

Personal Care Guidelines and Intimate Care **Policy**

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Intimate Care Policy

Personal Care Guidelines and Good Practice for Staff

These guidelines aim to protect children and vulnerable adults at The Beacon by observing good working practices it also aims to prevent staff from being put in any situation where a pupil or another adult could misconstrue anything they have done in the course of their duty.

1. Aims

The Aims of these guidelines are:

- to provide guidance and reassurance to staff
- to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of children and young adults
- to assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account

2. Principles

- The school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in its care. Meeting a child's intimate needs is one aspect of safeguarding.
- The Personal Care Guidelines and Intimate Care Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct and guidance on safer working practices
 - Whistle blowing and Allegations against staff
 - Health and Safety Policies
 - Medication and First Aid Policy
- The Governing body is 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, at The Beacon, recognise 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 the experience of intimate care should be a positive one. It is essential that the student is treated as an individual and that care is given sensitively and does not cause distress.
- Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.
- Where pupils have a complex or long term health condition, staff must be aware of any relevant personal plans and related school policies, risk assessments and protocols.
- All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.
- This Personal Care Guidelines and Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of pupils.

3. Pupil Focused Principles of Intimate Care

- Every pupil has the right to feel safe and secure.
- Every pupil has the right to personal privacy.
- Every pupil has the right to be valued as an individual.

- Every pupil has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Every pupil has the right to be consulted and involved in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every pupil has the right to express their views on their intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every pupil has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.
- Pupils have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff when meeting their needs.
- Pupils have the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.

4. Definition

Personal care encompasses those areas of physical and medical care that most people carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do because of disability or medical need.

Intimate care can be defined as any care that 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 so because of their age, physical disabilities or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as help with washing, toileting and dressing. It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

5. Best Practice

At The Beacon, staff are involved on a daily basis in providing personal care to children and young people with special educational needs arising from learning difficulties, sensory impairments, medical needs and physical disabilities. This places staff in a position of great trust and responsibility. They are required to attend to the safety and comfort of the children and to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect.

Any plan/programme should be agreed with all key staff and the pupil present where possible/appropriate. The plan should be regularly reviewed, at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, residential trips, staff changes, educational visits, day trips.

Where relevant it is good practice to agree with parents/carers and the pupil appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and these should be noted in the plan.

Any concerns relating to bladder and/or bowel movements should be communicated to parents/carers via their preferred means.

All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest levels of personal autonomy that is possible given their age and ability. Staff will encourage each pupil to do as much for him/herself as possible.

Staff should be aware of best practice relating to the undertaking of personal/intimate care, including, but not limited to, that detailed below.

Personal protective equipment (eg gloves, aprons) should be worn to avoid cross contamination. Surfaces should be wiped down after use (with relevant cleaning product(s) provided by the Facilities Team).

There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (e.g. verbal, symbolic) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where pupils are 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 and explain what they are doing.

Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present.

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

Adults who assist with intimate care should must be employees of the school (or a parent/carer). (It may be appropriate for those on work experience to participate in personal care, if the relevant safeguarding checks have been completed.)

There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved in intimate care tasks.

Where cultural or family reasons make a carer of the opposite sex inappropriate, this must be respected.

Health and Safety guidelines should be followed regarding waste products.

No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

6. Changing and Showers

All pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. There must however be the required level of supervision to safeguard pupils with regard to health and safety considerations.

7. Child Protection

The Beacon recognises that pupils with SEN and those that are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. The school's safeguarding procedures and policy must be followed.

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 child's body. In this, school best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take into account safer working practice

If any member of staff has concerns about any physical changes in a pupil's presentation, unexplained marks, bruises, these should immediately be reported to one of the DSLs. A body map should be completed. Parents should be informed and referrals made to Social Services by the school's Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST). Safeguarding guidelines should be followed.

If a pupil or any other person makes an allegation against an adult working with a child this should be reported according to the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

8. Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of pupils need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in a limited touch culture and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given the pupil's age and understanding.

Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued by the pupil or an observer or by anyone to whom the action is described.

Staff must be aware that all physical contact may be open to scrutiny. Arrangements regarding limited or appropriate touch need to be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Consultation with parents/carers should take place when there has been any deviation from agreed plans. This should be documented on Sleuth and Medical Tracker.

9. Support for staff

The requirement for training in the area of personal care will vary greatly and will be largely influenced by the needs of the pupils for whom staff have responsibility.

All class-based (teaching-related) staff should be aware of the policy and guidelines for providing intimate care.

There should be regular opportunities for them to raise any issues and share concerns.

Update schedule

Version	Reviewed	Reason for Update	Next review date
1	Sept 2016	Transfer/Review	Sept 2018
2	October 2024	Review	
3	November 2024	Review	Nov 2025
4	December 2025	Review	October 2026
5			