Marsh Hill Nursery School & Perry Beeches Nursery School

PERSONAL/INTIMATE CARE POLICY 2026-2027

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1. Introduction

Marsh Hill Nursery School and Perry Beeches Nursery School recognises that personal and intimate care is an important part of caring for young children. Children aged 2–4 may need varying levels of adult support with toileting, nappy changing, washing, dressing and maintaining personal hygiene.

The school is committed to providing personal care in a way that protects each child's dignity, privacy, safety and emotional wellbeing. All children will be treated respectfully, sensitively and without discrimination.

Personal care will be provided in a calm, reassuring and age-appropriate manner. Staff will encourage children to develop independence wherever possible, while recognising that children develop at different rates and may have additional needs.

The school will work in partnership with parents and carers to understand each child's individual needs, routines, preferences and any relevant medical or developmental information.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Protect children's dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure that personal and intimate care is delivered consistently and appropriately.
- Safeguard children and staff through clear procedures and professional boundaries.
- Promote children's independence and confidence in managing their personal needs.
- Ensure that children are not embarrassed, shamed or disadvantaged because they require personal care.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Provide appropriate support for children with SEND, medical needs or delayed toileting development.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and know how to report concerns.

3. Definition of personal and intimate care

For the purposes of this policy:

Personal care includes:

- Supporting children to use the toilet.
- Helping children wash and dry their hands and faces.
- Supporting children with dressing and undressing.
- Helping children change wet or soiled clothing.
- Supporting children with general personal hygiene.
- Assisting children with handwashing and hygiene routines.

Intimate care includes:

- Changing nappies and pull-ups.
- Cleaning a child after they have wet or soiled themselves.
- Supporting children who need assistance with toileting and cleaning their genital or bottom area.
- Changing underwear or clothing following a toileting accident.
- Providing other necessary care involving a child's private areas.

The school recognises that these activities are a normal part of caring for young children and must be undertaken sensitively and professionally.

4. Principles underpinning personal care

The following principles will guide all personal and intimate care:

1. **Dignity:** Children will be treated respectfully and never made to feel embarrassed or ashamed.
2. **Privacy:** Care will be provided in an appropriate designated area, balancing the child's privacy with safeguarding requirements.
3. **Choice:** Children will be encouraged to participate in decisions wherever their age and understanding allow.
4. **Independence:** Staff will encourage children to undertake as much of their own personal care as they can safely manage.
5. **Safeguarding:** All care will be carried out in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
6. **Equality:** No child will be refused admission, excluded from activities or treated less favourably because they require personal care.
7. **Partnership:** Parents and carers will be involved in planning and reviewing individual arrangements where necessary.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an appropriate policy is in place.
- Ensuring that the policy is reviewed regularly.
- Monitoring the school's arrangements for safeguarding children.
- Ensuring that appropriate resources and facilities are available.

5.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy.
- Ensuring staff understand their responsibilities.
- Ensuring suitable staff training and guidance are provided.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for children requiring additional support.
- Addressing any concerns, incidents or allegations relating to personal care.

5.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Advising staff where personal care raises safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring concerns and disclosures are managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Liaising with parents, external professionals and relevant agencies where appropriate.
- Ensuring allegations against staff are managed through the correct procedures.

5.4 Staff

All staff involved in personal care must:

- Follow this policy and any individual care arrangements.
- Treat children with dignity and respect.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Explain what they are doing in language the child understands.

- Encourage children to participate in their own care.
- Maintain appropriate hygiene and infection-control procedures.
- Record and report any concerns, incidents or unusual observations.
- Never undertake personal care outside their training, competence or authorised responsibilities.

6. Working in partnership with parents and carers

Parents and carers will be asked to provide information about their child's toileting, nappy-changing and personal-care needs when the child starts nursery school.

This information may include:

- Whether the child is wearing nappies, pull-ups or underwear.
- The child's usual toileting routine.
- Any signs or words the child uses to indicate they need the toilet.
- Any allergies, skin sensitivities or medical conditions relevant to personal care.
- Particular cultural, religious or family preferences.
- Any additional needs or equipment required.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to inform the school of any changes to their child's needs.

Where a child requires regular or additional intimate care, an individual personal care plan will be agreed with parents or carers. This will be reviewed when needs change and at appropriate intervals.

The school will not make children feel that they must be toilet trained before attending nursery school. Support will be provided according to each child's developmental stage and individual needs.

7. Nappy changing procedures

Nappy changing will be carried out promptly, sensitively and in accordance with the child's individual needs.

Staff will:

1. Explain to the child that they need changing and reassure them throughout.
2. Use the designated changing area and follow the school's hygiene procedures.
3. Wash their hands and put on disposable gloves and an apron before changing the child.
4. Ensure that all necessary equipment is available before beginning.

5. Never leave a child unattended on a raised changing surface.
6. Maintain the child's dignity and expose only the area necessary for changing.
7. Clean the child gently using appropriate wipes or other agreed products.
8. Use only products supplied and authorised for that individual child.
9. Place used nappies in the designated sanitary disposal bin.
10. Place soiled clothing in a sealed bag for parents or carers.
11. Clean and disinfect the changing surface in accordance with the school's infection-control procedures.
12. Remove disposable protective equipment safely and wash their hands thoroughly.

Staff must follow the manufacturer's instructions for changing equipment and ensure that it is safe and suitable for use.

Children should be encouraged to participate in the process where appropriate, for example by helping to remove clothing, disposing of their nappy or washing their hands.

8. Toileting support

Children will be encouraged to develop independence with toileting at a pace appropriate to their age and development.

Staff will:

- Respond promptly when a child asks to use the toilet.
- Offer regular reminders where appropriate.
- Support children who need help with clothing, wiping or handwashing.
- Explain each stage of the process.
- Respect the child's privacy while maintaining appropriate supervision.
- Encourage children to wash and dry their hands after using the toilet.

Children will not be rushed, criticised or punished for having toileting accidents.

Staff will not use language or behaviour that could cause embarrassment, shame or anxiety.

Where a child is becoming distressed or consistently reluctant to use the toilet, staff will discuss this sensitively with parents and consider whether additional support is required.

9. Accidents and soiled clothing

Occasional toileting accidents are a normal part of early childhood.

Where a child wets or soils themselves, staff will:

- Reassure the child and respond calmly.
- Explain what needs to happen in a way the child understands.
- Support the child to remove wet or soiled clothing.
- Provide clean clothing, where available.
- Assist with washing and changing where necessary.
- Place soiled clothing in a sealed bag for parents or carers.
- Clean any affected surfaces in accordance with infection-control procedures.
- Inform parents or carers at collection, or earlier if the circumstances make this necessary.

Parents and carers should provide spare clothing suitable for their child.

Where accidents become frequent or there is a significant change in a child's toileting pattern, staff will discuss this with parents or carers and consider whether further advice or support is needed.

10. Children with SEND or additional needs

The school recognises that some children may require additional or specialist personal care because of:

- Physical disabilities.
- Developmental delay.
- Medical conditions.
- Sensory needs.
- Communication difficulties.
- Additional toileting or continence needs.

The school will work with parents, carers and relevant professionals to identify appropriate arrangements.

An individual personal care plan or risk assessment will be developed where necessary. This may include:

- The type and frequency of care required.
- Equipment or adaptations needed.
- The child's communication methods and preferences.
- Any medical or health considerations.

- The staff responsible for providing care.
- Any relevant moving and handling arrangements.
- Emergency procedures where applicable.

The school will make reasonable adjustments to support children to access nursery school provision safely and inclusively.

11. Privacy and safeguarding arrangements

The school recognises that children have a right to privacy. However, privacy must always be balanced with the need to safeguard children and staff.

The following arrangements will apply:

- Personal care will take place in designated areas wherever possible.
- Changing and toileting facilities will be appropriately supervised and maintained.
- Staff must not lock themselves in a room with a child while providing personal care.
- Staff must ensure that their whereabouts and activities are appropriately known to colleagues.
- Doors should be managed in a way that protects the child's privacy without compromising safeguarding.
- Staff must not use personal mobile phones or cameras during personal care.
- Photographs or recordings must never be taken during personal care.
- Staff must not make inappropriate comments, jokes or remarks about a child's body.
- Physical contact must be limited to what is necessary to provide the care required.

The school will not require two members of staff to be present for every routine nappy change or toileting incident. Staffing arrangements will be based on the child's needs, the environment and any identified safeguarding risks. Where an individual risk assessment identifies that additional staff oversight is necessary, this will be clearly recorded.

Staff must never leave a child unattended on a raised changing table or other raised surface.

12. Staff conduct and professional boundaries

Staff must maintain high standards of professional conduct when providing personal care.

Staff must never:

- Humiliate, ridicule or shame a child.
- Use threatening or inappropriate language.
- Force a child to participate in unnecessary personal care.
- Touch a child in a way that is not required for their care or safety.
- Discuss a child's personal care needs in front of other children or unauthorised adults.
- Promise a child that they will keep a safeguarding concern secret.
- Use personal care as a form of punishment or reward.

Where a child refuses assistance, staff should remain calm, reassure the child and encourage them to participate. If care is necessary to protect the child's health, hygiene or dignity, staff should seek guidance from a senior member of staff and follow the child's individual plan. Any exceptional intervention must be proportionate, necessary and recorded.

13. Children who are distressed or reluctant to receive care

Staff must be sensitive to the fact that some children may feel anxious, embarrassed or uncomfortable during personal care.

Staff should:

- Explain what is happening before beginning.
- Use simple, reassuring language.
- Offer choices wherever possible.
- Allow the child time to respond.
- Encourage the child to do what they can independently.
- Respect the child's communication, including non-verbal signs of distress.

If a child becomes particularly distressed, staff should pause where it is safe to do so and seek support from a senior member of staff.

Any repeated distress, unusual reaction or concern about a child's wellbeing must be reported to the DSL and recorded in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

14. Cultural, religious and individual preferences

The school will respect the cultural, religious and personal preferences of families wherever reasonably practicable.

Parents and carers will be invited to share any relevant preferences concerning personal care.

The school will consider requests about:

- Preferred staff arrangements.
- Products used for personal hygiene.
- Clothing and modesty.
- Communication and language.
- Family or cultural practices.

Any arrangements must remain consistent with the child's welfare, staff safety and safeguarding responsibilities.

15. Hygiene and infection control

Staff must follow the school's infection-control procedures when undertaking personal care.

This includes:

- Wearing disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies or dealing with bodily fluids.
- Washing hands before and after providing care.
- Using appropriate cleaning products.
- Cleaning and disinfecting changing surfaces after each use.
- Disposing of waste safely.
- Keeping clean and used equipment separate.
- Following procedures for the safe handling of soiled clothing.
- Reporting any infection-control concerns.

Staff must follow current school guidance on the management of bodily fluids, infectious illnesses and contaminated materials.

16. Recording and communication

The school will maintain appropriate records of personal care where required.

Records may include:

- Nappy changes, where the school operates a changing record.
- Significant toileting accidents.
- Any unusual observations or concerns.
- Any injury, irritation or discomfort noticed during care.
- Any refusal or distress that raises a concern.
- Any incident involving an allegation or complaint.

Records must be factual, dated and completed promptly.

Information will only be shared with staff who need it to support the child or fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.

Parents and carers will be informed of significant incidents and relevant changes in their child's personal care needs.

17. Safeguarding concerns, disclosures and allegations

Staff must remain alert to safeguarding concerns that may arise during personal care.

If a child says something that causes concern, or makes an allegation:

- Listen carefully and remain calm.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking.
- Do not ask leading questions or investigate the matter.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Record the child's words as accurately as possible.
- Report the concern to the DSL immediately.
- Follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Any concern about the conduct of a member of staff must be reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures, including its low-level concerns and allegations procedures.

Concerns must not be ignored or dealt with informally where safeguarding procedures require formal action.

18. Staff training

Staff who provide personal care will receive appropriate guidance and training.

This may include:

- Safeguarding and child protection.
- Professional boundaries.
- Nappy-changing and toileting procedures.
- Infection prevention and control.
- Manual handling, where relevant.
- Supporting children with SEND.
- Communication and positive interaction with young children.

Staff must seek advice if they are unsure how to undertake a particular aspect of personal care safely.

19. Manual handling of children and equipment

The school recognises that staff may need to undertake manual handling activities when supporting children aged 2–4 and when moving equipment, furniture and resources around the nursery school.

Manual handling activities must be carried out safely to reduce the risk of injury to children and staff. The school will take reasonable steps to avoid unnecessary lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling and moving of children or equipment.

All manual handling must be appropriate to the task, the individual child's needs and the staff member's training and capabilities.

19.1 Manual handling of children

Staff may occasionally need to support children with physical movement, including:

- Helping a child who has difficulty getting up from the floor.
- Supporting a child with mobility difficulties.
- Assisting a child with transfers where this is part of their agreed care arrangements.
- Supporting children during personal care and changing routines.
- Helping a child who is unable to move independently during an emergency.

Staff must:

- Encourage children to move independently wherever possible and appropriate.
- Avoid lifting or carrying children unless it is necessary and safe to do so.

- Never attempt a lift or transfer for which they have not received appropriate training or guidance.
- Follow any individual personal care plan, healthcare plan or risk assessment.
- Use agreed equipment and adaptations where these are required.
- Seek assistance from another appropriately trained member of staff where the child's needs or the circumstances require it.
- Never attempt to move a child in a way that could cause injury or distress.
- Report any manual handling incident, injury or near miss to the headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff.

Children must never be lifted by their hands, wrists or arms. Staff should not improvise lifting or carrying techniques.

Where a child has additional physical, medical or mobility needs, an individual assessment must be undertaken in consultation with parents or carers and relevant professionals, where appropriate. This should identify the safest way to support the child and any specialist equipment or staff training required.

19.2 Risk assessment

Manual handling activities involving children must be assessed where there is a foreseeable risk of injury.

The assessment should consider:

- **The task:** What movement or support is required, how often it is needed and whether it can be avoided.
- **The child:** Their age, size, mobility, physical needs, understanding and ability to participate.
- **The environment:** Available space, floor surfaces, access routes, steps, doorways and potential obstructions.
- **The equipment:** Whether suitable equipment is available, safe and appropriate.
- **The staff:** Whether staff have received the necessary training and whether sufficient staff are available.

Individual risk assessments should be reviewed if a child's needs change, an incident occurs or the arrangements are no longer suitable.

19.3 Manual handling of equipment and resources

Staff may need to move furniture, changing equipment, storage containers, learning resources, outdoor equipment and other nursery school items.

Staff must:

- Consider whether an item needs to be moved before attempting to lift or carry it.
- Check the weight, size and stability of the item.
- Avoid lifting items that are too heavy, awkward or difficult to manage safely.
- Use suitable trolleys or other moving equipment where available and appropriate.
- Ask for assistance when an item cannot be moved safely by one person.
- Keep walkways, corridors, entrances and emergency exits clear.
- Store equipment safely to prevent items falling or creating trip hazards.
- Follow any manufacturer's instructions for moving or operating equipment.
- Report damaged equipment or unsafe storage arrangements.

Staff must not climb on furniture or use unsuitable equipment to reach or move items stored at height.

19.4 Use of specialist equipment

Where specialist equipment is required to support a child's mobility or personal care, staff must:

- Only use equipment that is suitable for the child and the intended purpose.
- Ensure they have received appropriate training before using it.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and any professional guidance.
- Check equipment for visible damage or defects before use.
- Ensure equipment is maintained and stored safely.
- Report any faults or concerns immediately and stop using equipment where it may be unsafe.

Staff must not use specialist lifting or moving equipment unless they have been trained and authorised to do so.

19.5 Staff training and responsibilities

The headteacher will ensure that staff are provided with appropriate manual handling information, instruction and training relevant to their role and the activities they undertake.

Staff must:

- Follow the school's manual handling procedures and risk assessments.
- Attend relevant training when required.
- Work within their level of competence.
- Report any concerns about unsafe manual handling arrangements.
- Inform the headteacher of any incident, injury or near miss.

Staff must not feel pressured to undertake a manual handling activity that they believe cannot be completed safely.

The school will review manual handling arrangements following an incident, a change in a child's needs or a change to equipment or the nursery school environment.

20. Facilities and equipment

The school will ensure that personal care facilities are:

- Clean and hygienic.
- Suitable for the age and needs of the children.
- Appropriately supervised.
- Equipped with suitable changing facilities.
- Stocked with appropriate hygiene supplies.
- Maintained in a safe condition.

Any damaged equipment or concerns about the suitability of facilities must be reported to the headteacher.

21. Complaints and concerns

Parents and carers who have concerns about personal care arrangements should initially speak to the child's key person or a member of the leadership team.

If the concern is not resolved, it should be raised with the headteacher in accordance with the school's complaints procedure.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations must be reported immediately and must not be delayed while following the ordinary complaints process.

22. Monitoring and review

The headteacher will monitor the implementation of this policy and ensure staff are familiar with its requirements.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local authority procedures or the school's arrangements.

The governing body will approve any significant amendments.

23. Related policies and guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Low-Level Concerns Policy.
- Allegations Against Staff Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Medical Needs Policy.
- Administration of Medicines Policy.
- SEND Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Complaints Procedure.