



Intimate and Personal Care Policy

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An academy within:



“Learning together, to be the best we can be”

1. Personal and Intimate Care

- While many students at The Willows School can manage their own personal and intimate care needs, there are some students who will require help either routinely or occasionally.

2. Definition of Personal and Intimate Care

- Personal and intimate care is any care which most children/young people carry out for themselves, but which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulty, medical needs or needs arising from the child/ young person's stage of development.
- Students may need help with drinking, eating, dressing, hair care, washing, showering, skin care, changing sanitary wear, toileting, positioning and therapeutic interventions. It may also require the administration of rescue medications and some first aid.

3. Aims of Policy

- To provide every student with dignity, privacy, respect and a professional approach from all staff in meeting their needs.
- To safeguard the rights, protection and well-being of students.
- To encourage students to become as independent as possible.
- To reassure parents/carers that appropriate provision will be made for the individual needs of their child.
- To make intimate care as positive an experience as possible for both students and staff.
- To provide guidance to staff when supervising or assisting students with toileting, personal hygiene or intimate care procedures.
- To provide staff with protection against accusations of misconduct through a common understanding and agreed procedure.

4. Setting the climate for Personal and Intimate Care

At The Willows School we recognise the principles of Every Child Matters and will:

- Take young people's wishes into account as far as is possible in meeting their needs.
- Acknowledge the vulnerability of young people with physical, learning, sensory, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

- Respect the rights of students together with their need for support and assistance.
- Respect and ensure privacy, appropriate to the child/young person's age and situation.
- Allow the students to assist/care for themselves as far as possible.
- Encourage the students to have a positive image of their own bodies.
- Develop students' skills in recognising and understanding appropriate and inappropriate intimate behaviour, and the importance of keeping themselves safe.
- Take into account age, ability, gender, religious and cultural issues.
- Provide care at the point of need and avoid undue delay.
- Use appropriate language for parts of the body and bodily functions.

5. Guidance to staff

- When providing, assisting or supervising individual students with intimate care, there should be two members of staff where possible. If this is not possible, staff should ensure that they are within potential sight/hearing of others. Other members of staff may support those providing, supervising or assisting with toileting without being directly involved themselves.
- No pupil should be made to feel at fault because of their toileting needs that are as a result of a medical condition or their special educational needs. Staff should reassure pupils that they are 'not in trouble' and that they are there to help.
- Staff must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and respect the privacy of personal and intimate care situations. They should refrain from discussing these situations unnecessarily with other staff, although some communication about individual student's needs and abilities will be needed to ensure that staff can provide appropriate support.
- Personal and intimate care will be provided for students including consideration of staffing requirements (gender, number etc.), timing, student and parent wishes, and safe manual handling requirements, advice from therapists and medical staff, and training requirements.
- Staff must take every precaution to protect themselves from the risk of infections. Protective gloves and aprons must be worn whenever direct intervention is required. These can be located in the Medical Room. Soiled clothing should be placed in the appropriate bag and sent home. Sanitary waste must be disposed of properly in the Hygiene Bins. Changing beds must be sprayed with Sanitiser after each use and staff must change their gloves and aprons and wash and dry their hands thoroughly after each and every procedure.
- Staff should use personal and intimate care situations to teach students about the importance of hygiene and privacy.

- Staff should talk to students throughout intimate procedures using appropriate levels of language in order to explain what they are doing and the reasons in line with Personal Care training provided by The Willows School upon induction.
- All incidents of provision, supervision and assistance with intimate care must be recorded using CPOMs and parents/carers should be informed.
- In the event of an individual needing regular intimate care, a risk assessment will be carried out, and shared with parents to agree on details of the care provided. It is the responsibility of the Pupil Support Team to write and update risk assessments. It is the responsibility of all staff supporting personal care to read and be familiar with these and to report any issues to the Pupil Support Team, in order that the risk assessment and procedures are reviewed, relevant and improved where necessary.
- When performing personal and intimate care procedures, staff should feel supported by the school management and receive adequate training in relation to health and safety, manual handling and safeguarding. Identified staff should also receive training for very specific intimate care procedures where relevant.
- When on educational visits out of school, staff must ensure that the personal and intimate care needs of students are considered at the planning stage. Every effort must be made to ensure that students' care needs do not exclude them from trips and visits. This may require aspects of the trip to be modified, extra staffing arranged, changing equipment to be carried and preliminary visits to be undertaken. It is the responsibility of the group leader to make sure that these needs have been met in line with this policy.

6. Safeguarding

- Adults who assist pupils with personal care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- Staff at this school recognise that pupils with special needs are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse and the school's child protection procedures will be adhered to. From a child protection perspective, it is acknowledged that personal care involves risks for children and adults. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in personal 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.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child or young person's presentation, for example, unexplained marks or bruises, they will immediately report concerns to the DSL OR DDSL. If a child or young person becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to a Senior Leader. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded.
- Wherever possible, staff care for a child or young person of the same gender. However, in some circumstances this principle may need to be waived, for example, female staff supporting boys or young men if no male staff are

available. Male members of staff should not normally provide routine intimate care for adolescent girls. This is safe working practice to protect children and to protect staff from allegations of abuse.

- If a child, young person, 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 concern is about the Head Teacher). It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to. 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, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

7. Conclusion

Matters of personal and intimate care are often considered embarrassing, unpleasant and potentially risky situations. Some of our students will need help with their personal hygiene and toileting during school time; others will need routine personal and intimate care to some degree. It is our duty as professionals to accommodate all their needs and treat them with understanding and respect on such occasions. We should do this with the minimum of disruption and with the cooperation of parents/carers in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both staff and students.

8. Key points for Staff:

- **Two staff where possible, make sure you are in sight/hearing distance of other staff**
- **Same gender if possible, male staff should not be caring for adolescent girls on their own**
- **Supplies available in the medical room**
- **Risk assessments are created by PST where needed**
- **Record intimate care using CPOMS and inform parents (as appropriate where agreed)**
- **Pay attention to safeguarding procedures and report concerns to DSL**
- **Consult senior leadership team or pupil support if you have any questions or concerns**