Mulberry
Academy Hastings

Intimate Care Policy

Approval Body	Principal
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Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes Since Last Version
No. 1	20.7.2026	NA

Intimate Care Policy

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.

All arrangements for intimate care must be recorded in writing prior to administration, with the exception of First Aid.

Whenever possible, intimate care arrangements are agreed in advance by the school, parents/carers and student. Staff should ensure they explain to the student what they are going to do and seek the student's agreement before commencing, taking into account their age and understanding. If a student refuses intimate care, the member of staff should inform parents/carers.

Where appropriate, parents/carers will be advised by the school to ensure that there is always a spare pair of underwear 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.

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Relevant consent forms are signed by the parent/carer and stored in the student's file. Only in an emergency will staff undertake intimate care not previously agreed with parents/carers, in which case they must be informed at the earliest opportunity by the member of staff who undertook the intimate care.

Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed at least six monthly; 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 Principal.

Guidelines for Good Practice

- 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.

- 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.

- If you have any concerns you must report them.
    - If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the DSL and then record on CPOMS. 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 on CPOMS.

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

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Helping a student get changed for PE or swimming

Wherever possible, talk to the student step by step through the process of getting changed without physically intervening. Praise them for every task they complete independently, no matter how small. Be patient. Give them time and space to get changed. Allow them privacy as much as is possible.

When a student has a period

Spare sanitary towels are kept in Student Services, Head of Year offices and reception. If the student has leaked blood, a phone call will be made home for the student to go home and get changed. If the student is in distress it may be appropriate to take them to the head of year who may decide to send them home.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the designated SENDCO.

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