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Witham St Hughs Academy

Intimate Care Policy

Policy/Procedure management log

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WITHAM ST HUGHS ACADEMY

POLICY DOCUMENT: INTIMATE CARE

Rationale

It is our intention to develop independence in each pupil. However, there will be occasions when help is required. Our Intimate Care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to the systems of Pastoral Care we have at Witham St Hughs Academy. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of pupils.

Children are generally more vulnerable than adults, and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual pupil on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities can include:

- toileting;
- feeding;
- oral care;
- washing;
- changing clothes;
- first aid and medical assistance; and
- supervision of a pupil involved in intimate self-care.

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based. Every pupil has the right to:

- be safe;
- personal privacy;
- be valued as an individual;
- be treated with dignity and respect;
- be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;

- express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account; and
- have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Academy Responsibilities

All members of staff working with pupils are DBS vetted. Only those members of staff who are familiar with the Intimate Care Policy.

Anticipated intimate care arrangements which are required on a regular basis are agreed between the academy and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the pupil. In such cases, a consent form is signed and stored in the pupil's file (appendix 1).

Intimate care arrangements for any pupil who requires this support on a regular basis should be reviewed at least every six months. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements. Any amendments to the arrangements should be recorded and made available for all parties involved.

Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by the parents. This act of intimate care would be reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and parents at the earliest possible time following the event.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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 children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children. Young children and children 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 children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation.

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

Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a pupil.

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.

5. Promote Positive Self-Esteem And Body Image

Confident, self-assured pupils who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a pupil 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 swelling report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a pupil is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the pupil, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the pupil. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the pupil's personal file.

Working with Pupils

The intimate care of pupils can be carried out by a member of staff with the following provisions:

- when intimate care is being carried out, all pupils have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens/curtains put in place;
- if the pupil appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the pupil is distressed and provide reassurance;
- report any concerns to the Safeguarding Lead and make a written record;
- parents must be informed about any concerns.

Communication with Pupils

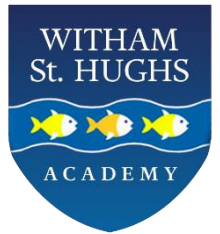
It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a pupil to ensure that they are aware of the pupil's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, pupils may communicate using different methods – words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc. To ensure effective communication:

- make eye contact at the pupil's level;
- use simple language and repeat if necessary;
- wait for response;
- continue to explain to the pupil what is happening even if there is no response;
- treat the pupil as an individual with dignity and respect.

It is important to note that in addition to the information in the Intimate Care Policy, reference should also be made to the Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Policies.

Policy Last Reviewed: September 2023

Witham St Hughs Academy will review, evaluate and update this policy when necessary.



Witham St Hughs Academy

Intimate Care Plan

Name of Child: _____

Year Group: _____

Date: _____

<u>Reason for Necessity of Intimate Care</u>		
<u>Nature of Care Needed</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Staff Responsibility</u>

I agree to the above plan for my child

Signed: _____ (Adult with Parental Responsibility)

Plan Agreed on Behalf of the Academy by:

Signed: _____