



# INTIMATE CARE POLICY

## RATIONALE

Barndale House School is responsible for the care of children with learning and physical disabilities who have an increased dependency on carers for a primary level of care and who therefore require practical support with their intimate care needs at school.

We have defined Intimate Care as direct care of the child in terms of any personal care activity a child would normally be able to do for him/herself. These needs are no different to the needs of a child who is not disabled but we need to flag up the notion that there are differences in the nature, method and principles of fulfilling those needs.

Intimate care is a high risk activity in terms of abuse and it is particularly important that there are guidelines on Intimate Care, both to protect those being cared for and the staff who care for the children's needs. We take the view that everyone is safer if expectations are clear and approaches are as consistent as possible.

The staff at Barndale House School have recognised the need to design guidelines which encompass all aspects of our procedures. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of the children and they aim to support good practice.

Therefore our guidelines have the following goals:

- To outline good practice during intimate care tasks so we can distinguish between good and poor care practice.
- To protect the children and the staff who are asked to carry out intimate care tasks.
- To outline a system that works effectively for the child, ensuring a consistent approach is undertaken and that approaches to intimate care are not markedly different between individuals.

## GUIDELINES

### 1. Children and their parents should have confidence in the staff

All staff involved in Intimate Care routines will have had an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check and will receive appropriate training to carry out this aspect of their work. Parents receive a copy of the School's Intimate Care policy and will be offered an opportunity to discuss their child's needs with an appropriate member of staff.

### 2. Carers should be aware of the abilities of the child

The child should be enabled and encouraged as far, as is reasonably possible, to contribute to his/her own intimate care.



**3. Ensure privacy, appropriate to the child's age and gender.**

The school takes the view that the issue of privacy is important. Many intimate care tasks are carried out by one person. This practice is actively supported unless the task requires two people.

**4. Children have the right to be respected.**

Respect of the child's body and integrity should be included in all care procedures. Ideally someone who has a positive long-term relationship with the child should carry out intimate care tasks. New staff members should get to know the children in the classroom context before getting involved in Intimate Care tasks.

**5. A strong focus should be evident on choice and decision making skills.**

Wherever appropriate, decision-making should be an integral part of the process – e.g. Do you want the toilet or not? Should we wash your hands or face first? Can I help fasten your trousers?

**6. Pupils will be prepared and involved in what is going to happen**

Staff will raise the child's awareness of the process. Objects of reference, symbols, signs, gesture and verbal explanation will be given as appropriate.

**7. Intimate care tasks are not an interruption to the timetable**

These practices should be valued as part of each child's essential curriculum. They are an opportunity to develop independent and age appropriate skills, increase dignity and to raise self-esteem.

**8. Never do any task unless you are confident in your ability to do it.**

Never guess; ask a colleague to help.

**9. If you are concerned – report it.**

Intimate care tasks should never be approached lightheartedly. If a child has soreness or something to cause you concern, follow School's Child Protection Procedures.

**10. Health and Safety issues**

Barrier materials will always be used e.g. disposable gloves. Appropriate Moving and Handling Procedures will be followed.

## **RESOURCES**

School will seek parental views on practices at home. Taking cognizance of this, preferred materials will be used and parents will be encouraged to resource their child's needs wherever possible.