

Intimate Care Policy

Policy document provenance

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Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Should no substantive changes be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

Related policies and documents:	MARK Education Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection policy MARK Education Trust Health & Safety policy MARK Education Trust Whistleblowing policy MARK Education Trust Staff Code of Conduct Hailsham Academy First Aid policy Hailsham Academy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
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Hailsham Academy is aware that some pupils may require assistance from members of staff for personal care, including toileting, either due to the age and developmental level of the pupil, or because of disability or medical need. The main aim of the school is to ensure that our learners are safe, secure and protected from harm.

For the purpose of this policy, **intimate care** is defined as any care which may involve the following:

- Washing
- Touching
- Carrying out an invasive procedure
- Changing a pupil who has wet or soiled themselves
- Assisting in toilet issues
- Providing comfort to an upset or distressed pupil

Intimate care tasks are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene that demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the genitals.

Examples of intimate care include support with dressing and undressing (underwear), changing incontinence pads, nappies or medical bags such as colostomy bags, menstrual hygiene, helping someone use the toilet, or washing intimate parts of the body.

Pupils may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.

The provision of personal care will always be deemed to be **regulated activity** regardless of frequency and whether they are supervised or not.

1. Aims

The intimate care policy aims to provide a clear framework for staff to ensure the safety and dignity of all pupils who need support with personal care, including toileting and continence management. It will also clarify for pupils and their families the support they can expect from school.

Principles

Hailsham Academy respects our pupils and encourages them to achieve their potential. This includes encouraging them to be as independent as they are able to with their personal care. We will ensure that our pupils are:

- Treated as individuals
- That their right to safety, dignity and privacy is respected
- Involved with and consulted about their personal care as far as they are able
- Provided with consistency of care as far as possible

2. Health and safety

The Health and Safety Policy lays out specific requirements for cleaning and hygiene.

Any member of staff that is required to assist a pupil with changing a medical bag will be trained to do so and will carry out the procedure in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Staff will wear disposable gloves while assisting a pupil in the toilet or while changing a nappy, incontinence pad or medical bag.

Soiled nappies, incontinence pads and medical bags will be securely wrapped and disposed of appropriately in designated bins which are emptied weekly.

The changing area or toilet will be left clean. Hot water and soap will be available to wash hands. Paper towels will be available to dry hands.

3. Staff and facilities

Staff members who provide intimate care will be suitably trained and will be made aware of what is considered good practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist pupils who need special arrangements. This may include the following:

- Adjustable bed
- Changing mat
- Non-slip step
- Cupboard
- Adapted toilet seat
- Disposable gloves/aprons
- Nappies, pads and medical bags
- Tissue rolls (for changing mat/cleansing)
- Supply of hot water
- Soap
- Barrier creams (provided by parents/carers)
- Antiseptic cleaner for the changing bed/mat
- Clinical waste bag
- Spillage kit

The school has a disabled toilet and hygiene room with a washbasin, shower and bed for changing.

Mobile pupils will be changed while standing up. Pupils who are not mobile will be changed on a purpose-built changing bed or changing mat on the floor.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty or menstruation.

4. School responsibilities

Where possible, pupils who require intimate care will be involved in planning for their own healthcare needs wherever possible, with input from parents welcomed.

In liaison with the pupil and parents, an individual health care plan will be created to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for any pupil with a health condition or disability.

Regular consultations will be arranged with all parents and pupils regarding toilet facilities.

The privacy and dignity of any pupil who requires intimate care will be respected at all times. A member of staff who holds an enhanced DBS will change the pupil or assist them in changing themselves if they become wet, or soil themselves. Any pupil with wet or soiled clothing will be assisted in cleaning themselves and will be given spare clothing, nappies, pads, etc., as provided by the parents.

Members of staff will react to accidents in a calm and sympathetic manner. Accurate records of times, staff, and any other details of incidents of intimate care will be kept in a Record of Intimate Care Intervention, and they will be stored in the hygiene room.

Arrangements will be made for how often the pupil should be routinely changed if the pupil is in school for a full day, and the pupil will be changed by a designated member of staff. A minimum number of changes will be agreed.

The family's cultural practices will always be taken into account for cases of intimate care. Where possible, same-sex intimate care will be carried out.

Parents will be contacted if the pupil refuses to be changed or becomes distressed during the process.

Excellent standards of hygiene will be maintained at all times when carrying out intimate care.

5. Parental responsibilities

Parents will change their child, or assist them in going to the toilet, at the latest possible time before coming to school.

Parents will provide spare nappies, incontinence pads, medical bags, wet wipes, a change of clothing in case of accidents and if required a barrier/nappy cream.

Parents will inform the school should their child have any marks or rashes.

Parents will come to an agreement with staff in determining how often their child will need to be changed.

6. Safeguarding

Staff members working directly with pupils will receive safeguarding training as part of their mandatory induction, in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Intimate care is a regulated activity; therefore, only members of staff who have an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check are permitted to undertake intimate care duties.

Wherever possible, staff involved in intimate care will not be involved in the delivery of sex education to the pupils in their care as an extra safeguard to both staff and pupils involved.

Individual health care plans will be drawn up for pupils as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the pupil.

Each pupil's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine how many carers will need to be present when the pupil requires intimate care.

If any member of staff has concerns about physical changes to a pupil's presentation, such as marks or bruises, they will report the concerns to the DSL immediately.

Special consideration will be taken to ensure that bullying and teasing does not occur.

7. Swimming

Pupils in upper key stage 2 participate in swimming lessons at Freedom Leisure Hailsham: during these lessons, pupils are entitled to privacy when changing; however, some pupils will need to be supervised during changing.

Parental consent will be obtained before assisting any pupils in changing clothing before and after swimming lessons.

Details of any additional arrangements will be recorded in the pupil's individual care plan.

8. Physical education and other skills coaching

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in PE, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.

Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.

Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

9. Offsite visits

Before offsite visits, including residential trips, the pupil's individual intimate plan will be amended to include procedures for intimate care whilst off the school premises.

Staff will apply all the procedures described in this policy during residential and off-site visits.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises, where a chaperone is not present, will not be permitted, unless approval has been obtained by the headteacher. Consent from a parent will be obtained and recorded prior to any offsite visit.

10. Toilet training

Members of staff providing care will inform another member of staff prior to taking a pupil to be changed or to use the toilet.

Where potties are used, they will be emptied immediately and cleaned with an anti-bacterial spray. The potty or toilet is checked to assess whether it is clean before use and toilet paper is well stocked.

Gloves will be worn before each change, and the area should be prepared to ensure it is clean and suitable for use. Gloves must be worn at all times when changing nappies, and during any instances where the member of staff could come into contact with bodily fluids.

All pupils will be accompanied to the toilet and will be appropriately supervised and supported during the toilet training stage. Staff will be sensitive and sympathetic when changing pupils and will not make negative facial expressions or negative comments. Pupils' efforts will be reinforced by praise where appropriate.

Staff are required to ensure that soiled/wet nappies are changed as soon as possible. Where pupils are left in soiled nappies and/or clothes, this will be dealt with in line with the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Pupils will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and warm water, with assistance provided where necessary.

If a pupil has a toileting accident, they will be offered assistance to change or be changed by a member of staff regardless of their age.

To build independence, pupils will be encouraged to replace their own clothes and flush the toilet, if they are capable of doing so.

Parents are consulted on the approach to toilet training their child to ensure there is consistency with the approach at home. Pupils' progress is discussed at handover with parents. If any pupil is struggling with toilet training techniques or has any issues, e.g. a rash, this will be discussed with the headteacher and the pupil's parents.

11. Providing comfort or support to a child

Pupils will naturally seek support and reassurance from adults at school. Examples of this include where a pupil is distressed when leaving their parent or has fallen over or is tired and may need to be carried. Such responsive care in the school will always be based on the pupil's needs and on the adult's knowledge of that individual pupil. Whatever the age of pupil is being cared for, clear professional boundaries will be maintained at all times in line with our safeguarding policy and procedures.

If a pupil touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way that communicates that the touch, rather than the pupil, is unacceptable. If a pupil touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as this could be an indicator of safeguarding concerns.

12. Guidelines for good practice

All pupils have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard pupils and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of pupils. For older pupils, it may be appropriate to introduce single-gender changing for PE lessons.

Young pupils and pupils with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse pupils. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both pupils and staff.

1. Involve the pupil in the intimate care. Try to encourage a pupil's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a pupil fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and, where possible, give choices. Check your practice by asking the pupil or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. Treat every pupil with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the pupil's age and situation.
3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent. As a pupil may have multiple carers, a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.
4. Be aware of your own limitations. Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
5. Promote positive self-esteem and body image. Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey many messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a pupil's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the pupil's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.
6. If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swellings report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. Never conduct any intimate care alone in a room with a locked or fully shut door ensuring another member of staff is aware.

If a pupil is accidentally hurt during intimate care, misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the pupil, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the pupil. All concerns must be logged on Myconcern.