



**Nurturing to Learn**

**INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

## **1. Principles**

1.1 The Governing Body will act in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Government guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2012) and KCSIE 2022 to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school

1.2 This school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupils intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

1.3 The Governing Body recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/hers ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

1.4 This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the schools policies as below:

Child Protection policy and procedures.

Staff code of conduct and guidance on safer working practice.

Whistle-blowing and allegations management policies.

Health and safety policy and procedures.

Special Educational Needs Policy.

Policy for the administration of medicines.

1.5 The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of spupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

1.6 We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his or her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every student is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no student should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

1.7 Staff will work in close partnership with parent and carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

1.8 Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have a health care plan in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.

1.9 Members of staff must be given the choice as to whether they are prepared to provide intimate care to pupil.

1.10 All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.

1.11 This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

## **2. Child focused principles of intimate care**

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the policy and guidelines are based:

Every child has the right to be safe;

Every child has the right to personal privacy;

Every child has the right to be valued as an individual;

Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;

Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;

Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account;

Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

## **3. Definition**

3.1 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 pupils are unable to do because of their 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, toileting or dressing.

3.2 It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

## **4. Best Practice**

4.1 Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Individual health care plans or intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents or carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as college nurses or physiotherapists. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the student should also be present wherever possible and appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits. Due to the SEND of the students the plan may be created with parents/ carers then talked through with the young person.

4.2 Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the pupil and parents or carer's appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan.

4.3 Where a care plan is not in place, parents or carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (for example, has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him or herself). It is recommended practice that information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in person by telephone or by sealed letter.

4.4 In relation to record keeping, a written record should be kept in a format agreed by parents and staff every time a child has an invasive medical procedure.

4.5 Accurate records should also be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care; these can be brief but should, as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case.

4.6 These records will be kept in the child's file and available to parents or carers on request.

4.7 All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual student to do as much for him or herself as possible.

4.8 Staff who provide intimate care are trained in personal care (for example, health and safety training in moving and handling), according to the needs of the pupil. Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

4.9 Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupil taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

4.10 There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal or symbolic), to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

4.11 Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the pupil personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their ages.

4.12 Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when he or she needs help with intimate care. SEND advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.

4.13 An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a student with intimate care.

4.14 The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

4.15 Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a student of the same gender, there is research which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors; ideally, every student should have a choice regarding the member of staff. There might also be occasions when the member of staff has good reason not to work alone with a student. It is important that the process is transparent so that all issues stated above can be respected; this can best be achieved through a meeting with all parties, as described above, to agree what actions will be taken, where and by whom.

4.16 Adults who assist pupil with intimate care should be employees of the School, not pupils or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.

4.17 All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

4.18 Health and Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products, if necessary, advice should be taken from the Kent County Council Procurement Department regarding disposal of large amounts of waste products or any quantity of products that come under the heading of clinical waste.

4.19 No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Scenario 1: child requires regular dressing and/or toileting support the school is aware that children with special needs or medical/physical needs may have additional vulnerabilities which must be considered when drawing up care plans for them as individuals. Regardless of age and ability, the views and emotional responses of children with such needs will be actively sought when drawing up or reviewing a Personal Care Needs Plan. Any child requiring regular dressing and/or toileting support will have a Personal Intimate Care Plan which will be agreed and signed by the parent/carer. This plan will outline who is responsible for supporting the child, where the support will take place, the procedure to be followed on every occasion, the resources required for the task, responsibilities for supplying these resources and any training received or required. This plan allows school and parents to be aware of the complete procedure surrounding the task from the outset. A record of 'changing' will also be kept. Although there may be specific requirements as reflected in individual Personal Care Needs Plans there is a general toileting procedure that staff at school will follow.

- Staff will always wear a single use disposable apron and gloves when carrying out the support.
- Any wet or soiled waste e.g. pads, wipes and gloves will be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag and sealed.
- The bag will then be placed in a bin (with a liner) specifically allocated for this purpose.
- This bin will be collected on a weekly basis as part of the usual refuse or sooner if required. Soiled or wet clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sealed.
- At the end of the school day staff will discreetly pass this over to parents/carers when collecting their child and verbally give details of the circumstances.

Scenario 2: Child not requiring regular dressing and/or toileting support In the event of a child becoming wet or soiled i.e. 'having an accident' in school, staff will quickly assess what actions need to be taken as below:

- If the child is wet and/or slightly soiled, a member of staff will discreetly escort the child to the nearest 'accessible' toilet where there is more space to carry out the support task.
- Staff will support changing of clothing and will initially encourage the child to clean themselves with wipes
- However they may support the cleaning/wiping process if the child is unable to do this or is distressed.
- At the same time a member of staff will action the school's procedure to clean any waste from the classroom area. In both of the above cases staff will carry out the procedures following health and safety guidelines e.g. Using gloves and aprons. Soiled or wet clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sealed. At the end of the school day staff will discreetly pass this over to parents/carers when collecting their child and verbally give details of the circumstances

## **5. Child Protection**

5.1 The Governors and staff at this School recognise that pupils with special educational needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

5.2 The college's child protection procedures will be adhered to.

5.3 From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a student's body.

In this School 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.

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

5.5 If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation, for example unexplained marks or bruises he or she will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head Teacher. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if appropriate, in accordance with the School's child protection procedures. Parents or carers will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made but this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child at increased risk of suffering significant harm.

5.6 If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the DSL. 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.

5.7 If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the School this should be reported to the Head teacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the allegation is about the Head Teacher), who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy regarding Allegations against Members of Staff. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of the allegation relates to.

5.8 Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Head Teacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing'.

**Appendix 1:**

**Elms School Permission for intimate care**

Dear Parents

If a child wets or soils themselves whilst they are in school, it is important that measures are taken to have them changed and if necessary, cleaned as quickly as possible. Our staff are experienced at carrying out this task if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, the school can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay. Elms School has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on our website.

Please fill out the permission slip below stating your preference.

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Consent for Intimate Care

Name of Child..... Class.....

Please tick as appropriate

• I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves whilst in the care of Elms School.

• I do not give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet or soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that in the event that I or my emergency contact cannot be contacted, the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid my child.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date.....

**Appendix 2:**

**Elms School Intimate Care Plan template**

Pupil Name:	
Class:	
Area of need:	
Details of assistance needed:	
Responsibility for supply of resources:	
Frequency of support/staff authorised to carry out plan:	
Location of toilet:	
Liaison with parents/carers methods of communication	
Staff training needs:	
Strategies to support independence:	
Review Date:	





## Update Schedule

Version 1	Written 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 – Mr Bennett
Sent to Governing Body for Approval	
Approved by Governing Body	
Update	20/09/2022