

Woodchurch High School

A Church of England Academy



Intimate and Personal Care Policy

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1. Scope of Policy and Definition of Intimate and Personal Care

This policy outlines the procedures and principles for staff supporting pupils with intimate care needs within Woodchurch High School. It applies to all staff members (teaching staff, support staff, external providers, and volunteers) who may be involved in providing intimate care to pupils.

Intimate care

Intimate care refers to support with personal hygiene and bodily functions that involves direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, private areas of the body. This may also include assistance with colostomy care or the management of catheters.

Intimate care tasks include:

- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Helping someone use the toilet
- Changing incontinence pads/nappies
- Bathing/showering
- Washing intimate parts of the body
- Changing sanitary wear
- Managing medical procedures that require access to intimate areas
- Managing or changing catheters or stomas

Personal care

Personal care involves helping with everyday physical or medical tasks that a person would usually do themselves but cannot due to disability or medical needs. It may involve touch but does not include contact with or exposure of private body parts and focuses on comfort, health, and personal presentation rather than intimate care.

Personal care tasks include:

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

This policy specifically applies to pupils who, due to age, disability, medical condition, or special educational needs, require assistance with tasks they cannot manage independently. The current policy can be amended at any point in response to children's needs and requirements.

2. Guiding Principles and Child's Rights

Woodchurch High School is committed to ensuring that all intimate care is provided in a manner that upholds the highest standards of dignity, respect, and safety for the pupil. The following principles underpin all intimate care procedures:

- **Reasonable adjustment**, The provision of intimate care falls within the scope of a **reasonable adjustment**, mandated to align precisely with the needs outlined in the pupil's profile and or Health Care Plan.
- **Right to Privacy and Dignity**: All pupils have the right to assistance that respects their privacy and dignity. Intimate care will be performed discreetly, in private locations, and with appropriate screening where necessary. Staff will ensure that only those strictly necessary are present. The school places a high emphasis on ensuring one-to-one care is provided where feasible to maximise privacy, with consideration for safeguarding protocols.
- **Right to Feel Safe and Comfortable**: Pupils have the right to feel safe and comfortable with the adults providing their care. Staff involved in intimate care will be known to the pupil where possible, and efforts will be made to ensure consistency of carers to build trust and familiarity.
- **Engagement and Permission**: Staff will ensure pupils are engaged and able to grant informed permission by following the specific communication protocols and routines outlined in their Individual Intimate Care Plan (IICP). This document details the agreed terminology, language, and step-by-step process required to ensure the pupil understands what is happening, allowing them to provide verbal or non-verbal consent; should permission be withdrawn, care will cease immediately to respect the pupil's wishes, unless doing so creates an unavoidable health and safety risk.
- **Encouragement of Independence**: Pupils will be encouraged and supported to work towards becoming independent in their intimate care where possible. Staff will promote self-help skills and gradually reduce assistance as appropriate, in consultation with the pupil and their parents/carers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff Members (including teaching staff, support staff, external providers, volunteers)

- To adhere strictly to the procedures and principles outlined in this policy.
- To treat all pupils with dignity and respect at all times.
- To promote pupil independence wherever possible.
- To maintain professional boundaries and ensure appropriate adult-pupil ratios. 2 :1
- To report any concerns or disclosures immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- To record intimate care provided as per school procedures.
- Ami Clewlow (TA 3) and Carla Melay (TA 3) will be lead designated staff members, completing Intimate Care for children and young people with complex needs (CPD certified) December 2025
- To ensure they have received appropriate training before providing intimate care.

Parental/Carer Involvement

- Parents/carers should be actively involved in the development and review of their child's intimate care plan, providing crucial insights into their child's needs and preferences.
- Parents/carers are responsible for providing any necessary equipment or specialist products required for their child's intimate care, as agreed in the Individual Intimate Care Plan (IICP).
- Parents/carers must ensure the school has up-to-date emergency contact details at all times.
- To communicate any changes in their child's needs to the school promptly.
- To respect the professional boundaries of staff.

- Parents to be informed of all procedures and adjustments in relation to ensuring what personal care measures could take place in all situations, and outlined in IICP
- Lead staff ACL , CME, GSI once plans are drafted, a meeting with parents will take place to ensure there can be a family centred approach

Pupils

- To communicate their needs and preferences regarding intimate care where possible.
- To cooperate with staff providing care to the best of their ability.
- To understand their rights regarding privacy, dignity, and independence.

Outside Agencies

- Follow guidance from health care professionals, to provide direction of best practise in the area of intimate care
- Completion of training to enhance support required to individuals

4. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **The Children Act 1989 & 2004:** Places a duty on local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 (and any subsequent updates):** Provides statutory guidance on safeguarding children and young people. This policy aligns with the principles of safer working practices.
- **The Equality Act 2010:** Requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities and prohibits discrimination. This includes ensuring dignity and respect for those requiring intimate care.
- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) / Data Protection Act 2018:** Governs the handling of personal and sensitive data, including records relating to intimate care.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (and any subsequent updates):** Inter-agency guidance to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Children and Families Act 2014** The SEND Code of Practice is statutory guidance for organisations that work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

5. Role of Staff in Providing Intimate Care

Assessment and Planning - Individual Intimate Care Plans (IICPs)

- For all pupils who require intimate care on a regular basis, an **Individual Intimate Care Plan (IICP)** will be agreed and drawn up in full consultation with the pupil (where appropriate), their parents/carers, and relevant health professionals.

- The views of the pupil will be actively sought where possible when drawing up a care plan, taking into account their age, maturity, and ability.
- The IICP will detail the pupil's specific needs, the nature of care required, preferred methods, communication strategies, and the number of staff needed.
- The IICP will include clear guidance on promoting independence; pupils will be encouraged to act as independently as possible.
- This plan should be reviewed regularly, at least annually, or more frequently if needs change.
- Where any changes to the agreed plan are required, consultation should take place with senior staff and parents or carers before implementation.
- IICPs completed and drafted by ACL (TA3) and CME (TA3) in consultation with GSI social inclusion officer

Best Practice Guidelines for Staff

- **Privacy and Dignity:**
 - Always seek to provide intimate care in a private area, such as a designated accessible toilet or medical room.
 - Ensure doors are closed and blinds/curtains are drawn.
 - Cover the pupil with a towel or clothing where possible to minimise exposure.
 - Maintain a calm and reassuring manner.
 - The school prioritises one-to-one care where possible to maximise the pupil's privacy and dignity during intimate care procedures, whilst adhering to safeguarding protocols always ensuring there is a second adult in the room.
- **Communication and Consent:**
 - Explain clearly to the pupil what is going to happen before and during the procedure, using language they understand.
 - Staff will have consent at each stage of personal care by strictly adhering to the guidance within the pupil's Individual Intimate Care Plan (IICP). This document includes an explicit reference to the whole procedure, detailing the step-by-step routine and agreed terminology staff must use; this ensures the pupil fully understands what is happening and is empowered to meaningfully grant permission throughout the process.
 - Actively seek verbal or non-verbal consent at each stage.
 - Respect a pupil's refusal or withdrawal of consent unless there is an immediate risk to their health or safety (in which case, emergency procedures will be followed, and parents/carers informed immediately).
 - For pupils with limited communication, staff will be trained to recognise signs of distress or discomfort.
- **Safe Staffing:**
 - Two members of staff will be present for intimate care procedures involving physical contact.
 - If two members of staff are not available, one member of staff may be present with the door slightly ajar (where appropriate and safe to do so), and another appropriate adult must be in the vicinity and be aware of the task being undertaken. This decision will be outlined in the IICP, if this happens, it will be recorded. This is only in exceptional circumstances.
 - In exceptional circumstances where only one staff member is available and the child's needs are urgent, care will be provided, but this must be reported to a senior member of staff immediately.

- Gender of staff: Where possible and appropriate, the pupil's wishes regarding the gender of the carer will be respected. However, this cannot always be guaranteed.
- **NB:** For more information on safer working practices, please refer to the relevant section in the school's **Policy for Safer Working Practices**.
- **Hygiene and Safety:**
 - Staff will always wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves and aprons.
 - Hands will be washed thoroughly before and after providing care.
 - All waste will be disposed of safely and appropriately according to school procedures.
 - Any spills or accidents will be cleaned immediately.
- **Respecting Boundaries and Body Language:**
 - Staff will maintain professional boundaries at all times.
 - Staff will be sensitive to the pupil's body language and verbal cues.
 - Any signs of distress, discomfort, or unusual behaviour from the pupil, or any disclosures made by the pupil, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.
- **Confidentiality and Record Keeping:**
 - Information regarding a pupil's intimate care needs and provision will be treated as highly confidential.
 - Detailed and factual records of all intimate care provided will be kept, including the date, time, staff involved, nature of care, and any significant observations or incidents. These records will be stored securely.
 - A record should be made of any variations from the agreed Individual Intimate Care Plan and the justification for this. This record must be shared with the pupil's parents or carers as well as lead care giver..
- **Staff Training and Support:**
 - All staff involved in intimate care will receive appropriate training, including comprehensive modules on hygiene best practices, health and safety procedures specific to intimate care tasks, manual handling (where applicable), and specific medical care needs.
 - Crucially, training will also cover how to professionally and sensitively handle situations involving a pupil's unexpected arousal or distress during intimate care, ensuring the pupil's safety and dignity are maintained, and all incidents are reported appropriately.
 - Staff will be supported by the school leadership team and will have opportunities to discuss concerns or seek guidance.

6. Concerns and Complaints

Any concerns or complaints regarding intimate care must be directed to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, including observations of unusual markings, discoloration, or swelling

(particularly in the genital area), signs of sexual arousal, or if a pupil appears to misunderstand or misinterpret the care being provided. All such matters will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly, strictly following the school's Complaints Policy and Safeguarding procedures.

7. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or school procedure.

