

Intimate Care Policy

Effective from: September 2025

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This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection/ Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Photography

RATIONALE

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the pupil's needs. The pupil's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There should always be a high awareness of possible safeguarding and child protection issues. As such, staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents, carers and health professionals, where appropriate, to provide continuity of care to pupils wherever possible. This policy has been developed in response to the requirements of "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2021) and "Working Together to Safeguard

Children” (2018). Additionally, the school seeks to apply the principles for good outcomes in all dimensions as set out in the Children Act 2004 (10 (2)) enabling pupils to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve social and economic well-being

This Policy is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS and accords with the requirements of paragraph (1)(c) of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004(a) relating to the promotion of pupil wellbeing.

Reference is made to the school’s child protection/safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct and the framework for Early Years provision.

Reference is also made to the school’s strategy for reducing the risks of infections (including COVID – 19) and ensuring that staff and children apply strict measures to reduce cross-infection when undertaking any form of intimate care.

INTRODUCTION

The Avenue Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School (‘The School’) 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. We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils with respect especially when intimate care is given. No pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

The management of all pupils with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The pupil’s welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care will be trained to do so (including Safeguarding, Child Protection and Health and Safety training) and be kept up to date with ‘best practice’ requirements.

Where an assessment made by a physiotherapist/occupational therapist determines special apparatus should be used to assist such care each case will be considered on its own merits. Where appropriate, staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils.

MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL CARE

Each pupil in the School will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each pupil to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the pupil responsibility for washing themselves. Each pupil’s right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil’s situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a pupil is toileted. Wherever possible, one pupil will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound rationale for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented. Another adult will however be present in the vicinity. Wherever possible a pupil will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis - there will be a rota of carers known to the pupil who will take turns in providing intimate care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from

developing, whilst at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers. The aim will be to achieve a sensible balance based on the needs of the child and being seen to be diligent in the provision of intimate care.

THE PROTECTION OF PUPILS

The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures (September 2021) will be adhered to at all times. All pupils will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead for pupil protection. If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed as set out in the Child Protection Policy. Parents/guardians will be contacted and informed as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Where appropriate, staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved. During this time the pupil's needs remain of paramount importance. The School will seek further specialist advice from outside agencies where necessary to maximise best outcomes for the pupil. Any concerns about staff conduct must be reported immediately to the Principal and/or the DSL.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

When attending to the intimate care of pupils, staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety policy. Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a pupil who has wet or soiled themselves. Any soiled waste (urinary or faecal) should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which will be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin in the toilets (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied daily and it will be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service. Note: this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Staff will wear suitable personal protective equipment and follow guidance on the use of sanitisers, washing services and other requirements.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

All staff engaged in the care and education of pupils must exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures 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 their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom the action is described. Staff must therefore always make considered judgements when executing their duties, be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact will be open to scrutiny.

Any physical contact with an individual pupil is potentially open to question unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the pupil, the school and those with parental responsibility. Pupils with complex health and/or special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each pupil. The

arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Consultation with colleagues and, where possible, parents/guardians will take place where any deviation from the agreed arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it will be fully documented and reported.

Extra caution is required by staff where a pupil is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. In this case the pupil may view physical contact to be associated with such previous experiences and may result in staff being more vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such pupils may present as extremely needy and actively seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the pupil, thus minimising any negative experience. In such cases ensuring supervision will help to protect staff from possible allegations.

RESTRAINT

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain pupils physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases trained staff should use the minimum force necessary for the minimum length of time required for the pupil to regain self-control. In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of and adhere to the school's use of force to control or restrain policy. Under no circumstances is it permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment, to modify behaviour, or to make a pupil comply with an instruction. Physical force of this nature is unacceptable and is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

PUPILS IN DISTRESS

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and is not subject to misinterpretation. Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the pupil needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. It may be more suitable to involve the pupil's relative. To minimise the risk of misinterpretation/allegation, particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice, from an appropriately qualified person.

FIRST AID AND INTIMATE CARE

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other pupils are present. The pupil's dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and must be made aware of the task being undertaken. Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for.

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 games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment. Staff must 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.

SHOWERS / CHANGING CLOTHES

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should avoid any physical contact when pupils are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising pupils in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore, staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. adults must not change in the same place as pupils; male members of staff must not remain in classrooms where KS1 pupils are changing and must ensure a female member of staff is there to supervise the class.

OUT OF SCHOOL TRIPS, CLUBS ETC.

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils on a School Trip or after-school activity. The standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with school's policy and guidance regarding out of school activities. To ensure pupils' safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on visits. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though they are in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Photography, videos and similar creative arts

Staff should be aware of the potential for such mediums of teaching to be used for the wrong purposes. Additionally staff should be aware that pupils who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the legitimate use of photography, filming etc. Only camera equipment and devices provided by the school, and monitored for their use can be used within the school. Personal camera equipment and devices are not permitted. Please see relevant school policies with regard to the use of cameras and other electronic equipment.

EQUAL ACCESS

This policy applies to every child regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, disability, SEN or faith background.

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Child Protection/Safeguarding

Photography

First Aid

Staff Code of Conduct