

# Policy and Guidelines on the Provision of Personal Care



## Why do we have these guidelines?

We recognise that some children may have a wide variety of additional support needs, health concerns or just the occasional 'accident', which may mean they require the support of a member of staff in providing personal care or help with 'toileting'.

We believe that it is important that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. The young person's right to privacy and dignity should be maintained at all times, with due regard to the child's self image.

Parents, staff and children should be aware that matters concerning personal care would be dealt with confidentially and sensitively.

These guidelines exist to ensure that care is provided in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the child while protecting staff from any mis-interpretation of their actions.

## Who should be familiar with these guidelines?

All school staff (teaching and non teaching) should be familiar with these guidelines. Parents of children who may require more frequent personal care may also wish to familiarise themselves with the full policy and guidelines. A copy of the full policy and guidelines is available to all parents via the school blog and an abbreviated statement providing information on personal care is included in the school handbook (see Appendix 2).

## Who do these guidelines apply to?

These guidelines apply to all pupils unless their needs are such that a specific personal care plan has been put in place, eg pupils with additional support needs whose toileting needs may be frequent and specialised.

## What do these guidelines cover?

These guidelines set out:

- Who is expected to provide the care
- How a child can be consulted on who provides the care
- Where care can be carried out
- What resources are available
- How parents are consulted and informed of incidents involving care
- How we record incidents involving care
- The gender issues for children and staff
- Staff training needs

## What do these guidelines not cover?

These guidelines do not include:

- the administration of medicines,
- the provision of first aid care.

Please see: *Policy and Guidelines on the Administration of Medicines Guidelines* and *Policy and Guidelines on First Aid*

## Who provides personal care?

The child with adult support/supervision will as far as possible, undertake personal care.

Any member of staff may provide personal care, although it would normally be expected to be someone who has regular contact with the pupil, eg, their teacher or classroom assistant. A list is kept of those members of staff – teaching, non-teaching, ancillary – who are prepared to undertake personal care (see Appendix 1).

**Only school staff should be involved in personal care. Parent helpers, students, volunteers, visitors to the schools etc must not be asked, nor permitted to volunteer.**

Even if a member of staff is not prepared to provide personal care, they are still required to observe these guidelines while seeking assistance for a child.

If a teacher is the child's preferred carer, another teacher who is not currently teaching should cover their class in the first instance. If this is not possible, then the class should be left with a task to complete and be temporarily supervised by a classroom/support for learning assistant, janitor/playground supervisor, or clerical assistant.

As the majority of our staff are part-time, there may be occasions when no-one is available to provide care without leaving a class unsupervised. In this situation the parent should be contacted, and requested to come to the school to provide the care. If no suitable adult is available to sit with the child, they may be required to remain in class.

## How should the child be consulted about their care?

As a general principle, it is accepted that children should be allowed some choice as to the person providing the care, although it has to be accepted that this will not always be possible. When negotiating with the child as to the carer, the implications of the child's choice should be pointed out, eg if the parent is the preferred carer, the child may have to wait some time while the parent is contacted.

Should the parent be the preferred carer, the child should not normally be left in the classroom while waiting. They should be seated in the library/computer area, with adult supervision. If no suitable adult is available they should be moved discretely to a quiet area in the classroom, eg, story corner, computer area.

Suggested strategies for negotiating a carer might be: "Who would you like me to get to help you?" or "Are you happy for ..... to help you?"

Once the carer is determined, the child will then be quietly told to make their way to the staff toilet. The teacher will then send for the carer. Should the preferred carer be another teacher,

arrangements should be made within school to make that person available (see above).

It may be inappropriate for a teacher to conduct personal care because they are unable to leave a group. This would be part of the negotiation with the child, eg “Mrs ..... isn’t able to help at the moment, would you be happy for ..... to help you instead?”

## Where can care be carried out?

Care should take place somewhere convenient, private and easily accessible to ensure the dignity of the child. Normally this would be the staff toilet, however, if a child is already in the pupils’ toilet it may be more discrete to provide the care there. If this is the case other pupils should be excluded until care has been given – if necessary they can be directed to the staff toilet.

To protect staff and pupils from possible allegations, while personal care would require privacy, it is recommended that first aid, etc could be given in a semi-public setting to alleviate any gender concerns. Unless absolutely necessary, staff should not put themselves and the child in a confined area.

## What resources are available?

An personal care pack is kept on top of the first aid cupboard in the staff toilet. This contains:

- Wet wipes
- Nappy sacks for soiled wipes, etc
- Disposable gloves
- Disposable apron
- Plastic bag for soiled clothing

Staff should replace items after each use (additional supplies are kept in the first aid cupboard) and notify the clerical assistant when stocks are low.

Toileting accidents are more than likely to happen within P1/2 due to the age and stage of development of the children. We encourage parents to have a spare set of clothes within their child’s bag so that staff can easily change the child if a toileting accident occurs. In addition spare clothing is available in the staff room.

Waste should be disposed of in the sanitary waste bin in the staff toilet. Soiled clothing should be placed in a plastic bag and returned to parents.

## How are parents consulted on and informed of incidents involving personal care?

Summary information as to care guidelines is available to all parents through the school handbook. The full guidelines can also be accessed through the school blog.

At the beginning of each session, a permission slip should be issued to the parents of all children in the school (see Appendix 3).

Parents should be informed whenever first aid or personal care has been given. Pro-forma notes (see Appendix 4) that can be inserted into the child’s homework diary are kept in the cupboard in the staff toilet to assist communications.

## How should incidents be recorded?

There is a need for all schools to record incidents requiring care. At Moniaive Primary separate log sheets (see Appendix 5), which are kept in the cupboard in the staff toilet, are used to record incidents of personal care. These logs serve a dual purpose:

- To keep a record as to the frequency of such care being required by individual children, thus flagging up possible problems;
- Enabling proper records of care to be kept centrally in the event of any questions being asked.

Children whose need for toileting forms part of their school programme would not be included in the school log, eg pupils with additional support needs whose toileting needs may be frequent and specialised.

## How are potential gender issues dealt with?

There is an assumption that all members of staff who volunteer are included in the list of potential carers (see Appendix 1) - no difference being made between male and female staff. However, we acknowledged that a particular member of staff may be inappropriate as a carer, eg the only carer available for a P6 girl is a male member of staff. Should this be the case, the parent should be contacted and informed of the problem.

**In the very sensitive area of personal care, the head teacher should ensure that staff are never placed in a situation when their actions could be open to any kind of mis-interpretation, or where either staff or pupils feel uncomfortable.**

To protect staff and pupils from possible allegations, while personal care would require privacy, it is reasonable for a staff member or pupil to ask for a second adult to be present. If this is not possible, the parent should be contacted.

## What training is available to staff?

Courses in moving and handling, and hygiene are available to all staff. These can be accessed via the CPD directory or through the Head Teacher.



## Appendix 2

# Statement to be Included in School Handbook

The following text will be included in the school handbook, which is provided to all parents when their child starts school.

*From time to time “accidents” involving soiling or wetting do happen. If this happens to your child, the staff will endeavour to deal with the situation as sensitively and discreetly as possible, and to keep you informed.*

*The action taken might include:-*

*Staff will clean and change your child into their own spare clothes.*

*Offering the child fresh clean clothes from a stock held in school, and the chance to wash or wipe themselves in private.*

*Helping the child to clean up, if they are happy for this to happen, and if there is a suitable adult around to assist.*

*Contacting parents or emergency contacts to come into the school, or to take the child home, to clean up.*

*If your child has an ongoing condition or problem, which is likely to make “accidents” an issue, do please discuss it with your child’s Class Teacher, the Head Teacher or the School Nurse.*

*A full copy of our Provision of Personal Care Guidelines are available to view on the school blog.*

### Appendix 3

## Annual Permission to be Signed by Parents

The following permission should be sought at the start of each session.

*In the event of my child having an accident where he / she is soiled or wet and is unable to deal with the situation themselves, I give my permission for a member of the school staff to change him / her (if that is the course of action which is thought best by my child, the school, and myself if I can be contacted).*

*Child's Name* .....

*Signed* .....

*Date* .....



## Appendix 4

# Pro-form for Notifying Parents of Care Incident

The following forms are kept in the first aid cupboard in the staff toilet and should be completed, and inserted into the pupil's homework diary, each time care is given.

<p>Date: _____</p> <p>Dear Parent / Carer</p> <p>_____ unfortunately had a toileting accident today.</p> <p>_____ was the member of staff who dealt with it. I hope that all is now well but do please contact the school if you would like further information.</p> <p>If spare clothes were needed and have come home to you, we would be very grateful if you could return these to us. Many thanks.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>Carol Moyes Acting Headteacher</p>
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### Appendix 5

## Personal Care Logs

Each incident requiring care should be logged on one of these sheets which are kept in the First Aid cupboard in the staff toilet.

### Moniaive Primary School Log of Incidents Requiring Personal Care

Name of Child	Date/Time	Nature of Care	Name of Carer	Parent Informed			Teacher Informed	Outcome
				By phone prior to care	By phone after care	Note in diary		