

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

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Policy Agreed	September 2020
To be reviewed	FEBRUARY 2024
Owner	ALMUT BEVER-WARREN
Signed	
Designation	HEADTEACHER

Rationale

Our Intimate Care Policy is in place to safeguard both our young people and staff and applies to everyone involved at New Park Academy in the potential intimate care of children.

Any staff involved with the intimate care of any young person needs to be sensitive to their individual needs. Intimate care may be any activity required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or as a one-off incident.

Examples may be:

- toileting;
- feeding;
- oral care;
- washing;
- changing clothes;
- first aid and medical assistance; and
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

New Park Academy would expect parents and/or carers to have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child and medical advice will be taken into consideration where appropriate.

Principles of Intimate Care

Every child has the right to:

- be safe
- personal privacy
- be valued as an individual
- be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account
- have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent
- be treated with dignity and respect

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children have safeguarding training as part of their induction period; however, only those familiar with the intimate care policy and who are willing to undertake such duties are involved in the potential intimate care of pupils at New Park School.

It is anticipated that such occasions will be infrequent; however, intimate care arrangements required on a regular basis will be agreed between the school and parents/carers, and when appropriate and possible, by the child prior to arrival.

In such cases, consent will be agreed at the pre-start meeting or with the Headteacher or on arrangement with the Headteacher if intimate care needs are determined during a school year. This information will be agreed in writing and signed and retained in the child's record file.

Intimate care arrangements for any child who requires this support on a regular basis should be reviewed at least every six months with any amendments to arrangements recorded and retained in the child's file.

Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents/carers and attempts would be made prior to seek guidance and approval if at all possible. In the event that parents/carers were not able to be contacted or informed at the time of intimate care, then they would be informed at the earliest possible time afterwards.

If any staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she is obliged to report this to the Headteacher who is the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer, or any member of the SLT.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All young people have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect and these guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. Any incident of Intimate Care should be documented in the child/young person's wellbeing folder within 24 hours of the incident taking place.

Staff will at all times

Involve the child in the intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation makes the young person totally dependent, verbal communication will be given in a step by step process, allowing each young person to make choices.

Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation

Assess each situation individually to safeguard both the pupil/young person and the member of staff to reduce situations of vulnerability for both parties. Be mindful of lone working which may not be appropriate in some situations.

Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

In cases where multiple staff will undertake intimate care to the same pupil/young person, a consistent approach must be undertaken, supported by effective communication and training to ensure consistent approaches.

Be aware of limitations

Only carry out activities within your competency. If in doubt, ask. Some situations may require formally trained staff.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image

The attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Make sure any approach to intimate care is communicated with choices and be mindful of the age of the young person.

If you have any concerns you must report them

If you observe anything that raises concern, report it immediately to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Officer in school. If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Child Protection/Safeguarding officer in school and make a written report.

Hygiene

Staff should be aware of normal health & safety and hygiene precautions, using protective equipment if necessary to avoid infection.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

Every young person should have a choice for intimate care; however, at New Park Academy the ratio of female to male staff would indicate the likelihood that intimate care may be given by a female.

Unless specifically requested, the intimate care of boys and girls may be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex; however, this will depend on age and developmental needs of the child and in such cases, as in all incidents of intimate care, the following should be observed:

- all children have the right to dignity, i.e. be appropriately covered, the door closed or screen/curtains in place;
- if a young person become distressed or uncomfortable, the intimate care should stop immediately, whilst ascertaining the reason why and providing reassurance with these concerns reported to the Child Protection/Safeguarding officer and by evidence in writing

Communication with Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of a young person's need and to consult their individual risk assessment and individual learning plan.

Parent/carer permission for Intimate Care

In conjunction with New Park School's safeguarding policy and intimate care policy and in the event of intimate care becoming necessary, I give permission for

Name of young person

To receive intimate care in school, which could be anything from toileting, oral care, changing clothes, first aid and medical assistance or supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to be independent.
I understand that I will be informed discretely should the occasion arise.

Pandemic Addendum

Definition of Intimate Care

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.

During any pandemic restrictions, guidance is to use social distancing and this is not possible when supporting a pupil with intimate care. Therefore, all precautions will be made to reduce the risk for the pupil and the staff supporting the pupil. We will continue with the practice of using disposable gloves and aprons should a pupil require intimate care. In addition, due to the nature of being less than 1 meter apart, the staff will also wear face coverings as appropriate. All of the personal protective equipment will be safely disposed of after supporting the pupil.

