

Standard Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

- At Southgate School, staff will realise that the issue of intimate care is a sensitive one; they will treat all young people with respect, consideration and dignity at all times.
- 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, the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing. It also includes high levels of supervision of young people involved in intimate self-care.
- Southgate School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.
- All pupils will access developmentally appropriate curriculum around PSHCSRE, including personal safety, relationship education and personal care routines.
- All staff have a duty of care to all young people, and therefore may be asked to help with intimate care.

Best Practice

- Young people's dignity will be a main priority and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided. All staff are aware of confidentiality procedures and sensitive information will only be shared with those who need to know.
- Young people will have staff known to them to support their intimate care where ever possible.
- Young people will be encouraged to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Each young person will be supported to do as much for themselves as they can.
- There will be careful communication with each young person, using their preferred method of communication, to understand their needs and preferences. Where there is appropriate developmental understanding, consent should be sought before starting in intimate procedure.
- Staff regularly involved in intimate care will be trained to do so, including Safeguarding. Health and safety training in moving and handling or using specific equipment will be provided where necessary. This may be provided by external agencies but is often 'cascaded' within the staff team.
- The environment should be carefully considered to provide comfort and dignity throughout the intimate care. This will usually be a hygiene suite or toilet.
- Best practise regarding infection control will be adhered to, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons, disposable sheets on beds and to clean equipment after each use.

Intimate Care Plans

- If a young person has had an 'accident' or needs one-off help with intimate care, best practice will be followed by 2 members of staff and parents will be promptly informed. An Intimate Care Plan is not needed.
- For young people who need regular intimate care (monthly or more frequent), an Intimate Care Plan will be written with input from parents, staff and other agencies if appropriate e.g. physiotherapists or school nurses. Staff at Southgate School will work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to young people wherever possible.
- Intimate Care Plans will communicate the needs of individual young people, taking into account developmental and personal changes such as medical issues, religious and cultural views of young people and families, the onset of puberty or menstruation and any historical concerns (such as past abuse).
- Intimate Care Plans should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. change of class, onset of puberty etc. They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips.
- In Foundation Stage, Key stage 1 & 2, intimate care may be appropriately delivered by cross gender support (where all parties feel comfortable with that arrangement). In Key Stage 3 & 4 (or at the onset of puberty if earlier) intimate care will only be delivered by same gender members of staff. If instances of a genuine emergency arise, cross gender care may only be delivered by 2 members of staff.
- It is not always practical or necessary for 2 members of staff to assist with intimate care and this does not always take account of the young person's privacy. This will be discussed and agreed by all parties within an Intimate Care Plan.
- Parents/Carers will be asked to supply appropriately sized nappies/pads, wipes, disposable bags and appropriate menstrual care supplies, as appropriate. The school will supply disposable gloves, aprons and sheets for changing beds.

Child Protection

- The school Safeguarding Policy and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.
- From a safeguarding perspective, it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a young person'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 remain vigilant at all times.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a young person's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. he/she will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding

Lead and complete a clear record of the concern on CPOMS. This will then be dealt with following the Safeguarding Policy.

- If a young person 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. The young person's needs and wishes will always be given priority and rotas will be altered accordingly.
- If a young person makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- Any adult who has concerns about a member of staff, regarding improper practise, will report this to the Headteacher (or to the chair of governors if the concern is about the Headteacher).

Other areas to consider

- Massage is now commonly used with children with complex needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation. It is recommended that massage by school staff should be limited to parts of the body such as hands, feet and face.
- Some children may require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures, such as rectal medication. This will be outlined within a Health Care Plan and only carried out by appropriately trained staff.
- If an examination of a young person is required for emergency First Aid it is advisable to have another adult present.
- Children who have physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If a member of school staff needs to implement part of a physiotherapy regime with a young person, this should only be done after appropriate demonstration and documented guidance from a physiotherapist.

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Reviewed 2014 N Rogers

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