Intimate Care Policy Mulberry School for Girls

Approval Body: Mulberry School for Girls LGB
Approval Date: March 2023
Implementation Date: March 2023
Review Date: March 2024
Policy Version: 3
## Version Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Reviewed</th>
<th>Changes since last version</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Existing</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Mar 2022</td>
<td>Small amendments made as follows:</td>
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<td>• All staff working with children must be DBS checked</td>
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<td>• Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed at least six monthly and amended if required;</td>
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<td>Mar 2023</td>
<td>.. take the bag of soiled clothes to the Learning Support Office changed to the Suite</td>
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This policy is intended to protect both staff and students. Staff need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse students. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Where consistent with the student's dignity, a second adult might ideally be present when a member of staff is involved in giving intimate care.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal needs of an individual including:
- changing clothes
- toileting
- first aid and medical assistance
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Parents are asked to inform the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

**Principles of Intimate Care**

Every student has the right to -
- be safe
- personal privacy
- be valued as an individual and be treated with dignity and respect;
- be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- express their views, choices and preferences on their own intimate care and have them taken into account
- have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

**School Responsibilities**

All staff working with children must be DBS checked, subject to references that are thoroughly verified and familiar with pastoral and intimate care policies.

Whenever possible, intimate care arrangements are agreed in advance by the school, parents and student. Where appropriate parents/carers will be advised by the school to ensure that there is always a spare pair of knickers in a student’s bag. The school will provide certain individuals with wet wipes to always keep in their bags. All staff working with these individuals will also be advised to keep some anti-bacterial wipes/gel on their person at all times.

Relevant consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the student’s file. Only in an emergency will staff undertake intimate care not previously agreed with parents; parents must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed at least six monthly and amended if required; the views of all relevant parties will inform ongoing arrangements. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague’s intimate care practice he or she must report this to the designated teacher for child protection.

**Guidelines for Good Practice**

1. Be aware of your own limitations
Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures may only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

2. Promote positive self-esteem and body image.
Confident, self-assured students who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a student’s intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the student’s age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

3. If you have any concerns you must report them.
If you observe any unusual markings, discoloration or swelling report it immediately to the designated teacher for child protection. If a student is accidentally hurt during the intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the student, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher.

If the student appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the student is distressed and provide reassurance.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the student. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the student’s personal file.

Working With students Of The Opposite Sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with students. Ideally, every student should have the choice of staff gender in circumstances of intimate care.

If a male is directly involved in administering intimate care, then a female must also be present.

Communication With Students

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the student’s method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress students may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:
- make eye contact at the student’s level
- use simple language and repeat if necessary
- wait and give time for responses
- continue to explain to the student what is happening even if there is no response

Helping a student get changed for PE or swimming

Wherever possible, talk the student step by step through the process of getting changed without physically intervening. Praise her for every single thing she does independently, no matter how small. Be patient. Give her time and space to get changed. Allow her privacy as much as is possible
When a student has soiled her underwear

In the Support for Learning Office stock cupboard we have a box of spare clothes as well as a store of plastic bags. We have a set of spare knickers of varying sizes. There are also disposable rubber gloves. Any student with SEN who is likely to soil herself at school has a spare set of clothes provided by parents. The key teachers of those students will know where the spare set is stored. Take the student to the toilet and stand outside the cubicle with the door closed but not locked. Discreetly hand her the plastic bag, direct her to put any dirty clothes inside then tie the top. Ask her to clean herself up with toilet tissue as much as she can and hand her the change of clothes. If the student says she needs help, reassure her, tell her not to rush and she has plenty of time. If the student is genuinely still struggling you must ensure that you wear rubber gloves before assisting. Ensure that you are accompanied by another member of staff for your own protection. Do not do anything you feel uncomfortable with - seek help advice from other members of staff. Always contact a family member and inform him/her what has happened and how the situation has been dealt with. Ask for any spare clothes that have been provided to be washed and returned to the school (apart from knickers – students may keep the replacement pair that have been provided). It may be appropriate for the student to be sent home. If the student stays at school, you need to take the bag of soiled clothes to the Learning Support Office. The student will need to collect it at the end of the day. Ensure that if rubber gloves have been used, they are disposed of immediately.

When a student has a period

Heads of Year always have spare sanitary towels in their office. Spare sanitary towels are kept in the Learning Laboratory stock cupboard. Ideally the student should be encouraged to buy one from reception. If the student has leaked blood, provide her with spare clothes from the box in the Learning Support Office. If the student is in distress it may be appropriate to take her to the head of year who may decide to send her home. Wherever possible, talk the student step by step through the process of getting changed without physically intervening. Praise her for every single thing she does independently, no matter how small. Be patient. Give the student time and space to cope independently. Allow her privacy as much as is possible. If it is absolutely necessary to intervene, ensure rubber gloves are used (kept in the Support for Learning Office Stock cupboard).

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the designated SENCO