



GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

Intimate Care Policy

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1. Policy Overview

This policy applies to any member of staff or volunteer at the Academy who is involved in the intimate care of pupils. It will be of particular relevance to staff working in the Early Years Foundation Stages where there may be pupils who are not fully toilet-trained. Staff working with other vulnerable groups of children and young people (such as those with special educational needs, medical needs and/or a disability) may also need to provide intimate care.

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. These are tasks which people usually carry out themselves but which some pupils will be unable to do because of their young age, physical disabilities or other special needs.

The Academy recognises its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils and takes this duty very seriously. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of this safeguarding responsibility.

The Academy also recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against, harass or victimise any pupil with a disability.

This policy should be read in accordance with the following Academy policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety
- Medical Support for Pupils
- Special Educational Needs
- Equal Opportunities for Pupils
- First Aid
- Allegations against Staff Procedure

In most cases, intimate care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific intimate procedure beyond this, only a suitably trained member of staff assessed as competent should undertake the procedure e.g. Personal Care Assistant.

2. Principles

- Any pupil who requires intimate care will be treated with respect at all times. The pupil's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance and no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.
- Pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each pupil to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the pupil responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit their circumstances.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected.
- The Academy is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

- Staff will work in close partnership with parents/carers and other professionals to ensure the pupil's needs are being met and to provide continuity of care.
- Staff will have a high awareness of child protection issues.

3. Our Procedures

- The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned to the extent possible. For pupils with complex and/or long term medical conditions, the Academy expects an individual healthcare plan (IHP) to be put in place which, in consultation with the parents and the pupil, details the intimate care required and how best to provide this (for more information on IHPs, please refer to the Academy's policy on Medical Support for Pupils).
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in lifting and moving) and are fully aware of best practice. 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 children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and the children/young people involved.
- There will 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. The pupil should be aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- Wherever possible, the same pupil will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the pupil 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.
- Wherever possible, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence, for example, female staff who need to support a boy pupil in the primary phase if no male members of staff are available.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's care plan where applicable. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
- Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present and having in mind the child's right to personal privacy. Where possible, one child 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.
- Where a formal plan is not in place, parents/carers will be informed if their child has needed help with intimate care needs (for example, wet or soiled themselves).

Academy staff will communicate this information confidentially in person, by telephone or by sealed letter.

- An accurate written record should be kept when a pupil requires assistance with intimate care setting out the time and date of the care, the care provided, who was present and any relevant observations regarding the pupil's behaviour. These records will be kept on the pupil's file.

4. The Protection of Children

- The Academy Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures will be adhered to.
- All 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 child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. she/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate Designated Person for Child Protection on-site.
- If a pupil 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 child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures for details).

5. Additional Guidance on Intimate Care

The following advice/strategies are some suggestions as possible ways to actively promote inclusion and the welfare of pupils.

- **Children Wearing Nappies**

Discussions with parents will outline who will be responsible for changing the nappy. A regular dialogue will take place with parents and the Personal Care Assistant.

Records will be kept of who changes a child, how often the task is carried out and the time they left/returned to the classroom following the task.

- **Changing Facilities**

At the Academy, children who have long-term incontinence will have access to specially adapted facilities i.e. the shower areas or health suite facilities. Members of staff are aware that the dignity and privacy of the child should be of paramount concern. The specialised areas are appropriate from a health and safety aspect and have all the required facilities needed.

- **Equipment Provision**

It is expected that parents will provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat etc. and parents should be made aware of this responsibility. The Academy will provide gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

- **Health and Safety**

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

- **Special Education Needs and Disability**

Children with special educational needs and/or a disability 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 care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child those with parental responsibility and the Academy should be easily understood and recorded.

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

6. Complaints

Any concerns or complaints regarding this policy, or its implementation, should be brought to the attention of the Academy in accordance with the Academy's Complaints Procedure. This can be found on the Academy's website or is available from the office.