



Continence Policy

Berkeley Primary School

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Preface

This Continence Policy: Principles and Guidance for promoting and Supporting Children's Personal Development is modelled on Leicester City's policy as recommended by Sure Start in the DCSF document 'Implementing the DDA: improving access: early years'.

It places the development of continence firmly in the context of:

- the DDA and the risk that blanket policies on toilet training may discriminate;
- general developmental milestones and the wider development of independence in young children.

This policy therefore supports schools and settings in:

- ensuring that policies do not discriminate
- addressing the practicalities
- endorsing and promoting the principle of partnership with parents

The terms schools and settings used in this document refer to " 'early years providers' this includes: maintained schools; non-maintained schools; independent schools and childcare registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register (to be introduced in September 2008), all of which are required to meet the EYFS requirements. From September 2008 it is the legal responsibility of these providers to ensure that their provision meets the learning and development requirements, and complies with the welfare regulations, as required by Section 40 of the Act."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 1.6

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 made changes to Part 4 of the DDA. Chapter 1 of the new Part 4 brought in requirements on those providing school education.

Part 4 of the DDA says that it is unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled pupils and prospective pupils. A school discriminates if:

- it treats a disabled pupil or prospective pupil less favourably than another for the reason related to their disability and without justification (the 'less favourable treatment duty');
- it fails without justification, to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage ('the reasonable adjustments duty').

The duties apply to:

- Admissions
- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Education and associated services (a broad term covering the whole life of the school).

When a parent considers that their disabled child may have been discriminated against, they can make a claim of disability discrimination. Most claims are made to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Early Years Foundation Stage

Context and legal responsibilities

The EYFS is a central part of the ten year childcare strategy and the Childcare Act 2006. The Act provides the context for the delivery of the EYFS and taken together with the other elements of the strategy, the EYFS will be central to the delivery of the new duties on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities.



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The EYFS is given legal force through an Order and Regulations made under the Act. From September 2008 it will be mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children – that is children from birth to the end of the academic year in which they are five.

EYFS Statutory Guidance

The Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requires all education providers to re-examine all policies, consider the implications of the Act for practice and revise their current arrangements. In the light of historical practices that no longer comply with new legislation, changes will particularly be required wherever blanket rules about continence have been a feature of a school's /settings admissions policy. Schools and settings will also need to set in motion action that ensures they provide an accessible toileting facility if this has not previously been available.

The Department of Health has issued clear guidance about the facilities that should be available in each school. (Good Practice in Continence Services, 2000).

Achieving continence is one of many developmental milestones usually reached within the context of learning before the child transfers to a nursery or school in the maintained sector. In some cases this one developmental area is given significance beyond all others and parents may be made to feel guilty that this aspect of learning has not been achieved.

Whilst there may be children with longer-term continence issues for whom an individual health care plan will be put in place. There will also be children at various points of developing their independence in toileting who will need short term support in this important area of self-care.

Definition of Disability in DDA

The DDA provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or a learning difficulty that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The effect must be substantial and long-term.

It is clear therefore that anyone with a named condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against. However, it is also unacceptable to refuse admission to other children who are delayed in achieving continence. Delayed continence is not necessarily linked with learning difficulties. However, children with global developmental delay which may not have been identified by the time they enter nursery or school are likely to be late coming out of nappies.

Education providers have a legal obligation to meet the needs of children with delayed personal development in the same way as they would meet the individual needs of children with delayed language, or any other kind of delayed development. Children should not be excluded from normal activities solely because of incontinence.

Any admission policy that sets a blanket standard of continence, or any other aspect of development, for all children is discriminatory and therefore unlawful under the Act. All such issues have to be dealt with on an individual basis, and schools and settings are expected to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each child.



At Berkeley Primary School our procedures will include the following:

Health and Safety

The procedure we will follow in the case a child accidentally wets or soils him/herself, is sick while on the premises or needs a nappy changing will include:

- Using the designated changing area in the Nursery, Reception, KS1 and KS2 building and resources provided
- Staff to wear disposable gloves and aprons
- Wet or soiled nappies to be double wrapped and disposed of via the normal domestic waste route
- Soiled clothing to be sluiced and stored in a suitable place for collection by parent/carer at end of the day. (Not in a public place e.g. on a coat peg)
- Changing area to be cleaned after use
- Hot water and liquid soap available to wash hands as soon as the task is completed
- Hot air dryer or paper towels available for drying hands.

Facilities

Schools are now admitting younger children, some of whom, by virtue of their immaturity, are likely to have accidents, especially in the first few months after admission. There are a number of sensitivities with regard to children who have toileting / continence difficulties, not the least of which concerns the child's and family's self-esteem, the need for privacy and confidentiality, and the potential for name-calling/bullying owing to body odour. The emotional well-being and the dignity of the child is paramount when dealing with such intimate and personal needs.

At our school we have areas for changing and showering children in order to meet the personal development needs of young children in all 4 buildings in the disabled toilets. The toilet door will be closed to ensure that privacy and dignity are maintained during the time taken to change the child.

Safeguarding

The normal process of changing a nappy should not raise safeguarding concerns, and there are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not take place. Few schools will have the staffing resources to provide two members of staff for nappy changing and personnel checks (including DBS) are carried out to ensure the safety of children with staff employed. At our school staff members will change a nappy or help a child who has soiled / wet themselves on their own.

If there is perceived risk of allegation by a child then a single practitioner should not undertake nappy changing or other personal care needs.

A student on placement or volunteer in school should not change a nappy.

Due consideration should also be given to supporting older pupils with their personal care needs.

All members of staff are encouraged to remain highly vigilant for any signs or symptom of improper practice, as they would for all activities carried out on site.



Agreeing a procedure for personal care

We will consult with parents of children that need personal care to enable a mutual agreement to be reached to clearly define the expectations of both parties. Parents will be fully aware of the procedures the school will follow should their child need changing during school time.

Written guidelines will specify:

- who will change the child, EYFS promotes that this will ideally be the key person
- where changing will take place
- how these procedures reflect the individual child's care routines
- the use of any anti-allergic creams according to specific needs of individual child
- who will provide appropriate resources e.g. cleansing agents for skin
- how a nappy / soiled underwear will be dealt with
- what hygiene measures are in place
- what a staff member would do if they notice marks or injuries
- what a staff member will do if they suspect improper practice

If a special circumstance arises (e.g. should a child with complex continence needs be admitted) the Continence Team / health advisors will be closely involved in forward planning and specific training for the individual child.

Resources

Changing an individual child could take up to ten minutes, possibly longer in some circumstances. Generally this would not be dissimilar to the amount of time that could be spent with a child on any activity, and of course the time spent changing the child can be a positive, learning time.

Where a child is likely to have longer term needs the school SENCO should ensure that additional resources from the school's delegated SEN budget are allocated to the foundation stage to enable the children's individual needs to be met. Where there are children with complex care / continuing care needs funding may be available from other sources. The SENDCO will apply for these.

Keys to Success

A successful transition to independence in this area of self-care is more likely to be achieved where practitioners and parents work together with a positive approach to supporting the child in this aspect of their development.

It is therefore not helpful to assume that the child has failed to achieve full continence because this has not been attempted in the home. There are very few children for whom this would be true. Where this may be the case a positive and structured approach developed in partnership with parents and carers is likely to be successful.

"Providers must promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and must ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability." EYFS Statutory Guidance pg.37

Where staff become concerned that delayed continence may be linked with delays in other aspects of the child's development, this should be sensitively discussed with parents and carers and a specifically planned programme be jointly developed and agreed.



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There are other professionals who can help with advice and support. The family Health Visitor or appropriate nurse will have knowledge of who can be contacted to offer support and advice in this area. Health care professionals can also carry out a full health assessment in order to rule out any medical cause of continence problems.

Partnership Working

In order to achieve a clear understanding of the responsibilities of each partner, staff and parent /carers should set up a mutual agreement which will define each others expectations.

This will include:

The parent / carer:

- Agreeing to ensure that the child is changed at the latest possible time before being brought to school
- Providing the school / setting with spare nappies / underwear, a change of clothing and any prescribed creams
- Understanding and agreeing the procedures that will be followed when their child is changed at school –including the use of any cleanser or the application of any prescribed cream
- Agreeing to inform the school should the child have any marks/rash
- Agreeing to a 'minimum change' policy i.e. the school would not undertake to change the child more frequently than if s/he were at home.
- Agreeing to review arrangements should this be necessary

The school:

- Identifying the key person and staff engaged in the child's personal care.
- Agreeing the child's care routines with the parents/carers
- Agreeing to change the child during a single session should the child soil themselves or become uncomfortably wet
- Agreeing how often the child would be changed should the child be staying for the full day
- Agreeing to monitor the number of times the child is changed in order to identify progress made
- Agreeing to discuss any marks or rashes seen
- Agreeing to review arrangements.

This kind of agreement should help to avoid misunderstandings that might otherwise arise, and help parents feel confident that the school is taking a holistic view of the child's needs.

Further Information and guidance

Toileting Issues for Schools and Nurseries (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Specialist Community Child Health Services) Available from Early Years Co-ordinator (SEN) , Early Years Support Team, New Parks House, Pindar Road, Leicester, LE3 9RN or e-mail early.yearssupport@leicester.gov.uk

Enureris Resource & Information Centre (ERIC), 34 Old School House, Britannia Road, Kinswood, Bristo, BS15 8BD. Telephone: 0117 960 3060
Website www.eric.org.uk

Good Practice in Continence Services, 2000. Available free from Department of health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH or www.doh.gov.uk/continenceservices.htm



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Managing Bowel and Bladder problems in Schools and Early Years Settings (Guidelines for good practice), PromCon, Disabled Living, Red Bank House, 4 St Chad's Street, Manchester M8 8QA. Telephone: 0870 777 4714.

Email: promocon@disabledliving.co.uk Website: www.promocon.co.uk

Keep it clean and healthy, Infection Control Guidance for Nurseries, Playgroups and other Childcare settings. Published by Pat Cole, Hartford Cottage, 1 Longstaff Way, Hartford, Huntingdon, Cambridge, PE29 1XT. Email: pat@cole-hartford.fsnet.co.uk