

Intimate Care Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out a clear framework within which all children and young people receive intimate and personal care they require in order to participate fully in activities whilst at school. As well as providing a clear policy statement to services that support children and young people, the document provides guidance for people who provide intimate and personal care.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a safe and professional manner at all times.

We recognise 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, embarrassment or discomfort.

2. Definition

'Intimate Care' can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, such as toileting, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, intimate personal areas of the body. In most cases such care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of equipment associated with the process as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the cases of specific procedure only staff assessed as competent should undertake the procedure.

3. Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare, safety and dignity are of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (all staff undergo Child Protection and Moving and Handling training) and are fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist.

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 involved in the intimate care of children will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.

The child 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 him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual Intimate Care Plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation and level of need to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Wherever possible one child will be catered for by one adult, unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting boys in our school, because of a lack of suitably trained male staff.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the Individual Intimate Care Plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

4. Intimate Care of pupils in nursery, pre-school and reception stage

Staff should always wear protective gloves when dealing with a child who has soiled (or when changing a soiled nappy) or is bleeding.

Any soiled nappies should be placed in a nappy sack and placed in a bin designated for nappy disposal.

A home link book will be provided to record the time a nappy has been changed and by whom along with any other relevant comments, for example if the child has been unhappy, or tired, etc.

All staff engaged in the care and education of children need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact.

5. The Protection of Children

Child Protection Procedures and Multi-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into 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 a member of staff, all necessary Child Protection procedures will be followed in line with the stated policy and national guidance.

All staff will be required to confirm that they have read the school policy for clarification of practices and procedures.

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases, only the minimum

force necessary should be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control. In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of the schools Positive Handling Policy

The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with children this will be in response to the child's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given the age, stage of development. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

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Responsibility of the Academy SENDCo