

Mary Rose Academy Intimate Care Policy



Person responsible: Head of School

Policy reviewed: July 2019

Review date: July 2020

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' (2006) to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils¹ at this academy.
- 1.2 This academy takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's 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/her 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 below:
 - safeguarding and child protection policy
 - 'whistle-blowing'
 - health and safety
 - positive handling
 - policy for the administration of medicines
- 1.5 The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils 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/her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively.
- 1.7 Staff will work in close partnership with parent/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.
- 1.10 All staff undertaking intimate care are 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.

¹ References to 'pupils' throughout this policy includes all children and young people who receive education at this establishment.

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 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 and undressing, swimming.

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 intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. The plan is 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.

4.2 Where relevant, the academy follows best practice by agreeing with the pupil and parents/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this is noted in the plan.

4.5 Accurate records are kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care; this includes full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It is clear who was present in every case.

4.6 These records are kept by the class teacher and available to parents/carers on request.

4.7 All pupils are supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.

4.8 Staff who provide intimate care are 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.

- 4.9 Staff are 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.
- 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, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission will 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 is given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when s/he needs help with intimate care. SEN 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 are sought and taken into account.
- 4.13 An individual member of staff will inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a pupil with intimate care.
- 4.14 The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families are 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 pupil of the same gender, there is research² 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 occasions when the member of staff has good reason not to work alone with a pupil. The process is transparent so that all issues stated above can be respected.
- 4.16 Adults who assist pupils with intimate care will be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- 4.18 Health & Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products, if necessary, advice should be taken from the DCC 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 or at any other time (see school policy)

5. Child Protection

- 5.1 The Governors and staff at this school recognise that pupils with special needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.
- 5.2 The school's child protection procedures will be adhered to.
- 5.3 From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in

² National Children's Bureau (2004) *The Dignity of Risk*

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, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Head of School or Executive Headteacher. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if appropriate.
- 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 of School or the Executive Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff and Volunteers. It will not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff 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 of School or Executive Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

6. Physiotherapy

- 6.1 Pupils who require physiotherapy whilst at school have a programme managed by a trained physiotherapist. Where a member of the school staff should be required to deliver the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly. The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique.
- 6.2 Under no circumstances will school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.
- 6.3 Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the positive handling trainer or the physiotherapist.

7 Medical Procedures

- 7.1 Pupils who are disabled might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures are managed by the school nurse, discussed with parents/carers, documented in the health care plan and only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.