Diocese of Chelmsford
Vine Schools Trust

Intimate Care Policy

This is a model policy for all Vine schools that has been reviewed and adapted for St. Leonard's C of E Primary School.

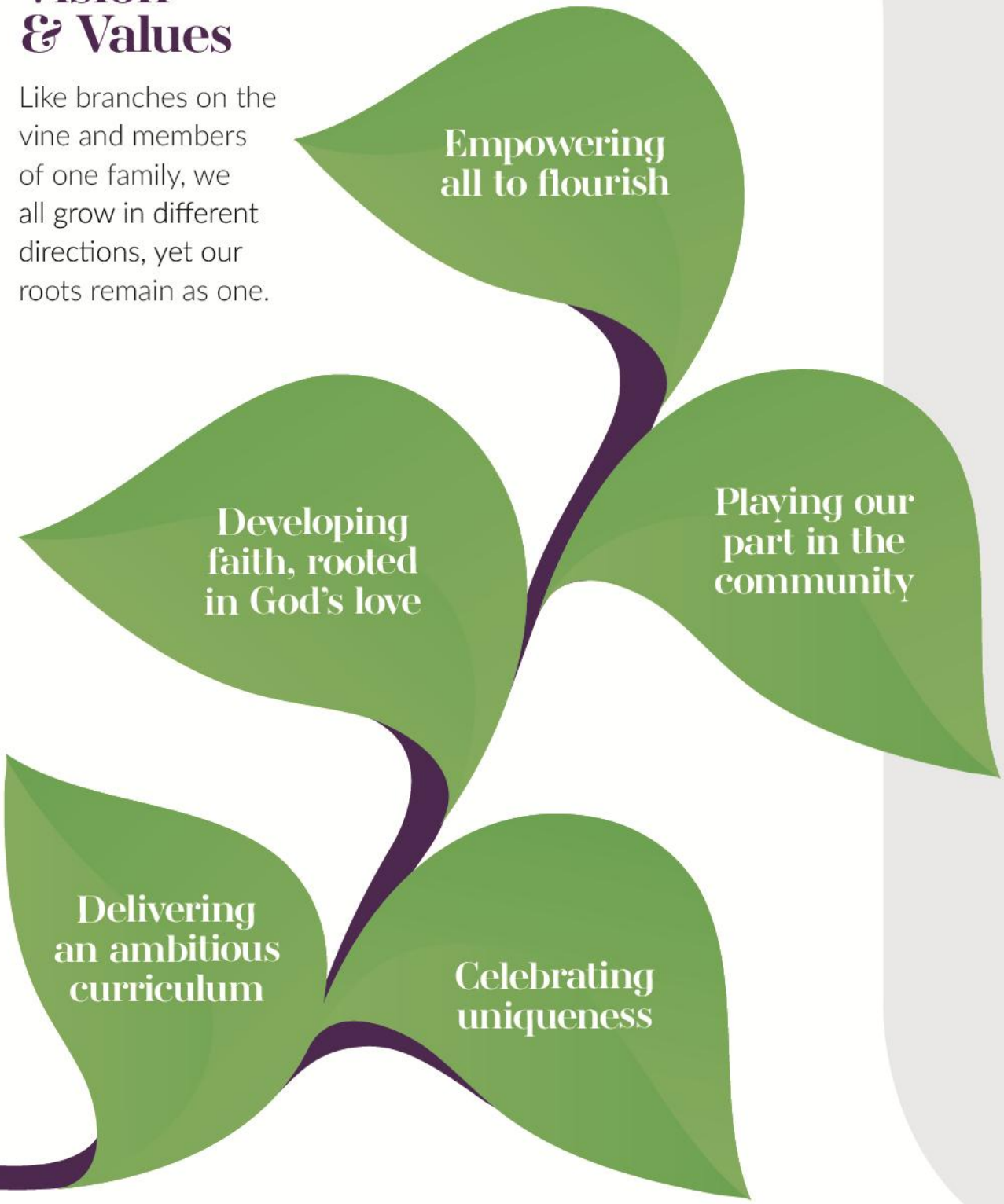
Policy Reference:	
Approved by Vine Schools Trust on:	Summer 25
Adopted by this school on:	1.09.2025
Next review:	Summer 26

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit

JOHN 15:5

Vision & Values

Like branches on the vine and members of one family, we all grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one.



What is Intimate Care?

The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

The policy aims to provide a clear framework for staff to ensure the safety and dignity of all learners who need support with personal care, including toileting and continence management. It will also clarify for learners and their families the support they can expect from school.

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development. Care may involve help with drinking, eating, dressing and toileting. Help may also be needed with changing colostomy bags and other such equipment. It may also require the administration of rectal medication.

Aims

St. Leonard's C of E Primary School aims to have a positive approach to intimate care which ensures a safe, secure and comfortable experience for the child.

Children's dignity will be preserved, and a reasonable level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff at the school work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

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

St. Leonard's C of E Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will always undertake their duties in a professional manner. All staff recognises 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.

Principles

St. Leonard's C of E Primary School respects our learners and encourages them to achieve their potential. This includes encouraging them to be as independent as they are able with their personal care. We will ensure that our learners are:

- Treated as individuals.
- That their right to safety, dignity and privacy is respected.
- Involved with and consulted about their personal care as far as they are able.
- Provided with consistency of care as far as possible.

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Our Approach to Best Practice

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

The religious views and cultural values of families should be taken into account. Accordingly, it is vital that we seek to engage with parents, and children, prior to enrolment, to discuss the normal routines of the school and staff most likely to be involved in delivering aspects of intimate care.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so, have an awareness of Child Protection implications and are fully aware of best practice. This includes:

- 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.
- Speaking to children personally by name so that they are aware of being the focus of the activity
- Preparing the child for and to anticipate events while demonstrating respect for his/her body, eg. Giving a strong sensory clue such as using a sponge or pad to signal intention to wash or change.
- Respecting a child's preference for a particular care and sequence of care
- Ensuring the child's privacy is protected.
- Ensuring the changing area is left clean and tidy for the next person.
- Keeping a log of who is changed when and by whom with times/dates, recording any notable responses or changes to behaviour
- When wet wipes are used and where possible the child is encouraged to attempt to clean private parts of the body him/herself. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account level of understanding and ability to self-care.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.

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.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented. It is good practice to inform another member of staff before commencing intimate care with a child. (Health Care Plans – detail the procedures necessary.)

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It is preferable that staff should work with children of the same sex in providing intimate care. However, due to St. Leonard's C of E Primary School having a much higher proportion of female to male staff this is not always practical. However, religious and cultural views of families will at all times be taken into account and parents will be consulted should a male member of staff be required to provide intimate care for girls.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; the phase group staff / carers known to the child will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

School responsibilities

- We will work with the whole school community to ensure access to clean, well-stocked private and safe toilet facilities for all.
- We will work with learners, parents/carers to promote bladder and bowel health and maximum possible continence.
- Where learners are not able to be fully continent, we will ensure that an individual care plan is written to ensure their needs are clarified and met. The learner will be included in discussions about the care plan, unless this is clearly inappropriate, as will their family. Relevant healthcare professionals including the school nurse may also be consulted. The care plan will be reviewed at least annually or sooner if the learner's needs change.
- School will ensure that anyone who undertakes intimate care is an employee of the school and has had appropriate safeguarding checks. Only those staff named on the individual care plan will be involved in providing support with intimate care to a learner. School will ensure that sufficient staff are named on care plans and available to provide the required support in all foreseeable circumstances. If, in exceptional circumstances, none of the named staff members for an individual are available, school will contact the family for consent to involve a different member of staff.
- Only in an emergency would staff undertake intimate care that has not been agreed with the parents/carers. This act of care would be reported to a senior member of school staff and to the parents/carers as soon as possible after the event. The reasons for this and the care undertaken would be documented by the staff member who had delivered the care.
- A written record will be kept of all support with intimate care. This will include the date and time of the care, who was present, and any care given that has differed from the care plan, together with the reason for this. Any changes in the learner's behaviour or appearance will be documented and reported to a senior member of staff, in line with the safeguarding policy.

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- Staff will communicate carefully with learners, using their usual communication method, to discuss their needs and preferences. Wherever possible the learner's wishes and preferences will be taken into account.
- School will take into account the religious views, beliefs and cultural values of the learner and their family, as well as the learners gender identification and individual physical needs (e.g. periods, catheterisation, stoma care etc) as far as possible in provision of appropriate toileting facilities and when undertaking or supporting required individual personal care.
- School will work with all learners to promote positive self-esteem and body image and independence with self-care as far as is appropriate and practical.
- School will ensure that all staff are aware of the need for confidentiality. Personal and sensitive information will only be shared with those who need to know.
- School will act according to their child protection policy and procedures if there are any concerns for the learner's wellbeing.

Governors' responsibilities

- To ensure there are appropriate toileting facilities to meet the needs of all their learners, including those with bladder and bowel health issues.
- To ensure that sufficient staff are trained to meet the needs of their learners.
- The governing body will ensure that this policy is monitored and reviewed at least every three years.

Parent/carer responsibilities

- Parents/carers must ensure that they provide all relevant information to school, as soon as possible, so that the needs of their child can be met. This includes the nature of their child's needs, details of any healthcare professionals involved including specialist nurses, as well as any changes in their medication, care or condition.
- Parents/carers must ensure that they work towards their child achieving the maximum possible level of independence at home.
- Parents/carers should work with school to develop and agree a care plan.
- Parents/carers must make sure that school always has required equipment available for their child's intimate care or toileting needs.
- Parents/carers must ensure that school always has their emergency contact details.

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Learner responsibilities

- To respect the toileting space and others use of that space and right to privacy.
- To let school staff know if there is a problem with respect to the toileting/intimate care spaces.
- To be as involved as possible in their intimate care and with their care plan.
- To let school staff know when they are aware that they need assistance.
- To let their parent/carer or a trusted member of school staff know if they have any concerns or feel uncomfortable at any time.

Related documentation

When reading this policy please be aware of and refer to the following related documents:

- The child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Health and safety policy
- Inclusion policy

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