



**Robert Shaw
Primary and Nursery**

**Continence and Intimate Care
Policy**

Introduction

February 2025

There are an increasing number of children being admitted to Early Years setting and Primary School who have continence problems. This may be due to developmental delay or more complex needs. Delayed continence is not necessarily linked to learning difficulties however, by virtue of their immaturity, health or personal development some children may still be in nappies or have occasional accidents when they are attending Early Years settings and in Foundation Stage classes in schools.

Intimate care may include washing, dressing or undressing, toileting, changing nappies and menstrual care (for children with complex needs). School must make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each child and children should not be excluded nor treated less favourably because of their incontinence.

Aims of Policy

- To provide clear guidelines for all staff on appropriate procedures that maintain a professional distance approach.
- To highlight the importance of continence in the development of independence.
- To establish good practice in the care of children with continence problems.
- To ensure that children are treated with dignity and respect by those adults responsible for them.
- To safeguard the interests of children, staff, parents, carers and educational settings.
- To establish good practice for joint working between the child, the child's parents /carers and all professionals involved with the child.

Content and Delivery

- Physical handling will vary according to the pupils' individual physical and needs
- Daily care routines are part of the pupils' education. These should promote the development of self-help skills and independence
- Pupils should be handled with care, confidence, respect and reassurance
- Intimate handling should always be undertaken with the utmost regard for the pupils' dignity, the right for privacy and with respect for confidentiality
- During care routines pupils should be talked to about what is happening to enable them to anticipate, understand and participate in care procedures
- Ensure that where intimate care procedures are carried out, staffing levels are adequate, overseen by familiar staff when possible and procedures are followed meticulously
- Staff should seek advice if they are unsure about care routines
- Pupils' Individual Care Plans should be readily available and familiar to all relevant staff
- More able male/female pupils should be encouraged to be independent and their privacy respected
- Staff should be aware of placing themselves in vulnerable situations. They should seek support if necessary
- Any students from outside agencies working in this area should always be overseen by staff and must never be on their own with a pupil
- If during daily care routines unexplained marks or bruises are noticed these should be reported in accordance with the Child Protection Procedure

This policy sets out procedures for handling these situations with dignity and kindness to ensure the needs of individual children are met and health and safety standards are maintained.

What happens if a child is admitted to school who is incontinent?

Robert Shaw Primary School acknowledges that this is a developmental or medical problem and will work with parents to establish a mutually acceptable care and changing plan which is likely to cover the following points:

Agreement with Parents to:

- ensure that the child is changed at the latest possible time before being brought to the setting/school.
- provide spare nappies and /or underwear and a change of clothing.
- ensure the procedures that will be followed when the child is changed at school including the use of any cleanser or the application of any cream.
- inform the setting/school should the child have any marks/rash.
- a 'minimum change' policy i.e. the setting/school would not undertake to change the child more frequently than if s/he were at home.
- review arrangements should this be necessary.

Agreement that the school will:

- change the child during a single session should the child soil themselves or become uncomfortably wet.
- undertake regular changes as necessary.
- report should the child be distressed, or if marks/rashes are seen.
- review arrangements should this be necessary.

Hygiene Procedures to follow for changing a soiled nappy or soiled underwear/clothing

- Staff to wear disposable gloves and aprons while dealing with the incident.
- Soiled nappies to be double wrapped, and placed in a hygienic disposal unit.
- Changing area to be cleaned after use.
- Hot water and liquid soap available to wash hands as soon as the task is completed.
- Hot air dryer or paper towels available for drying hands.

Staff Guidelines for dealing with a soiled child

For children in the Foundation stage the teaching assistant will be responsible for: -

Changing the soiled child (the teacher may also but this would be on a voluntary basis). Older children will be supported in cleaning and changing as determined by their level of independence to do so. Two adults to be present whilst supporting the child.

Note: these guidelines are for children who are too young to clean themselves effectively or who have some developmental difficulties. These guidelines are not for occasions where the incident is a 'one off accident' and the child is sufficiently independent to clean themselves. However, the same levels of dignity, privacy and kindness should be extended. In these incidents soiled underwear should be double wrapped and placed in the child's school bag for washing at home and parents informed.

For children requiring support:

- The teaching assistant will inform the teacher discretely that they are going to change a child.
- The teaching assistant will explain to the child what they are going to do to help clean them up.
- The adult will take the child to the toilet area in the Early Years Foundation Stage or if the child is in an older year to the relevant toilet area, ensuring dignity and privacy are respected.
- The child will normally be asked to stay standing.
- Adult should wear disposable rubber gloves.
- Only essential garments should be lowered or removed.
- Remove soiled pad/ nappy/underwear.
- When washing or wiping, always do this front to back to prevent infection.
- Ensure skin is dry using paper towels (child should be encouraged to help if able to do so).
- Replace pad/ nappy/underwear (child should be encouraged to help if able to do so).
- Encourage child to wash and dry hands.
- Tidy and clean changing area disposing of soiled items as per above hygiene guidelines.
- Wash own hands.

What to do if a child become distressed during the changing process

Talk the child through each step and reassure them that they will feel much better when they are clean.

If the distress is such that it is difficult to continue then stop the changing process.

If this results in a hygiene issue then parents should be contacted to explain the situation and an agreed course of action established.

In any event a record must be made of distress, whether or not the changing was completed and parents informed as soon as possible.

What to do if any marks or redness are seen

If marks or redness are seen then this should be recorded and reported to the child's parents as soon as possible. If there concerns relating to Child Protection these should be dealt with in accordance with school policy.

Access to Relevant Training

This policy and guidance does not replace the need for appropriate staff training where this is felt necessary and the school will work with parents and relevant agencies to ensure staff are adequately trained for dealing with incontinence issues.