



Grangewood School

A learning community

Intimate Care/ Physical Contact Policy

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V1.1	23/4/25	Name of policy changed and minor amendments

This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or best practice (where appropriate).

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Principles

Grangewood School 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.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies as indicated

below:

- Eden Academy safeguarding policy and child protection procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Part 1)
- The staff code of conduct 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice'
- Whistle-blowing and allegations management policies
- Health and safety policy and procedures
- Moving and Handling policy
- Administration of Medicines procedures

The Board of Trustees and the local advisory board are 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.

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; no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

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.

Members of staff are made aware at interview that giving intimate care to pupils is an essential part of the work in this school.

All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the policy 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. These views may be expressed non-verbally, or through behaviour and should be considered
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible

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.

Best Practice

Most pupils at this school have intimate care needs at some level. Parents are aware that these procedures are carried out on a daily basis. Many pupils have an intimate care plan outlining these procedures.

Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) are considered when undertaking intimate care.

Parents are responsible for providing nappies/pads and the school will provide gloves, wipes, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of waste. Our bins are emptied twice weekly via a special service.

Our NHS nurse, provided by the Central and North West London Team and the School Health Care Worker, Charleigh Rodgers, can offer advice on ordering pads in the right size and requesting an increase in quantity when this is needed. The NHS nurse is available for advice on toileting programmes and the best procedures when changing nappies/pads on children and young people

The intimate care plan of all our pupils 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 consider procedures for educational visits/day trips.

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 are trained in personal care (e.g. health and safety training in moving and handling) according to the needs of the pupil.

Staff will be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear PPE - disposable gloves, aprons and masks as well as cleaning of changing beds, etc.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils considering 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 is age-appropriate and considers the child's level of speech, language and communication development and their cognitive development.

Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be 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. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and considered.

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

The intimate care of young people can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with agency policy and procedures.
- Staff who are governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within the organisation. Direction and agreement must be provided by the Designated Manager
- When intimate care is being carried out, **all** young people have the right to dignity and privacy ie they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens put in place.
- That young people and their parents are aware that there may be on occasions cross-gender care.
- If the young person appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately, (unless by stopping it constitutes a risk to the young person). We will then try to ascertain why the young person is distressed and provide reassurance. Should a young person be in particular distress, there may be occasions when intimate care – such as a nappy change cannot proceed. If this happens parents will be informed and next course of action discussed.
- When intimate personal care has been required and a member of staff of the same gender has been requested and is not available, this must be brought to the attention of the Head as soon as possible. Additionally, this must be recorded in the young person's records stating date; time; care given; why the care had to be given and why a member of the chosen gender was not available. The parents will be informed of such as instance.

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.

Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers (unless in an emergency situation) and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks. Our students and volunteers are required to have enhanced DBS checks in the event of emergency situations where they may need to become involved in 'regulated' activity. Student nurses are permitted to carry out intimate care routines with pupils as a requirement of their placement but should not be left alone with a child and should have a staff member within the same area.

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

Health and safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products and the bins provided for sanitary waste must be used.

NO MEMBER OF STAFF WILL CARRY A MOBILE PHONE, CAMERA OR SIMILAR DEVICE WHILST PROVIDING INTIMATE CARE.

Child Protection

The trustees, local advisory board and staff at Grangewood School recognise that pupils with special needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

The school's child protection procedures will be adhered to.

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 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.

Where appropriate, pupils 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 pupil's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the

class teacher or Head of School. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Appropriate action will be taken.

If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Headteacher (or to the Director for Schools 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 should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to.

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 Headteacher, to the Director for Schools or to the trustees in accordance with the child protection procedures and whistle-blowing policy.

Physiotherapy

Pupils who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist or physiotherapist assistant. School staff who undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises) will be trained to do this by the physiotherapist or assistant who will monitor the procedures. The physiotherapist or assistant should observe the member of staff applying the technique. Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

Medical Procedures

Some Grangewood School pupils may require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the health care plan and will only be carried out by the school nurse, health care worker or by staff who have been trained to do so.

Our health care worker, Charleigh Rodgers, undertakes most medical procedures but will also train class staff to undertake some functions. She is supported when necessary by a member of the school nursing team from Central and North West London NHS. Staff giving enteral feeds to

children or administering medication either on a regular basis or as an emergency will have been trained and signed off as competent. There are strict procedures in place for the recording of medicine administration and feeds.

First aiders at work and paediatric first aiders are trained to carry out basic first aid procedures.

It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that items and spillages are disposed of correctly. The site manager must be informed if significant amounts of blood, vomit or faeces need to be removed from hard surfaces. Special cleaning fluids need to be applied and s/he will advise if the area needs to be vacated.

If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation, two adults must be present another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

Massage

Massage is used in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation. Massage undertaken by school staff is confined to parts of the body such as the hands and feet, or the back through clothes, in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and pupils. Any adult undertaking massage for pupils must demonstrate an appropriate level of competence.

At Grangewood School some pupils undertake 'positive calm' sessions as part of the curriculum and to promote a readiness to learn. Positive calm sessions involve a sequence of touch/movement through clothes, usually on the back, in conjunction with a story or song.

All massage/positive calm sessions must be sensitive to any oils or lotions used and this should be checked with parents for allergies and preferences before any are used and written permission sought.