



Policy for Intimate Care

Introduction

The 'Intimate Care' policy and associated guidelines for pupils at Sunningdale School have been developed to safeguard both children and staff. This guidance applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. Children with a disability can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Rationale:

Sunningdale school is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat children with respect when engaged in any form of intimate care.

The child's welfare and dignity are paramount at all times.

Definition

'Intimate care' is defined as any involvement that requires touching or the carrying out of invasive procedures to support the personal care needs of the child. Where possible children will carry out these tasks independently; however for a small number of pupils especially those with a physical/severe learning disability or those with medical needs intimate care support may be required on either a regular or intermittent basis in order to address need.

Intimate care may include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Medical interventions
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which this policy and guidelines are based. At Sunningdale we believe that every child has the right to:

- Personal privacy.
- Be valued as an individual.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Be involved in their own intimate care.
- Express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account.
- Privacy and a professional approach from all staff that meets their needs.
- Information to help them to make informed and appropriate choices

- Be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.

Responsibilities

- Only identified named staff should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The delivery of intimate care should be undertaken by professionally qualified staff and governed by their professional code of conduct.
- All staff must work as part of a multi-professional team to ensure the child has access to the most suitable equipment and facilities.
- All staff must support the child in the achievement of the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability. Where necessary individual care plans will be drawn up for individual children.
- All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care they are likely to be engaged in and fully understand the 'Intimate Care' policy and guidelines.
- Senior leaders must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the 'Intimate Care' policy and guidelines.
- Senior leaders must ensure that all staff involved in intimate care are up to date with safeguarding and moving and assisting training and be fully aware of best practise.
- The Intimate Care Policy will be highlighted as part of the Induction Process for all new members of staff
- Staff will provide detailed risk assessments for individual children updated on a regular basis.
- All staff must be aware that intimate care can be provided by a member of staff of a different gender to the pupil.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the 'Designated Person.'

Invasive procedures

We recommend that where possible 2 adults are present when invasive procedures are undertaken.

Whilst toileting, intimate care procedures may be carried out by one member of staff, however changing areas should also be clear and visible to other members of staff without compromising the child's privacy.

Facilities

All staff involved with intimate care should use the following facilities as appropriate

- adjustable changing beds
- protective clothing and disposable gloves
- labelled bins, waste bins for incineration
- supplies of suitable cleaning materials with COSHH certification.
- private areas

Working with children of the opposite sex

We believe there is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved in the care of our pupils.

The practical guidelines within this policy are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.

Communication with children

Pupil voice

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's identified Communication Pathway.

Where possible children will be

- Involved in formulating their own care plan
- Staff should be sensitive to a child's wishes by observing responses and reactions during intimate care. When the child is unable to communicate their wishes we will consult with parents who will act as advocates on the child's behalf.
- Communication throughout intimate care procedures should be in line with the child's identified method of communication. This may include communication methods such as signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing.
- Staff should model the agreed terminology for the private parts of the body according to the age and stage of the child's development.

Guidance on who will be involved in 'intimate care'

- Identified Key Workers will be permanent members of the school staff within class teams.
- Students, work experience and visitors **should not** be responsible for the intimate care of children
- Nurses on site will be available to give advice and /or administer intimate medication when prescribed.

The protection of children

Child protection procedures and multi agency safeguarding procedures **MUST BE** adhered to.

If staff have any concerns about any changes in a child's presentation they **MUST** immediately report the information to their line manager in the first instance and if necessary to the 'Designated' person.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be discussed with the class teacher initially and appropriate changes made where necessary. This will be recorded.

- If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff it **MUST** be reported to the 'Designated person.'
- If a member of staff has concerns about a colleague and their intimate care practice they must report this immediately to the 'Designated person.'
- An investigation will be carried out if there is any discrepancy between a report made by a child and the supporting adult with regard to their intimate care or time spent alone.

Parents

Permission to provide intimate care is part of the school's admissions procedures. Sharing of information is encouraged so that we can provide care most suitable to a child's needs.

The school ensures ongoing effective communication through the use of home school diaries and easy access through our 'open door' policy.