



Intimate Care Policy

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Position:	Headteacher
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GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN PERSONAL CARE

The following guidelines have been taken from the Chailey Heritage work on "Guidelines for Good Practice in Personal Care". Other issues particularly relevant for our pupils and staff have been included where appropriate. They aim to provide clear expectations for all staff involved with the physical care of pupils.

Our pupils with moderate and severe learning disabilities are very vulnerable and all staff involved in their personal care should be sensitive to their needs.

These guidelines are designed to safeguard both pupils and staff and are based on the belief that everyone is safer if expectations are clear and approaches are as consistent as possible.

The class teachers must ensure all staff, including students on placement in their class have read and understand these guidelines. Students on placement will be expected to be part of the pupil's personal care but there should always be another adult present whilst a pupil is being changed.

1. Training

All staff will be given training in the school's procedures for personal care. This will be done as part of the Induction Process.

2. Guidelines

All staff should:

- a) Encourage pupils to have a positive image of their own body;

Confident, assertive pupils who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. As well as privacy, the approach taken in a pupil's personal care can convey many messages about what his or her own body is "worth". Staffs attitude to the pupil's personal care is very important. As far as appropriate and keeping in the mind the pupil's age, routine care should be enjoyable and relaxed.

- b) Treat every pupil with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to their age and the situation.

Privacy is an important issue. Much personal care is carried out by one staff member alone with one pupil.

This practice is actively supported unless the task requires two people.

The school's practice is for staff to carry out the personal care of pupils alone unless the task requires the presence of two people.

It is essential that a member of staff inform another member of staff that they are going to take a child to the toilet/change their nappy. They should inform the other member of staff when they have returned.

c) Follow Individual Care Plans

Pupils will have an individual care plan giving details of procedures for personal care, medical care protocols and risk assessments. This will be approved by parents / carers and will be reviewed by the class staff as appropriate or at least once a year at annual review. Each pupil's individual care plan will be followed by school staff in all settings always, i.e. within school and on school visits elsewhere.

d) Involve the pupil as far as possible in his or her own personal care

Try to avoid doing things for pupils that they can do alone and if the pupil is able to help please let them do so. This is as important for tasks such as removing underclothes as it is for washing the private parts of the body. Support them in doing all that they can themselves. If a child is fully dependent on you, talk with him or her about what you are doing and give choices where possible.

e) Be responsive to a pupil's reactions

It is appropriate to "check" your practice by asking, particularly a pupil you have not previously cared for "Is it OK to do it this way?"; "Can you wash there?" If a pupil expresses dislike of a certain person carrying out his or her personal care, try and find out why. Ensure one of your class staff is aware of this.

f) Make sure practice in personal care is as consistent as possible

Teachers have a responsibility for ensuring their staff follows a consistent approach. This does not mean that everyone has to do things in an identical fashion, but it is important that approaches to personal care are not markedly different between individuals. For example, do you use toilet tissue or wet wipes to wash a pupil's private parts? (Is care during menstruation consistent across different staff?)

g) Never do something unless you know how to do it

If you are not sure how to do something, ask. If you need to be shown more than once, ask again. Certain procedures such as giving rectal valium must only be carried out by staff that have been formally trained and assessed as competent.

h) Report any concerns you identify during the personal care of a child, for example;

- You accidentally hurt the pupil;
- The pupil seems sore or unusually tender in the genital area;
- The pupil misunderstands or misinterprets something;
- The pupil has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause (sudden crying or shouting)

Report any such incident as soon as possible to another person working with you and make a brief written note of it. This is for two reasons; firstly, some of these could be cause for concern, and secondly, the pupil might possibly misconstrue something you have done.

If you are concerned that the pupil appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, discuss this with the class team. An erection may occur during personal care. This is perfectly natural, not necessarily sexual and should not affect the care routine.

3. Health and Safety

All staff are actively encouraged to use single use disposable gloves and aprons when undertaking personal care. The change mat / bed should be washed with antibacterial spray after each use. Secure hand washing procedures should be in place.

4. Sensitive Issues

Most of our pupils have difficulty interpreting and relating to the world around them. To help them, staff and parents need to ensure a clear and consistent approach to sensitive issues, to safeguard themselves and to give clear guidelines on socially acceptable behaviour.

a) Personal contact

Touch is encouraged as part of healthy interaction and vital to our well-being. Comforting pupils is essential, and a hug gives them a positive message about themselves.

However, carrying and cuddling them excessively and for our own convenience should not be encouraged.

b) Masturbation

We believe all pupils should have an opportunity to explore their own bodies in a relaxed and comfortable setting. This will most often be in the privacy of their own home.

In exploring their bodies some pupils will masturbate. This is quite natural, and they should never be punished or chastised for doing so.

There are however situations and settings where masturbation is not appropriate, and intervention is necessary.

The following are suggested:

- distraction, e.g. another activity or interaction;
- calmly and gently remove hands;
- verbal reminders "we don't touch, that's private";
- Specific teaching on "public" and "private" (clothes, places, actions, body parts).

c) Menstruation

Teaching on menstruation should begin, where appropriate, with girls in Year 6 and continue at secondary level.

A positive attitude will underpin all teaching and include an element of celebration as girls become young women.

Such teaching will include activities around public and private (clothes, places, actions, body parts), becoming a young woman, body changes, hygiene and the practical aspects involved, becoming as independent as possible in the management of their periods.

The individual management and care of each pupil when they have their period should be discussed with both parents by the class team. If students on work placement are also involved in their personal care it is important to discuss the sensitive issue of menstruation with them.

All staff involved should talk with the young woman each time they have their period, acknowledging both its presence and also how they might be feeling.

A special calendar to record feelings, moods, frequency and duration could be used between school and home to ensure a consistent approach and involve the young women as appropriate.

These are general guidelines for use by parents and staff with pupils across the whole school. However, we recognise their individual differences and needs including culture and religious beliefs and will adapt our procedures accordingly.



Appendix 1 - Personal Care Plan

Name:		
DOB:		Date:

Description of Personal Care Needs:

Details of assistance, including frequency of support:

Strategies and targets towards independence:

Review Date:

This plan has been agreed by:
Parent/Carer: Date:
Class Teacher / Keyworker: Date:

