



Intimate Care Policy

Date Completed: September 2024

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Review Date: September 2027

This policy represents the agreed principles for intimate care throughout the trust.
This policy has been agreed by all staff and trustees within Elveden Schools Trust.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate of care of their children

Principles

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young persons' right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

Definition

Intimate care is one of the following:

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell
- Supporting a pupil with toileting due to SEN

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed particularly in Early Years. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

Providing comfort or support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in EYFS). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated.

When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

Toileting

It is an expectation that children will be fully independent before starting full-time school; this expectation will be communicated to parents. If this is not the case, parents/carers must speak to a member of staff who will be able to advise and support.

Cleaning children

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child
- Children that wear nappies due to SEN, will be disposed of by school.
- If barrier cream (Sudocream) needs to be applied in the case of children with SEN, then written permission must be sought from the pupil's parent/guardian in advance.

Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves. All areas/rooms must be cleaned after use and the school cleaners will provide additional cleaning during and at the end of the day.

Medical Procedures

Children who are disabled might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents or carers, documented in the health care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.

Every medical procedure performed will be logged and signed by the member of staff performing the procedure and the chaperone adult who has overseen the procedure. Where advised by health care professionals, additional information will be logged. For example, volume and colour of bodily excretions, blood glucose levels for the monitoring of diabetes.

It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly. Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with Local Authority guidance. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity

Physiotherapy

Children students who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the health care plan that a member of school staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly. The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique.

Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes. Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

Protection for staff

It is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a student's body. At Elveden Schools Trust, best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in intimate care and others in the vicinity) will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.

Medical intimate care procedures that involve touching private parts will require the presence of a chaperone (second adult) who may be a witness to the procedure. Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk.

These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

Safeguards for children

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Elveden Schools Trust are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily.

All those working with children should be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and should only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their supervisor's satisfaction.

It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students should only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors

Where appropriate, students will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a student becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the Head Teacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents or carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution.

Staffing schedules will be altered until the issues are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if necessary.