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## Personal Care Policy

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## **1. Definition**

Personal or Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a student after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the student's needs. The student's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to students wherever possible.

## **2. Aims**

- To ensure a whole school approach which ensures that the needs of the students are paramount and their rights and privacy are respected.
- To recognise 'intimate care' includes attending to toilet accidents/medical conditions causing soiling/menstruation soiling/supervising toileting habits.
- To ensure students are able to express choice and have a positive image of their own body.
- To ensure students feel safe and secure.
- To ensure students are respected and valued as individuals.
- To ensure intimate care procedures minimise any risks associated with intimate care.
- To adhere to North East Lincolnshire Council's Child Protection procedures.
- To ensure the procedures are non-discriminatory and that parents/carers of children with disabilities are not asked to do more than their peers who do not have children with disabilities.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety policy and procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle Blowing and Allegations Management Policies

## **3. Best Practice**

The management of all students with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The student who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the student's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training as needed for specific students with statements/disabilities) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with students who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of students will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the students in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and

student's involved. Exceptions may be made for students with learning disabilities with parental/carer consent/agreement.

The student will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular students as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the student.

Each student's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each student's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a student is toileted. Where possible, one student will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible the same student will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the student who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, whilst at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

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

#### **4. The Protection of Children**

Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.

All students will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a student's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/designated person for child protection.

If a student 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 student's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed in alignment with the Safeguarding Policy.

## **5. Further Guidance**

Appendix 1: Additional Guidance

“Working Together to Safeguard Children”, Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures.

Safeguarding Children in Education - DfES/0027/2004

<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6524/2/DfES-0027-2004.pdf>

What to do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused. Summary (2003)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused>

## **6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Principal is identified to lead on the implementation of the policy. This individual will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures and where necessary, make recommendations to the Governing Body for improvement. The policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

## **Appendix 1 – Intimate Care: Additional Guidance**

### **1. Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a student in getting dressed or undressed. Staff will always encourage students to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

### **2. Students' changing needs**

Intimate care for soiling should only be given to a student after the parents/carers have given permission for staff to clean and change the student. Parents/carers must sign a permission form so that the staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling themselves (Appendix 2). A letter will be sent home to parents/carers in the event of a child needing changing. (Appendix 3)

If a parent/carer does not give consent, Learning4life-GY will contact the parents/carers or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the student. If the parents/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the student is comforted and kept away from the other students to preserve dignity until the parent/carer arrives. Students are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent/carer to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The student will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carer or emergency contact cannot attend, Learning4life-GY seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the student. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the student soils him or herself.

When touching a student, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a student's privacy and will respect the student's wishes and feelings.

If a student needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the student throughout the process
- The student is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the student's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the student

Parents/carers of students with regular soiling/wetting will be encouraged to leave a change of clothes in school for the use of their child.

### **3. Hygiene**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

#### **4. Protection for staff**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Allow the student, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the student a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the student's reactions

#### **5. Safeguards for students**

Only staff employed by Learning4life-GY will carry out intimate care procedures; it is not appropriate for volunteers and students to do so.

#### **6. Health and Safety**

Staff should wear a plastic apron and gloves when dealing with a student who is bleeding or soiled. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied on a weekly basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Staff should be made aware of the Academy's Health and Safety Policy.

#### **7. Special Needs**

Students with special needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and Individual Education Plans for each student. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the student, those with parental/carer responsibility and Learning4life-GY should be easily understood and recorded (Appendix 4). An intimate care record (Appendix 5) will be used to record who changes a student, how often this task is carried out and the time they left/returned to the classroom following this task.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of students with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who cannot) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

#### **8. Providing comfort or support**

Students may seek physical comfort from staff. Where students require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be student initiated. When comforting a student or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a student should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the student.

If a student touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the student, is unacceptable.

## Appendix 2

### PERMISSION FORM FOR THE PROVISION OF CARE

If a student wets or soils themselves while they are with Learning4life-GY it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible. Our staff are experienced and trained at carrying out this task if you wish them to do so or, if preferred, Learning4life-GY can contact you or your emergency contact who will be asked to attend without delay.

Learning4life-GY has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on our website ([www.learning4life-gy.co.uk](http://www.learning4life-gy.co.uk)) Please complete the permission slip below stating your preference.

Yours sincerely

Claire Smith  
Principal  
Learning4life-GY Independent School

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Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Course \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Please delete as appropriate**

\*I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned by trained staff if they wet/soil themselves while in the care of Learning4life-GY.

\*I do not give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned if they wet/soil themselves. Learning4life-GY will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that in the event that I (or the emergency contact) cannot be contacted the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

Signature of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

### **Appendix 3**

Date:

Dear

**Re: Informing parents/carers of an intimate care issue for [insert student's name]**

This is a courtesy letter to inform you that your child had a toileting accident today at Learning4life-GY. The matter was dealt with swiftly and sensitively by \_\_\_\_\_ in accordance with our Intimate Care Policy.

We have returned the clothing for washing. Please wash and return any items borrowed from Learning4life-GY at your earliest convenience. If you wish to discuss the matter further please contact us on 01472 323540.

Yours sincerely

Claire Smith  
Principal  
Learning4life-GY Independent School

**Appendix 4 - Permission form**

**Permission to provide intimate care**

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

DoB: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I/We give permission for Learning4life-GY to provide intimate care to my/our child.

I/We will advise Learning4life-GY of anything that may affect issues of personal care (if medication is changed or my child has an infection for example)

I//We understand the procedures that will be carried out and will contact Learning4life-GY immediately if there are any concerns.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

