

YMCA Stepping Stones Intimate Care Policy

Department: YSS

Owner: Head of Early Years and Childcare Development

Approval Route: YSS Board

Frequency of Revision: Annually

Linked Policies and Procedures: [YSS Safeguarding Policy](#)

This policy will be reviewed sooner if there is a change to legislation or guidance which may affect it. Any changes will be communicated to all stakeholders.

Version	Date Approved	Reason for Update
1	10.12.25	New Head of YSS

Policy Statement

At YSS Nursery we understand that children are at different developmental stages and, unless there are any medical or developmental reasons why this would not be appropriate, we work in partnership with parents/carers to support the child towards independent toilet training.

We aim to be inclusive to all children and give consideration to the individual needs of each child. We see toilet training as a self-care skill that all children should have the opportunity to learn through the full support and non-judgemental concern of adults.

This policy will be used when supporting children requiring nappy/pull-up changing and other related personal/intimate care tasks. It has been written to ensure that best practice is always carried out and that procedures followed comply with the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.

Practitioners who work with young children or children who have special needs will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require practitioners to be respectful of children's needs.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Children's dignity will be preserved, and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Practitioners who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. Practitioners behaviour is open to scrutiny and practitioners at YSS Nursery work with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.



Practitioners deliver a personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social, Health Education and Development, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

We are committed to ensuring that all practitioners responsible for the intimate care of children will always undertake their duties in a professional manner. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our Approach to Best Practice

All children who require intimate care are always treated respectfully; the child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Practitioners who provide intimate care are trained to do so and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided, as required, to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist.

Practitioners will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children.

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

As a basic principle, children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Practitioners 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 intimate care plans will be drawn up for children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. These plans include a written risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the carer and health.

Each child's right to privacy 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 intimate care. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented in the 'Any other information' section of the Intimate Care Plan.

Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; 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.

Basic Principles

At YSS Nursery, practitioners will bear in mind the following key principles when changing a child's nappy/pull up:

- Children have the right to feel safe & secure
- Children will be respected and valued as individuals
- Children have a right to privacy / dignity
- In order to promote and develop greater independence, children need to be supported in their understanding of toileting procedures
- To ensure children are comfortable and happy, nappies will be checked at regular intervals and promptly changed when required. (i.e., when wet or soiled)

Vulnerability to Abuse

As a nursery, we ensure that all practitioners are familiar with our Safeguarding Policy as well as our procedures to help develop each child's resilience and protect them from any form of abuse.

It is important that children are changed in a reassuring and caring way by a member of practitioners they have a close relationship with. Furthermore, it is important that we signal our intention to change a child's nappy before doing so, ensuring that the child understands and anticipates what is going to happen, as appropriate to their level of development. This helps give children the important message that not just anyone can pick them up, take them off and undress them.

Practitioners should always change children in the nappy-changing area which, whilst allowing for privacy is not closed off. This is part of making sure there is a culture of openness which safeguards children and ensures all adults follow safe working practices.

Working with Parents/ Carers

We will work with parents/carers when developing a child's changing routine.

We ask that parents/carers send their child in a clean nappy/pull-up at the beginning of the session.

If a child has any disability or medical need that may affect their personal care routine, a Health Care Plan will be drawn up in agreement with parents/carers.

Parents/carers will be asked when their child first starts at nursery whether or not they have any needs, or any special words or actions used during their nappy changing procedure.

Any significant observations made during a changing procedure will be notified to the parents at the end of the session (i.e. badly soiled nappy/strong urine etc.)

Achieving Contenance

At YSS Nursery, we will encourage all children to achieve continence when they exhibit signs that they are ready. This will be achieved through modelling, positive praise, working with parents and having high expectations. In addition to this, a familiar member of practitioners will ensure that nappy changing times are relaxed and a time to promote increasing independence.

Protection for Practitioners

Nappy changing procedures will be carried out by a member of nursery practitioners. Protection for that person will be undertaken in the following ways:

- This policy will be shared with practitioners who will be responsible for undertaking intimate duties. This is an essential aspect of ensuring that all relevant practitioners are trained in what the policy and procedures should be. Practitioners will follow good working practices which comply with Health and Safety regulations.
- Practitioners will discreetly inform colleagues that they are taking a child to the toilet to change.
- Each instance of intimate care will be recorded by the adult who completed it. Details recorded will include: - what personal care tasks were carried out - by whom - the time and date it was completed.
- If a situation occurs that causes a member of practitioners concern, a second member of practitioners will be called, and the incident reported to the line manager and recorded.
- Where practitioners are concerned about a child's actions or comments whilst carrying out a personal care procedure, this should be recorded and discussed with the nursery's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) immediately.
- Practitioners will be specifically trained in intimate/personal care for children with specific needs.
- To ensure the safe moving and handling of children, children will be encouraged to use 'steps' to independently climb onto a changing area, with support provided if needed.
- Practitioners are aware that they have a 'duty of care' towards children's personal needs and will act as soon as they become aware that a nappy/pull up needs changing.

The Protection of Children

Our YSS Safeguarding Procedures are accessible to practitioners and adhered to.

Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of practitioners has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. They will immediately report concerns to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead. A clear record of the concern will be completed on MyConcern and will be referred to children's social care if deemed necessary. Parents/carers will be asked for their consent or will be informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made, unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm.

If a child becomes distressed, unhappy or refuses to allow a particular member of practitioners to provide intimate care, the matter will be dealt with sensitively. Parents/ carers will be contacted by practitioners at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution and to ensure the child can be cleaned and supported swiftly. The issue will be looked into and outcomes recorded.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of practitioners, all necessary procedures will be followed as stated in the YSS Safeguarding Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Nursery Manager

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the Intimate Care Policy is followed by all practitioners in nursery through monitoring. This may be delegated to the SENCO in respect of children with SEND.

Practitioners

Practitioners are responsible for always following the policy and highlighting any concerns to line manager immediately. Practitioners undertaking intimate care for a child/ children must advise the Room Leads or Deputy Nursery Managers if any equipment or resources that need to be used, are faulty or damaged immediately, so that this can be addressed quickly. Designated practitioners will work with parents/ carers to complete & regularly review the 'Individual Intimate Care Plan'. An IHCP (individual health care plan) will be completed by designated practitioners/ SENDCo for children with additional, specific needs.

Children

Children should be encouraged where possible to support in their own intimate care process – e.g. taking shoes and lower clothing off, bringing their bag with clean nappies/ pull ups to the changing area, etc. For children with specific, additional needs, an IHCP (individual health care plan) may be drawn up to address their intimate care needs, with support from appropriate agencies where this is appropriate.

Parents/Carers

Parents/ carers should be fully aware of the intimate care policy and procedures in place. They must complete both the 'provision of care agreement' and the 'nappy changing agreement'. Parents/carers will also be involved with the 'Individual Intimate Care Plan'.

Parents/ carers are responsible for;

- Understanding and agreeing the procedures that will be followed when their child is changed at the nursery.
- Supplying clean nappies/pull ups, wipes, etc that will be used and applied as necessary.
- Understanding that they will be asked to collect their child from nursery if their child shows symptoms of illness or indications of ill health.
- Sending their child in nappies/pull ups or protective underwear / waterproof pants until they are dry and clean the majority of the time.
- Ensuring a spare set of clothing is provided in their child's bag.

Training

Practitioners who undertake intimate care should receive an annual refresher of their roles and responsibility to ensure that the policy is fully understood and adhered to.

Equality Impact Assessment under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people based on their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any children and it helps to promote and encourage equality in our nursery.

Appendix 1 – Intimate care flowchart procedure to be followed whenever a child requires intimate care

<p>Staffing ↓</p>	<p>Ensure that another member of staff knows (unless a care plan says more staff are needed).</p>
<p>Involve the child ↓</p>	<p>Involve the child in the care. Help them to complete as much as they can themselves, where possible. Talk to them about what is happening.</p>
<p>Hygiene ↓</p>	<p>Make sure hygiene procedures are followed (gloves, aprons, good hand washing). Ensuring soiled products are disposed of correctly.</p>
<p>Safeguarding ↓</p>	<p>Be vigilant to safeguarding. If you have any concerns, report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL).</p>
<p>Recording ↓</p>	<p>Make sure paperwork/recording is completed in PEN at the time of changing a child with date, time, who changed and any comments</p>

Respecting the child’s dignity is paramount. If there are any concerns, please raise them with the DSL/ Nursery Manager immediately. Make sure you have read and understand the Intimate Care Policy and have received any training prior to undertaking any intimate care.



Appendix 3 - Changing procedures for children in nappies to followed by Practitioners

Prepare the changing mat for children in nappies by cleaning it with antibacterial spray. Some children may stand up for a change when pull ups are worn.

Ensure the following items (which have all been provided by the parent/carer) are ready before changing a child's nappy; clean nappy and wipes. Where cream is used the child should have their own named cream and written permission obtained from the parent/carer.

Approach the child and say or sign that it's time for a nappy change. Wash and dry your hands and put on a pair of disposal gloves (compulsory for all) and a disposable apron (if needed). Any practitioners member changing a child must put a fresh set of gloves on for every child that has a nappy changed. The correct donning procedures must be followed.

Support the child on to the nappy changing unit using the steps. Practitioners must not lift the child onto the changing unit. Some children will wear pull-ups and therefore will be standing up for a change or be sitting on the toilet.

Remove the child's clothing to access the nappy/ pull up. Encourage the child to help with this if they are able to.

Practitioners will then remove the child's nappy/pull ups and clean the area, always from front to back using wipes and only cream provided by the parents/carers. The practitioner must ensure the child is clean and comfortable by putting on a clean nappy/pull up and a clean set of clothes if required.

If the child's clothes are soiled, they should be bagged separately and sent home, they should not be rinsed by hand or washed at nursery. As part of the 'Nappy changing agreement' parents/ carers are asked to ensure a spare set of clothing is provided in the child's bag.

The practitioners member must then clean the changing table after each use using an antibacterial spray.

Soiled nappies or pull-ups and wipes used will be placed into the designated nappy bin.

The practitioners must then place the used gloves and apron in the yellow bin. Gloves and aprons should not be added to the nappy bin. Practitioners will then wash their hands with liquid antibacterial soap and running water and then dry them on a disposable paper towel.

Practitioners will help the child to wash their hands using liquid soap, warm water and paper towel and then take them back into nursery to continue with their activities and play.

