

# Long Furlong Primary School

## Personal Care Policy

### Introduction

Staff who work with children and young people will realise that the issue of personal care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of individual's needs.

Personal care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demands direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing. Where possible all children will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care, however in circumstances where this is not possible, staff will support them in line with this policy.

Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide personal care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Long Furlong Primary School work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Long Furlong Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the personal care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when personal care is given. No child should be deliberately attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

### Our Approach to Best Practice

All children who require personal care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide personal care receive appropriate induction and training (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with personal care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is made aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual personal care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and any health issues.

Each child's right to privacy and dignity will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with personal care. Each child's needs must be assessed on an individual basis using the risk assessment process. The personal care plan should indicate the ratio of staff required to ensure safe and effective care is provided, with reasons clearly defined in each case.

Parents/carers will be consulted regularly regarding the particular needs of their child in relation to personal care; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the child's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each child will have an assigned member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

### **The Protection of Children**

This policy must be read and applied in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding policy. Long Furlong's safeguarding and child protection procedures take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and our own Local Authority.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. information must be recorded as quickly as possible and passed to the designated teacher for child protection. The designated teacher will make an informed decision about the next course of action, for example whether or not a referral is made to the local child protection team. Where appropriate the school will keep parents/carers informed of any actions taken with regard to child protection and work in partnership with them, however the school may refer concerns without first informing parents/carers if this is deemed the best way of protecting the children in our care.

The school curriculum, in particular through PSHE, aims to encourage children's self-confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness. All important elements in enabling children to protect themselves. All children receive support in developing assertiveness and personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

Allegations made against staff or volunteers at the school will be handled in line with the procedures set out by the Local Authority designated officer.

### **Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the governing body. Regular monitoring of personal care plans and their implementation is ongoing by those staff involved in their administration. Any issues raised through this monitoring process that may require policy adjustments will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher as they arise.