INTIMATE CARE & PERSONAL HYGIENE POLICY

Applies to all employees, *volunteers and authorised practitioners supporting children with personal or intimate care.*

Policy Statement

Dots & Tots Day Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child receives sensitive, respectful and safe personal and intimate care. Children will be supported to develop confidence, independence and an understanding of their own bodies, while their privacy, dignity, individual needs and wellbeing are protected. This policy sets out the overarching principles for intimate care and should be read alongside the nursery's Nappy Changing, Toilet Learning, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Sickness, Illness, Infection Prevention & Exclusion policies.

Scope of Intimate Care

Intimate care includes any assistance involving a child's private or personal needs, including changing nappies or pull-ups, support with toileting, changing wet or soiled clothing, washing or cleaning a child after an accident and other necessary assistance with personal hygiene. Routine nappy-changing methods and toilet-learning procedures are set out in their respective policies and are not repeated here.

Staffing and Authorisation

Only practitioners who have completed the nursery's safer recruitment requirements, including appropriate enhanced DBS checks, have been assessed and formally signed off as competent and authorised by nursery management or their Room Leader may undertake nappy changes or other intimate care duties. Before authorisation, practitioners must demonstrate an understanding of safe working practices, safeguarding procedures, hygiene requirements, professional boundaries and children's dignity and privacy. Management or the Room Leader will provide appropriate induction, guidance and practical assessment before authorisation. Authorisation will be reviewed and stopped where concerns arise. Any concerns will follow a strict HR process, and the relevant organisations such as LADO and Ofsted will be notified if thresholds are met or guidance is required. Further training will also be given should it be required.

Dignity, Privacy and the Child's Voice

Staff will always try to explain what they are going to do in a way that the child can understand, seek the child's cooperation where possible and respond sensitively to verbal and non-verbal communication. Objects of reference of picture cards will be used should the child not understand verbally or there are communication barriers. Children will be offered appropriate choices, such as who helps them where staffing permits, and encouraged to do what they can independently. Children will never be shamed, punished, rushed or made to feel embarrassed about personal care needs. Where essential care is required and a child is distressed or reluctant, staff will pause where safe, reassure the child, consider an alternative familiar practitioner and seek management or parental advice as appropriate. Necessary hygiene or safeguarding action will not be withheld.

Professional Boundaries and Safeguarding

Intimate care is a position of trust. Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries, use only necessary and proportionate physical contact, and ensure that care is carried out in an appropriately private area while remaining within the nursery's safeguarding arrangements. Practitioners must never take photographs or

recordings of intimate care or any area of a private body area. Staff will remain within the sight and sound of colleagues as required by the nursery's Nappy Changing and Toilet Learning policies, without compromising the child's dignity. Nappy stations are positioned with the rooms, so sight and sound requirements of other staff members are always maintained, and privacy is protected with the use of a curtain. Any unexplained marks, injuries, concerning disclosures, behaviour or other safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Personal Hygiene and Changing Clothing

Children may need help with handwashing, cleaning their face, changing after water or messy play, changing wet clothing or attending to personal cleanliness. Practitioners will offer developmentally appropriate assistance and encourage children to participate in washing, drying and dressing themselves. Wet or soiled clothing will be securely bagged for return to parents unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed. Staff will ensure children are comfortable and appropriately dressed before returning to activities.

Hygiene and Infection Prevention

Staff will follow the nursery's existing infection prevention procedures, including appropriate handwashing, use of protective equipment, safe handling of bodily fluids, cleaning of surfaces and secure disposal of waste. Detailed nappy-changing hygiene requirements are contained in the Nappy Changing Policy, and wider cleaning, illness and infection control arrangements are contained in the Sickness, Illness, Infection Prevention & Exclusion Policy. Staff must follow these procedures during every relevant care task.

Individual Needs, SEND and Medical Care

Care will be adapted to each child's age, stage of development, communication, disability, sensory preferences, cultural needs and medical circumstances. Visual prompts, objects of reference, familiar routines and additional time may be used to support understanding. Where a child needs specialist equipment, ongoing continence support or a different approach, the SENCo will work with parents and relevant professionals to prepare an individual intimate care plan and risk assessment. Medical procedures must only be undertaken by appropriately trained and authorised staff in accordance with the child's agreed healthcare arrangements.

Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will be consulted about their child's established care routines, preferred products, clothing, relevant sensitivities and additional support needs. Practitioners will share any changes, concerns or accidents sensitively and work with families to provide a consistent approach. A child's wishes and developing independence will be respected alongside parental views and the nursery's safeguarding responsibilities.

Recording and Confidentiality

Relevant intimate care, nappy changes, toileting accidents and any concerns will be recorded through the approved nursery management system in line with the Nappy Changing, Toilet Learning and Records, Confidentiality & Data Protection policies. Information will be factual, respectful and accessible only to authorised staff. Any safeguarding concern will also be documented through the nursery's safeguarding reporting procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Nursery Manager is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring appropriate induction and oversight, and responding to concerns. Room Leaders may assess and authorise competent practitioners within the nursery's agreed procedures and must communicate authorisations to management. The SENCo supports individual care arrangements where additional needs are identified. All practitioners are responsible for following the relevant care procedures, respecting children's dignity, reporting concerns and seeking guidance where required.

Related Policies and Guidance

Nappy Changing Policy; Toilet Learning Policy; Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Sickness, Illness, Infection Prevention & Exclusion Policy; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy; Records, Confidentiality & Data Protection (GDPR) Policy. This policy supports the welfare and safeguarding requirements of the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager will monitor intimate care practice through induction, supervision, observations, feedback and review of relevant records and risk assessments. This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner following a significant concern, change in nursery practice or relevant statutory guidance.

Policy Created: October 2026

Policy Review Date: October 2027

Version: 1.0

Signed

Christie Patton

Company Owner