



Intimate Care Policy – The Shrubberies School

Principles

The Governing Body will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and Keeping Children Safe in Education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2020, to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at this school.

This school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010 which requires that any child with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the following

- The safeguarding policy
- The health and safety policy and procedures
- The policy for the administration of medicines
- The supporting students with medical needs policy
- Using physical contact

The Shrubberies is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

The Shrubberies recognises that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity, with respect when intimate care is given. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

Definition

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

It also includes supervision of children involved in intimate self-care.



Best Practice

Staff induction will cover intimate care. More in depth training will be provided as part of the school's rolling programme of CPD. Staff are fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

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.

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 their needs and preferences. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

All 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 his/herself as possible. It is acknowledged as a given that for some of our students intimate care will be essential e.g. changing for PE, changing, drying and dressing after swimming, and residential trips.

Every 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. Adults who assist children one-to-one should be employees of the school and be DBS checked at the appropriate level as this is classed as a regulated activity. Safer Recruitment procedures are in line with the statutory guidance of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

It is not always practical for two members of staff to assist with an intimate procedure and also this does not take account of the child's privacy. It is advisable, however, for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.

Intimate care will always be given by staff known by the pupil. Wherever possible the same pupil will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers known to the child who 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.

Safeguarding

The Designated Safeguard Lead is Wendy Newby and the Deputies are Rachel Stephens, Clare Jordan and Jude Shackell.

The Governors and staff at The Shrubberies School recognise that children with special needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.



The school's safeguarding policy and inter-agency child protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely but in this school best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.

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

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, soreness etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguard Lead or the Deputies. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if necessary, in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

If a child becomes distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Headteacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Headteacher) and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, this will be investigated by the Headteacher (or by the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) in accordance with the agreed procedures.

Any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher.

Medical Procedures

Children with disabilities might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.

Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.



Massage

Massage is now commonly used with children who have complex needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation.

It is recommended that massage undertaken by school staff should be confined to parts of the body such as the hands, feet and face or shoulders and back through clothes in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and children. Massage is only given with consent from the children either verbally or through non-verbal communication such as pulling away or showing dislike. Please also see the Using Physical Contact Policy.

This Policy Statement is considered part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment for all staff at The Shrubberies