



# HIGH WELL SCHOOL

## Preparing for Positive Futures

### **Intimate Care**

|                                  |                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Policy Lead:                     | <b>Jo Thompson</b> |
| Date approved by Governing Body: | 28.01.2001         |
| Date Shared with Staff:          | 02.02.2021         |
| Date of Review:                  | December 2021      |

Signed by Chair of Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jo Thompson', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 28.01.2001

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## 1. Rationale

High Well school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. There are also duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

In meeting a child's intimate care needs it must be recognised that staff will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust. Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the school practised is 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.

## 2. Definition

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 young age, 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. It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

## 3. Aims

- To ensure that all intimate care needs for pupils is carried out in lines with the agreed plans.
- To ensure that staff are aware of agreed practice and the planning process involved, and are able to implement them.
- To ensure that where possible all intimate care plans are written involving the pupil, family and agencies involved.

#### 4. Agreed Practice

All Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care will have a written intimate care plan agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil should also be present wherever possible/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/day trips.

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

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 pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.

Staff who provide intimate care would be trained in personal care (eg 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.

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

There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) 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.

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.

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

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.

Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a pupil of the same gender, there is research<sup>1</sup> which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors; ideally, every pupil should have a choice regarding the member of staff. There might also be

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<sup>1</sup> National Children's Bureau (2004) *The Dignity of Risk*

occasions when the member of staff has good reason not to work alone with a pupil. 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.

Adults who assist pupils with intimate 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.

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

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

Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

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 LA 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.

## **5. Policies which directly relate to the Intimate Care Procedures**

- 'Safeguarding Policy including Child Protection' 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
- 'Manual Handling' procedures

**Appendix 1**

**Intimate Care Plan**

|   |      |              |
|---|------|--------------|
| Pupil's name:                               | DOB  | School Site: |
| Reasons for the plan:                       |      |              |
| Level of Supervision:                       |      |              |
| What Assistance Required:                   |      |              |
| When  |      |              |
| Where                                       |      |              |
| By  |      |              |
| Communication strategies with the child     |      |              |
| <b>Facilities and equipment</b>             |      |              |
| Equipment required                          |      |              |
| If toilet training programme, list details: |      |              |
| <b>Arrangements when off-site</b>           |      |              |
| This plan was completed by:                 |      |              |
| Name  | Role |              |
|   |      |              |
|   |      |              |

|                                      |             |                  |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>This plan has been agreed by:</b> |             |                  |             |
| <b>Designation</b>                   | <b>Name</b> | <b>Signature</b> | <b>Date</b> |
| Parent/Carer                         |             |                  |             |
| Headteacher                          |             |                  |             |
| Teacher                              |             |                  |             |