

Intimate Care Policy and Guidance

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Kings Mill School & Residence



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Introduction

Most of the children and young people we encounter within the school and residence of Kings Mill School will require assistance with intimate care tasks, especially toileting, bathing and dressing.

All of the children and young people we work with have a right to be safe, to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times and in all the places we may put them, whether within the grounds of the school, in any other setting or when on visits and trips away from the school or residence buildings.

This document is in response to requests for clear principles and guidance on the issue of supporting intimate care needs. This policy and guidance should be read alongside other supporting policies such as safe guarding and the administration of medication.

In the rest of this document where the term child/children is used, it refers to children/young adult/student. The term 'Parent' is used to refer to parent, legal guardian or carer. The term 'Staff' includes all adults working in the school/residence setting, although those required to undertake intimate care tasks will have that task specified in their job description and are referred to as "designated" for that task.

In adopting this policy and guidance the Governing body accept that to meet the standards set by Ofsted for both settings they have a responsibility for monitoring the work undertaken and recorded and for reviewing the document either annually or when significant changes occur.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 2001, amended 2005)

The DDA provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. The effect must be substantial and long term.

Anyone with a named condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against. Education and care providers have an obligation to meet the needs of children with delayed personal development, children should not be excluded from activities solely because of incontinence or the need for assistance in personal care activities. All such issues have to be dealt with on an individual basis and all settings encompassed within Kings Mill School are expected to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of every child at the school.

The DFE outline in the National Minimum standards for Residential special schools that: "Where necessary, a child has a clear individual health and welfare plan or similar record, containing relevant health and welfare information provided by parents/carers and recording significant health and welfare needs and issues. This record should be agreed by parents/carers and include:

- Records of developmental checks
- Health monitoring required by staff
- Intimate care or bodily functions requiring staff help; and
- 'The involvement of a child's parents/carers or significant others in health and welfare issues.'

Standard 3.12 NMS April 2015

Aims

The aims of this policy and guidance are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose duties include intimate care.
- To assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.
- To remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination and ensure inclusion for all children.

Definition of intimate care

'Intimate Care' can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of, the sexual parts of a body. Help may also be required with changing colostomy of ileostomy bags, managing catheters, stomas or other appliances. In some cases it may be necessary to administer rectal medication in an emergency or use other devices or procedures which places the staff member directly in contact with a child's sexual parts, for example the placing of a urine sheath or sanitary wear.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified as relevant to the setting at Kings Mill School include, but are not limited to:-

- Dressing and undressing
- Helping the child use the toilet
- Changing continence pads
- Bathing/ showering
- Washing intimate parts of the body
- Changing sanitary wear

Definition of personal care

Personal care generally carries more positive perceptions than intimate care. Although it may often involve personal contact (touching) another person the nature of this contact is more socially acceptable, as it is seen as less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal presentation and hence is perceived as a social function. These tasks, although invading personal space, do not do so to the degree that tasks undertaken within intimate care procedures do. They can lead to positive social outcomes for people.

These tasks can be identified as, but are not confined to:-

- Dressing/undressing
- Skin care/applying external medication
- Feeding, including enteral feeding
- Administering oral medication
- Hair care
- Prompting to use the toilet
- Washing non-intimate body parts

Personal care encompasses those areas of physical and medical care that many people carry out for themselves but which many of the children and young people at Kings Mill School are unable to do because of disability or medical need. Many children may require help and assistance with eating, drinking, washing ETC; the issues raised in this guidance are not prescriptive but are based upon practical experience and good practice.

Basic principles

Children and young people's intimate care needs cannot be seen in isolation or separated from other aspects of their lives. Encouraging children and young people to participate in their own intimate or personal care should therefore be a part of the target setting approach towards achieving skills in personal care and a general approach towards facilitating participation in daily life.

Intimate care can take a substantial amount of time but should be an enjoyable experience for the young person and for the care giver, it should take as long as is required, never rushed. It is essential that every child and young person is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and sensitively as possible. The child/young person involved should be encouraged to express choice and to have a positive image of their own body.

Staff should bear in mind the following principles:

- Children/young people have a right to feel, and be, safe and secure
- Children/young people have a right to an education and schools have a duty to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils of all abilities and needs.
- Children and young people should be respected and valued as individuals
- Children and young people have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from adults when meeting their needs
- Children and young people have a right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices
- Children/young people have the right to be accepted for who they are without regard to age. Gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.
- Children and young people, or their advocates, have the right to express their views and have them heard. Kings Mill School has a complaints procedure that all can access easily.

The student council is a vehicle for suggestions and complaints from students to be aired.

- A Childs/young person's intimate care plan should be designed with knowledge drawn from all those people who know them, taking professional advice when required, it should make the most of their ability and enable them to have as much independence as possible.

Vulnerability to abuse

Children and young people with disabilities have been shown to be particularly vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. It is essential that all staff are familiar with and knowledgeable on the school and residences policies and procedures on safeguarding children, safer recruiting and the child's intimate care plan.

Intimate care may involve the touching of the private parts of a child's body and therefore may leave staff more vulnerable to accusations of abuse. It is unrealistic in the care and school setting to eliminate all risk but this vulnerability places an important responsibility on staff to act in accordance with the agreed procedures.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children...'

And that 'School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.' Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016

Working with parents/carers

Establishing effective working relationships with parents/carers is a key task for staff in both the school and residence, and is particularly necessary for children and young people with special care needs and disabilities. Parents and carers should be empowered to work with staff to ensure that their child's needs are properly identified, understood and met. Parents, carers and staff should work collectively, taking advice from other professionals as appropriate, to ensure that all appropriate information is gathered to inform the health and intimate care plan.

Plans for the provision of intimate/personal care must be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectations, roles and responsibilities. Records should also reflect arrangements for ongoing and emergency communication between home and the school or residential setting and for monitoring and review. It is important that the procedure for dealing with concerns arising from personal care processes is clearly understood by parents/carers and all those involved.

Links with other agencies

Kings Mill School works closely with a range of other agencies. It is important that positive links are made with all those involved in the care and welfare of children at the school and accessing the residence. This will enable the school and Residence to make plans taking into account the knowledge, skills and expertise of all involved professionals and will ensure that the child's wellbeing and development remains the focus of concern. Arrangements for ongoing liaison and support to staff involved where required should also be formally agreed and recorded.

Good practice guidance

At Kings Mill School and within the Residence designated staff are involved on a daily basis providing intimate/personal care to children and young people. These duties place staff in a position of great trust and responsibility, they are required to attend to the safety and comfort of the young person and ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect.

The time taken to carry out this care can also be used to promote personal development, as even the youngest child can be encouraged to become aware of and value their own body and extend their personal and communication skills.

Religious and cultural differences must always be taken into account when making arrangements for personal/intimate care and this will be highlighted in the child's intimate care plan which staff must familiarise themselves with before carrying out this type of task with the young person.

Cross gender care. There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved in intimate and personal care tasks, although a male worker must never be involved in the intimate care of a female child/young person. Should the parent/ carer find it unacceptable to have a carer of the opposite sex carry out tasks of an intimate care nature this should be respected, however, at times there may be exceptional circumstances when there are human resource implications preventing full consideration of these wishes and this should be pointed out to the parent/carer at the time the plan is written

Examples of positive approaches to intimate/personal care which ensure a safe and comfortable experience for the child/young person:

- Get to know the child/young person and read care and other plans, talk to your colleagues in all settings to gain an appreciation of their moods and systems of communication
- Have a knowledge of and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivities related to aspects of intimate/personal care.
- Speak to the child positively and address them by name, ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity and give explanations of what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way.
- Prepare your work area first, ensure you have everything you require to carry out the task without leaving the work area.
- If working alone make sure you have:-
 - Informed your colleagues where you are, who you are with and what you are doing.
 - You have a “walkie talkie” with you.
 - When you have finished the task record anything unusual you have noted in either the child's behaviour, marks on their body or compliance.
- Agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions, use signing when appropriate.
- Respect the child/young person’s preference for a particular sequence of care events.

- Give strong clues, support by communication, which enable the child to anticipate and prepare for events. E.g. show the child a clean pad to indicate your intention to change them or a flannel to indicate washing.
- Encourage the child/young person to participate and undertake as much of the procedure as possible, particularly when washing intimate area's and when dressing/undressing.
- Seek the child's permission before undertaking any task, e.g. "I'm just going to change your pad, is that OK?"
- Use facilities that are appropriate and afford privacy and modesty
- Record the event noting responses to intimate care and any changes in behaviour.

Practical considerations for managers/seniors to ensure health and safety of children/young people and staff:

- All adults assisting children/young people with intimate/personal care must be employees of the school/residence. This aspect of their work must be an integral part of their job description.
- Staff should receive training in good working practices which comply with health and safety legislation, national minimum standards (*NMS April 2015*) and school/residence policies when dealing with bodily fluids, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), manual moving and handling, safeguarding children, hiv and infection, lone working, whistle blowing and risk assessment. Identified staff should also receive training for very specific intimate care procedures where relevant, for example enteral feeding.
- Where a routine procedure needs to be established, there should be an agreed care plan involving discussion with the Residence/School staff, parents/carers, relevant health care personnel and where appropriate the child/young person. All parties must sign the plan which must be reviewed on a regular basis. The school/residence complaints procedures should be known to all and followed when necessary.

The care plan should cover:-

- Facilities
- Equipment
- Staffing
- Training
- Curriculum specific needs
- School/Residence trips and outings
- Arrangements for the reviewing and monitoring of the care plan and complaints procedure.

Staffing levels need to be carefully considered. There is a balance to be struck between maintaining privacy and dignity for children/young people alongside protection for them and staff. It is important for the care plan to highlight any staffing requirements and the setting should decide on practical ways of dealing with staffing levels. Some procedures may require two members of staff, e.g. when moving and handling and this should be clearly stated in the care plan. In a lone working situation, ie when a member of staff is undertaking intimate/personal

care on a one to one basis protection should be afforded to the child/young person and the member of staff in the following ways:-

- Care staff and others undertaking these duties should implement the strategies in the “examples of positive approaches” section outlined above.
- Care staff and others undertaking these duties should notify their colleagues, the senior on duty or a teacher, discreetly, that they are taking the child/young person to carry out care procedures.
- A signed record is made of the date, time and details of any intervention required that is not a part of the agreed routine. A decision can be made at the care planning meeting as to whether a regular record needs to be kept of routine procedures.
- If a situation occurs which causes care staff embarrassment or concern a second member of staff should be called if necessary and the incident recorded on Cepom’s
- When staff are concerned about a child/young person’s actions or comments which is outside of safeguarding procedures it should be recorded and discussed with the senior on duty immediately

Other practical considerations for head teacher and senior leadership team

- Is a risk assessment for moving and handling required
- There should be sufficient, appropriate space, heating and ventilation to ensure safety and comfort for staff and the child/young person
- Personal protective equipment of a suitable nature must be provided in each changing area and supplies maintained.
- Special bins should be provided for the safe disposal of soiled pads and equipment.
- Special arrangements must be made for the collection/disposal of contaminated waste
- The school nurse or specialist continence nurse should be consulted as appropriate
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials should be easily available
- Arrangements for assisting girls during their menstruation must be part of their care plan

Training

Training in the area of intimate/personal care will largely be influenced by the role staff take and their designated tasks within their job description. Intimate/personal care will be an issue addressed during induction and will be addressed during supervision.

Whole staff training should provide staff with opportunities to work together on the range of issues covered in this document thereby developing a culture of sharing good practice within the whole setting of Kings Mill School/Residence.

More individualised training will focus on the specific processes or procedures staff are required to carry out, in the case of medical procedures this training will be provided by the school nurse or a health professional.

Training in moving and handling will be given to all staff who will receive regular refresher/update training. See appendix 1.

For all staff undertaking intimate/personal care it is recommended that advice from the school nurse be sought should any issue arise, this is particularly the case for staff having to deal with children or young people who become sexually aroused during the process.

Managing risk

These guidelines aim to manage risk and ensure that staff do not work outside the remit of their responsibilities, it is essential that staff follow the guidance set out in this policy and take reasonable precautions to prevent or minimise accident, injury, loss or damage and that it encourages staff to have a dialogue about the issues raised during intimate/personal care procedures.

It is of particular importance in regard to:-

- Staff training
- The recording of activities as necessary
- Consent being obtained from parents/carers
- The care plan being produced and signed by all contributors
- The presence of two adults when invasive medical procedures are undertaken, ie the giving of medication.

References. .? Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016.