity
- Children who cannot achieve continence and independent toileting will require high levels of assistance, which the school will provide with support from external agencies wherever necessary
- Schools should ensure that they work in partnership with parents and carers in planning for toileting needs and effective toilet training, acknowledging that continence and independent toileting may not be achieved by some children
- The school will facilitate and adopt consistent approaches at home and at school and recognises the importance of this which depends on the successful partnerships between the two
- The school, in partnership with parents/carers, child and any other professionals involved, will make and review care plans, working towards achieving maximum independence of the child with toileting
- The school will positively address issues raised by toileting needs in a constructive and problem-solving way
- School staff will be provided with access to appropriate resources and facilities and be supported by clear plans, policy guidelines and training. All staff supporting pupils with toileting difficulties must receive appropriate information and specific training as required
- Headteachers and the Senior Leadership Team will be aware of, and will ensure the implementation of, appropriate health and safety procedures and risk assessments
- Staff are aware of their duties to comply with the SEN and Disability Discrimination Acts, detailed below
- The school's DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will consult the Social Worker whenever planning toilet training or special toileting arrangements for children on the Child Protection Register or whenever any Social Care teams are involved

Definition of Disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

The DDA provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment or medical condition that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The effect must be substantial and long-term. It is clear therefore that anyone with a named condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against. However, it is also unacceptable to refuse admission to other children who are delayed in achieving continence. Delayed continence is not necessarily linked with learning difficulties. However, children and young people with global developmental delay, which may not have been identified by the time they enter school, are likely to be late achieving independence with toileting. The school recognises that some may never achieve independence with toileting.

Guidance on starting school

Children with toileting difficulties should be admitted into reception classes with their friends in the same way as any other child. At this stage it is not possible to assume that failure to achieve independence with toileting is in itself an indication of special educational needs. However, there are some children who enter reception with special

educational needs and/or medical conditions which indicate the need for special toileting arrangements or toileting training. These children fall within the terms of the SEN and Disability Discrimination Acts and the school setting

must take “reasonable steps” to support them. Education providers 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 children with delayed language, or any other kind of delayed development. The school supports this by ensuring that children are not excluded from normal school activities solely because of incontinence. Admission of new pupils is not dependent on a blanket standard of continence being achieved. The school recognises that this is discriminatory and therefore unlawful under the Act. All such issues will be dealt with on an individual basis, and the school will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each child which will be co-ordinated by the Senior Leadership Team.

Demonstrating Good Practice

Before the child begins attendance the school will:

- Gather information from parents, child and any professionals involved
- Establish effective partnership with parents/carers, child and any professionals involved
- Focus on health and safety implications and determine whether a risk assessment is required
- Decide, in consultation with parents/carers, whether you need further advice from Health or Children’s Services
- Arrange for any specialist advice, training, resources to be in place before the child begins attendance
- Agree a plan with parents/carers and child and make a written note of your agreement
- Make sure that all staff are informed and clear about their responsibilities.

The school will monitor and review the plan regularly to ensure it is still appropriate and meeting the changing needs of the child. The school will also discuss the level of independence with toileting before a child starts school. However, it is not acceptable to deny, delay or reduce attendance at school simply because a child has special toilet requirements. The school will agree a plan which will work towards maximum independence and support the child’s attendance in the educational setting. This will be co-ordinated by the Senior Leadership Team and facilitated by the staff working within the child’s year group team. If the child or young person is not able to use the toilet independently on entry, the school will find a suitable variation on the following procedures to address the difficulty.

The school will gather as much information as possible from the parents/carers and child. For example: How have they tried to introduce toilet training at home? What happens at home? Has the child any regular routines or daily patterns which could inform the routine set up by the school? Have the parents/carers noticed any particular difficulties or phobias which the school should be aware of? Can the parents/carers suggest a strategy or procedure for dealing with the problem?

An appropriate toileting programme will be developed through discussion and agreed so that the child, parents/carers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The plan will have regular monitoring and review arrangements. The plan will give careful consideration to choosing which adults should be involved in toileting care to support the emotional well-being of the child. The school will give a written copy of the programme/care plan to the parents/carers.

Clothes provided by home need to be easy for the child to pull up and down. Wherever possible it is better to train the child with appropriate clothing rather than continuing to rely on the nappy/pad or training pants.

No child will be left wet or dirty for a parent/carer to change later - See Appendix A

It is not reasonable to expect parents or carers to be on emergency stand-by to change children during the school day

Staff will ask parents/carers to provide the school with a couple of appropriate changes of pants/trousers etc in case of accidents

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to deal with wet/soiled clothing. Staff will liaise accordingly and make the necessary arrangements at an appropriate time (e.g. end of day) in a discrete fashion to ensure the child's well-being is maintained

The school will organise for a member of staff familiar with the child to take on the responsibility of taking the child to the toilet at fixed, appropriate intervals throughout the morning/day. Careful observations and discussions with the child may identify when the child "needs to go".

The school will ensure that the routine established in school is strictly maintained from the start and try hard to avoid accidents. If necessary we will shorten the time between visits to the toilet so that the child gets into the habit of being dry.

Children may be anxious and pre-occupied by toilet difficulties but usually respond to praise, encouragement and confidence building. The school recognises the importance to promote self-esteem in other areas of school life.

Drinking water is easily accessible for all children and they are encouraged to have "little and often" rather than in huge amounts at a time

Reminders to use the toilet will be discreet and staff may consider the use of signs, pictures or code words

Staff will make little fuss over accidents that do occur and ensure that they are dealt with swiftly, appropriately, sympathetically and in a calm, low-key way. Give extra attention when they have made the effort to go to the toilet independently.

After a period of training it may be sufficient to remind the child to go to the toilet on their own. Staff will be positive and patient and praise the child for their effort.

The school recognises the importance to anticipate toileting needs for these pupils before planning off-site activities. Children will not be excluded from off-site activities because of their toileting needs. Where difficulties persist, the school will consider the possibility of more complex needs and will seek further guidance and support from other professionals. This will be discussed and agreed with parents prior to involvement of such professionals.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

In addition to the good practice guidance described above the school may consider:

- In consultation with parents, for Health service staff to provide any relevant medical information, training and advice

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- It to be appropriate to consult the Specialist Teacher Adviser for children with Physical Disabilities who can provide guidance and assistance with risk assessments
 - The accessibility of specialist equipment through the Specialist Teacher Inclusion Service.

Health and Safety considerations

The LA, Headteachers, and Local Governing Committee have a duty to safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff. The school has hygiene or infection control policies as part of their health and safety policy and will follow these when managing a child with toileting needs. The school will ensure all known allergies are considered when planning and carrying out each child's toileting programme.

Child Protection concerns

In general, one member of staff will be present with each child, except for circumstances where:

- A member of staff is not comfortable to do so alone
- 2 members of staff are needed to safely handle a child who needs to be assisted
- Use equipment such as a hoist
- There is a known risk of false allegations by the pupil

Only school staff will be involved in supporting a child's toileting needs. The school does not see that it is appropriate for volunteers/students to be involved in such practice; this ensures that we maintain the child's dignity and continue to support their emotional well-being. Where there are concerns the usual child protection procedures should be followed.

Appendix A

Protocol for supporting a child who has wet or soiled themselves is to be implemented when dealing with a child who has wet or soiled themselves.

PLEASE REMEMBER...

- The child is not be left wet or dirty for a parent/carer to change later.
- It is not reasonable to expect parents or carers to be on emergency stand-by to change children during the school day.
- Policy states you only need 1 member of staff to carry out the change of wet/soiled clothing – school is happy to support 2 person approach to safeguard staff.

Procedure:

1. The child is to be asked to go into the nearest toilet area.
2. Inform another member of staff of the incident you are about to sort if possible.
3. Use disposable non-powdered vinyl gloves and a disposable plastic apron. Goggles should be available for use if there is a risk of splashing to the face.
4. If needed ask someone to clear up any spilled bodily fluids and make the area safe for other children.
5. Ask the child which items of clean clothing they require and ask them to remove their wet/soiled items in a toilet cubicle.
6. If upon assessing the situation it is felt that the child will benefit from having a shower, if not already specified on a toileting programme the parents are to be called first to ensure they are happy for school staff to carry this out and possibly go home if due to illness.
7. Assist the child with cleaning themselves and dressing if they are not able to do this for themselves, while promoting independence and maintaining dignity at every opportunity.
8. Any wet/soiled items are to be placed in a plastic bag and made ready to go home with the child.
9. Parents are to be informed in a discrete and sensitive manner that again promotes and maintains the dignity and well-being of the child.
10. If a child soils or wets themselves several times in a day it is appropriate to call the parents and discuss this to ascertain any potential related issues that the school needs to be aware of, and may be able to support the family further with.
11. The school caretaking team need to be informed if any areas have been contaminated by bodily fluids.