

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL



Policy Statement on

INTIMATE CARE

Drawn up by:	AJH
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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These three fundamental guiding principles are paramount and should be evident whenever intimate care involving children or young people is considered.

1st Principle

The exchange between all those involved in any intimate care procedures must be one of mutual respect.

2nd Principle

Every plan supporting intimate care must demonstrate how the child/young person can be enabled to develop their autonomy.

3rd Principle

The number of adults engaged in the care should only reflect the minimum needed to perform the task safely and respectfully. Each situation should reflect both the safety and vulnerability of child/young people and staff.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Hinchingbrooke School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children or young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children/young people with respect when intimate care is given. No child/young person should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

WHAT IS INTIMATE CARE?

Intimate care is any personal care that most people usually carry out for themselves.

OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE

The management of all children/young people with intimate care needs will be carefully planned and should be a positive experience for all involved. The child/young person who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide this care are trained to do so (including Safeguarding and Child Protection and Moving and Handling Training) and are fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist with children/young people who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist/occupational therapist.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children/young people taking into account developmental changes such as puberty eg menstruation. Whenever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex and relationships education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved. If staff are involved care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

Children/young people will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will ensure each child/young person does as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up as appropriate and shared and agreed by the child/young person and their parents/carers.

Each child/young person's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many carers need to be present when the child/young person is being cared for. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. In this case, the reasons should be clearly documented and reassessed regularly.

Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence, for example female staff supporting boys when there is no male staff.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the care plan. The needs and wishes of children/young people and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Cambridgeshire LSCB Safeguarding Interagency Procedures and Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures for Education will be adhered to alongside the school/setting's policy and procedures.

All children/young people will be taught personal safety skills relative to their age, ability and understanding. These skills will be shared with parents/carers to enable them to be consolidated within the home/community.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical or behavioural changes in a child/young person's presentation, eg marks, bruises, soreness or reluctance to go to certain places/people etc, s/he will immediately pass their concerns to the designated person for child protection in their school/setting.

If a child/young person is displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour, advice should be sought from the appropriate source (eg In schools this might be: Designated Person for Child Protection, School Nurse, Social Care, Education Child Protection Service, Cambridgeshire Sexual Behaviour Service).

If a child 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. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child/young person's needs remain paramount. Further advice, following the Interagency Procedures will be taken from outside agencies as necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff the procedures for Allegations Against Staff, in the Safeguarding and Inter-Agency Procedures will be followed. All staff will be required to confirm that they have read the Cambridgeshire Model Policy and Guidance for Intimate Care and be aware of the need to refer to other policies the school/setting may have in place for clarification of practices and procedures.

This policy was developed by consultation between staff, the governing body or management committee, parents and children/young people (as appropriate) and was approved.