Hope School and College.
Intimate Care Policy.

Policy reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governors

Rationale

Intimate physical care and activities requiring close personal contact can be identified as any personal care and assistance that involves an individual's personal space.

In addition to care, hygiene, and safety, the individual's dignity should be preserved at all times. Taking into account age, gender, culture and physical and developmental needs.

Aims of the policy

- **To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children and young people**
- **To provide guidance and reassurance to staff who have responsibilities that may include intimate care**
- **To remove barriers to learning and participation, to protect from discrimination, and ensure inclusion for all pupils and young people.**
- **To ensure consistency of action whilst being sensitive to individual needs**

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 espouse of, the sexual parts of the body. Help may be required with changing colostomy bags, managing catheters, stomas or other appliances and any other nursing tasks. Where possible intimate care will be provided by the member of staff who is same gender.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified may include –

- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Helping someone use the toilet
- Changing continence pads
- Bathing/showering
- Washing intimate parts of the body
- Changing sanitary wear
- Medical interventions

Definition of Personal Care

'Personal Care' generally carries more positive perceptions than intimate care. Although it may often involve touching another person, the nature of this touching is more socially acceptable, as it is less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal presentation and hence is regarded as social functioning. These tasks do not involve conventional personal, private, or social space to the same extent as intimate care and support positive social outcomes for many pupils.

Those personal care tasks specifically identified as relevant here may include:

- Skin care/applying external medication
- Feeding
- Administering oral medication
- Hair care
- Dressing and undressing (clothing)
- Washing non-intimate body parts
- Prompting to go to the toilet

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.

Students may require help with eating, drinking, washing, dressing and toileting and may require support during therapy and other physical activities.

Basic Principles

Students intimate care needs cannot be seen in isolation or separate from other aspects of their lives.

Encouraging students to participate in their own intimate or personal care where possible should therefore be part of a general approach towards developing self-help skills and independence, facilitating participation in daily life.

Guidelines

The guidelines cover a variety of activities and it must be accepted that there is a degree of flexibility and judgement within some situations.

Guidelines should be followed in the context of child protection, health and safety and police clearance procedures.

Police Clearance

All adults participating in any activities undertaking intimate/close personal contact will have undergone enhanced DBS checks.

Child Protection

It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and comply with the safeguarding strategies and procedures in place.

Health & Safety

All staff should be aware and adhere to general health and safety guidelines as documented by the LA. Appropriate risk assessments should be carried out. Any Health & Safety concerns or queries should be taken up with the appropriate person who will act upon the information.

Students/Volunteers and Helpers

Students/volunteers/helpers and parents.

- Should NOT assist with toileting pupils and other intimate care procedures.
- May assist in helping pupils change for PE if supervised by a member of school staff.
- Must not assist with any feeding requiring medical training/SALT advice (in the case of an emergency help as soon as possible)
- May assist at the dining table in general situations.
- Must be supervised and not be placed in a situation where they are alone/unsupervised with pupils. (except in extreme /emergency circumstances.

Good Practice Guidance

In many schools, education and other settings, designated staff are involved on a daily basis in providing intimate/personal care to students with special educational needs arising from learning difficulties, sensory impairments, medical needs and physical disabilities. This places those staff in a position of great trust and responsibility. They are required to attend to the safety and comfort of the students and to 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.

Toileting and Changing

Intimate/personal care which ensure a safe and comfortable experience for the pupil/young person.

- Get to know the student beforehand in other contexts to gain an appreciation of her mood and systems of communication

- Consistency of approach with necessary information being communicated to all appropriate staff
- Have a knowledge of and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivity related to aspects of intimate care
- Speak to the student by name and ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity. Address the student in an age appropriate way
- Give explanations of what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way
- Respect a student's preference for a particular sequence of care
- Give strong clues that enable the student to anticipate and prepare for events
  e.g. show the clean pad to indicate the intention to change
- Encourage the student to undertake as much of the procedure for themselves as possible, including washing intimate areas and dressing/undressing
- Provide facilities that afford privacy and modesty
- Provide support aids to enable students to manage their own intimate health care needs as independently as possible
- Staff to be aware of own personal hygiene and use of appropriate aids – gloves, aprons, hand washing etc
- Be aware of general hygiene and disposal of waste (e.g. – soiled pads, catheters etc)
- Documented parental agreement to procedures involving intimate care

Feeding / Eating

- All procedures including feeding plans to be kept up to date with information from relevant health professionals
- Account must be taken of pupils likes and dislikes and normal routine
- Hygiene procedures to be adhered to
- Emergency procedures to be put in place if possible choking may be an issue
- The importance of social interaction at snack/lunchtime should not be underestimated

Physical Assistance Guidelines

- Giver verbal prompts/instructions before touching, moving, or handling pupils
- Have due regard for instructions given by therapist regarding individual pupil's movements/transfers etc
- Always use equipment recommended to assist moving/transfers
- Please see moving and handling policy and individual plans

Pupils may have individual bathroom/feeding/physical assistance regimes which will be reviewed and amended as required, following advice.