

This Policy has been adopted and approved by Gippswyk Community Educational Trust and has been adapted for use by Copleston High School.

<b>INTIMATE CARE POLICY</b>	
Approved by GCET	19.7.2022
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Responsible Officer	Tracy Pilkington - SENDCO
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#### **Definition of a Parent**

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Copleston High School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The school recognises that there is a need to treat all students with sensitivity and respect when intimate care is given.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of intimate personal areas. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as helping someone use the toilet or with cleaning intimate parts of the body. Student's dignity will be preserved, and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided appropriate to their level of developmental need.

Students will require some degree of intimate care at some point throughout their educational journey due to routine 'accidents' or more rarely due to developmental or medical issues.

## **PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE**

All students within the school have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity, respect and privacy at all times, so as to enable them to access all aspects of the Academy's provision.

This guidance sets out clear principles and guidelines on supporting intimate care and toileting and it should be considered in line with the Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Administering of Medicines policies.

This guidance supports the safeguarding and welfare requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012 and the Equality Act 2010. The school will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school.

The school will ensure that:

- No student's physical, mental or sensory impairment will have an adverse effect on their ability to take part in day to day activities.
- No student with a named condition that affects personal development will be discriminated against
- No student who is delayed in achieving continence or has other specific issues requiring intimate care will be refused admission
- No child will be sent home or have to wait for their parents/carer due to problems resulting from a need for intimate care
- Adjustments will be made for any child who has delayed incontinence

## 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 students 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 and toileting.

It also includes supervision of students involved in intimate self-care. Intimate care includes any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual student. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with students and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual care
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a student involved in intimate self-care

## PRINCIPLES

- Children and young people should be encouraged to express choice and to have a positive image of their body
- Children and young people have the right to feel safe and secure
- Children and young people have the right to remain healthy
- Children and young people should be respected and valued as individuals
- Children and young people have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff when

meeting their needs

- Children and young people have the right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices
- Children and young people have the right to complain about their intimate care and have their complaint dealt with
- A student's care plan should be designed to lead to as much independence and control as possible

## OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE

- All students who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the young person's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and/or Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus if appropriate will be provided to assist with students who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist.
- Staff will be supported to adapt practices in relation to the needs of individual students, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex and relationship education to the students as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.
- There is careful communication with each student who needs help with intimate care in line with their age and understanding to discuss the child's needs and preferences.
- The student is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- Students will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves.
- Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular students as appropriate. These plans will include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and the staff member.
- Each student's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each student's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a student needs help with intimate care.
- Where possible one student will be cared for by one adult unless there is a necessity for having two adults present. If this is the case, this should be clearly documented.
- Each child/young person will have an assigned senior member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Where young people have routine, occasional 'accidents' they will be changed, or supported in changing (depending on age, stage of development and need) in school. Soiled/wet clothes will be bagged (as below) and

young people will be provided (where possible) with spare clothes or change into PE kit etc. If necessary, a parent can be called to bring in spare clothing. Parents should always be informed that a child has had an accident and told where to find the soiled/wet clothes.

Where regular intimate care is required, staff work in partnership with parents/carers to provide care appropriate to the needs of the individual student and together will produce a care plan. The care plan will set out:

- What care is required
- Number of staff needed to carry out the task (if more than one person is required, reason will be documented)
- Additional equipment required
- Young person's preferred means of communication (eg. visual, verbal). Agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions
- Young person's level of ability ie. what tasks they are able to do by themselves
- Acknowledge and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivities related to aspects of intimate care
- Be regularly monitored and reviewed in accordance with the child's development

Parents/Carers are asked to supply the following where regular intimate care is required:

- Spare nappies
- Wipes, creams, nappy sacks etc.
- Spare clothing
- Spare underwear
- Sanitary products

## WRITING A CARE PLAN FOR INTIMATE CARE

Where a routine procedure is required, a care plan should be agreed in discussion with the child, school staff, parents and relevant health personnel. This might be for a student who needs intimate care because they are not yet toilet trained through to a student who has severe medical issues. Students who need to be changed occasionally due to routine accidents do not require a plan but will be covered by standing risk assessments. Where a plan is required, it should be signed by all who contribute and then reviewed on an agreed basis. A six-monthly review is recommended, but this needs to be more frequent if the circumstances/child's condition is changing. Whilst developing the plan, the following should be considered:

Implications for the school:

- The importance of working towards independent self-care
- Arrangements for home-school transport, sports day, school performances, examinations, school trips, swimming etc.
- Who will substitute in the absence of the appointed person(s)
- Strategies for dealing with pressure from peers e.g. teasing/bullying
- Time required to implement and manage the plan.

Implications for classroom management:

- Seating arrangements in class so that they can leave class with minimal disruption to the lesson
- Avoidance of missing the same lesson due to routines
- Awareness of a student's feelings about their own intimate care needs which could affect learning
- Implications for PE, swimming etc. ie discreet clothing, additional time for changing

All plans must be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectation, roles and responsibilities. They should reflect

all methods of communication including emergency procedures between home, school and the medical service. A procedure should also be included to explain how concerns arising from the intimate care process will be dealt with.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate space and facilities for the intimate care to take place. It is necessary to look at issues such as proximity to the classrooms, how to ensure privacy and dignity, the types of equipment needed, how to alert for assistance if required etc. Environmental advice pertinent to a student can be gained by contacting the Occupational Therapist (OT) who supports the child/young person in the school/setting.

## DEALING WITH BODILY FLUIDS

Urine, faeces, blood and vomit will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of safely. When dealing with bodily fluids, staff wear personal protective clothing (disposal plastic gloves and aprons) washing their hands thoroughly afterward. Soiled children's clothing will be bagged to go home or (with parent's permission) disposed of in yellow sacks – staff will not rinse it. Students will be kept away from the affected area until the incident has been completely resolved.

All staff maintain high standards of personal hygiene and will take all practicable steps to prevent and control the spread of infection.

This guidance aims to manage risks associated with toileting and intimate care needs and ensures that employees do not work outside the remit of their responsibilities set out in this policy.

## MOVING AND HANDLING

Assisting personal care tasks may present challenges for moving and handling. At all times the student's wishes and choices must be considered, but procedures must also take into account the safety of the people who are assisting. Manual handling risks need to be assessed and identified and measures put in place to reduce the risk as required. This may involve small items of equipment, such as grab rails or steps, to more complex equipment such as mobile or ceiling track hoists and electric height adjustable changing benches.

Advice as to the best moving and handling procedures to support an individual can be requested via the Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) service specifically addressing the needs of the individual who requires the assistance. If the individual is not known to the children's OT or PT service, then a referral can be made.

The School is responsible for providing training for staff who deliver moving and handling. In the same way as an intimate care plan is required, there also needs to be a clear protocol for the moving and handling procedures identified for the task. This should clarify who and how these procedures are to be undertaken. Training is provided annually or sooner in the event of changing circumstances or staff.

## MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

Positive links with other agencies should be used to enable school-based plans to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals. This will enable a focus to be kept on the needs of the student and will ensure the student's well-being and development remains paramount.

## STUDENT VOICE

The student should be enabled, subject to their age and understanding, to express a preference regarding the sequence of care. Appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff should be agreed, it may be possible to determine a student's wishes by observation of reactions to intimate care.

Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates. It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols and body movements. To ensure effective communication with the child, staff should ascertain the agreed method of communication and identify this in the agreed Care Plan.

## SAFEGUARDING

Staff are trained on the signs and symptom so child abuse which in line with the latest guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education and will follow the guidance given.

If a member of staff is concerned about any physical or emotional changes, such as marks, bruises, soreness, distress etc. they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. The Child Protection Policy will then be implemented.

Should a child become unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the SENDCo will look into the situation and record any findings. These will be discussed with the student's parents/carers in order to resolve the problem. If necessary, the SENDCo will seek advice from other agencies (first obtaining parental consent in order to talk to any agency about a specifically named student).

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, the procedure set out in the Child Protection Policy will be followed and if necessary, a referral made to the LADO. If a member of staff is concerned about another member of staff's behaviour, they should follow the procedures in the Whistleblowing Policy.

## VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE

Disabled children and young people are particularly vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. It is vitally important that all staff members are familiar with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures as well as the statutory framework as laid out in the most current 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

Disabled children can be more vulnerable to abuse because:

- They often have less control over their lives than their peers
- They do not always receive appropriate sex and relationships education, or if they do may not understand it, so are less able to recognise abuse
- They may have multiple carers through residential, foster or hospital placements
- Changes in appearance, mood or behaviour may be attributed to the student's disability rather than abuse
- They may not be able to communicate what is happening to them
- Intimate care that involves touching the private parts of a disabled student may leave staff more vulnerable to accusations of abuse. It is unrealistic to eliminate all risk, but the vulnerability places an important responsibility on staff to work in accordance with agreed procedures.

## UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE

Academy staff should use their discretion and judge each case individually with reference to the student's needs, but it is generally not acceptable to:

- Assume that every pupil with the same condition requires the same treatment
- Ignore the views of the pupil or their parents
- Ignore medical evidence or opinion (although this may be challenged)
- Send students with medical conditions home frequently for reasons associated with their medical condition or prevent them from staying for normal school activities, including lunch, unless this is specified in their care plans
- If the student becomes ill, send them to the school office or medical room unaccompanied or with someone unsuitable
- Penalise students for their attendance record if their absences are related to their medical condition eg. hospital appointments
- Prevent students from drinking, eating or taking toilet or other breaks whenever they need to in order to manage their medical condition effectively
- Require parents, or otherwise make them feel obliged, to attend school to administer medication or provide medical support to their child, including with toileting issues. No parent should have to give up working because the school is failing to support their child's medical needs
- Prevent students from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to students participating in any aspect of school life, including school trips, e.g. by requiring parents to accompany their child

## INSURANCE

The Trust will ensure that the appropriate level of insurance is in place and appropriately reflects the level of risk. GCET is insured through Zurich and full indemnity is provided to staff providing appropriate medical care through the public liability section of the policy. Further information is provided via the following link:

<https://newsandviews.zurich.co.uk/strategic-focus/supporting-schools-pupils-medical-conditions/>