

# **HIGHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

### **Rationale**

Highfield Middle School is responsible for the care of all children, whatever their needs or difficulties, including children with learning and physical difficulties who have an increased dependency and require practical support with their intimate care needs at school.

We have defined Intimate Care as direct care of the child in terms of any personal care activity a child would normally be able to do for him/herself. These needs are no different to the needs of a child who is not disabled but there are differences in the nature, method and principles of fulfilling those needs.

Intimate care is a high risk activity in terms of abuse and it is particularly important that there are guidelines on Intimate Care, both to protect those being cared for and the staff who care for the children's needs. We take the view that everyone is safer if expectations are clear and approaches are as consistent as possible.

The staff at Highfield have recognised the need to design guidelines that encompass all aspects of procedures. They apply to every member of staff involved in the intimate care of the children and they aim to support good practice.

Therefore, our guidelines have the following goals:

- To outline good practice during intimate care tasks so we can distinguish between good and poor care practice
- To protect the children and the staff who are asked to carry out intimate care tasks
- To outline a system that works effectively for the child, ensuring a consistent approach is undertaken and that approaches to intimate care are not markedly different between individuals

### **Guidelines**

1. **Children and their parents should have confidence in the staff**

All staff involved in Intimate Care routines will have been police checked and will receive appropriate training to carry out this aspect of their work. Parents will receive a copy of the School's Intimate Care policy and will be offered an opportunity to discuss their child's needs with an appropriate member of staff.

**2. Carers should be aware of the abilities of the child**

The child should be enabled and encouraged, as far as is reasonably possible, to contribute to his/her own intimate care

**3. Ensure privacy, appropriate to the child's age and gender**

The school takes the view that the issue of privacy is important. Many intimate care tasks are carried out by one person. This practice is actively supported unless the task requires two people.

**4. Children have the right to be respected**

Respect of the child's body and integrity should be included in all care procedures. Ideally, someone who has a positive long-term relationship with the child should carry out intimate care tasks. New members of staff should get to know the children in the classroom context before getting involved in Intimate Care tasks.

**5. A strong focus should be evident on choice and decision making skills**

Wherever appropriate, decision making should be an integral part of the process – e.g. Do you want to go to the toilet or not? Should we wash your hands or face first? Can I help fasten your trousers?

**6. Pupils will be prepared and involved in what is going to happen**

Staff will raise the child's awareness of the process. Objects of reference, symbols, signs, gesture and verbal explanation will be given as appropriate

**7. Intimate Care tasks are not an interruption to the timetable**

These practices should be valued as part of each child's essential curriculum. They are an opportunity to develop independent and age-appropriate skills, increase dignity and to raise self-esteem.

**8. Never do any task unless you are confident in your ability to do it**

Never guess; ask a colleague to help.

**9. If you are concerned – report it**

Intimate Care tasks should never be approached light heartedly. If a child has soreness or something to cause you concern, follow School's Child Protection Procedures.

## **10. Health and Safety Issues**

Barrier materials will always be used e.g. disposable gloves. Appropriate Lifting and Handling Procedures will be followed when necessary.

## **RESOURCES**

School will seek parental views on practices at home. Preferred materials will be used and parents will be encouraged to resource their child's needs whenever possible.

## **TRAINING**

Staff will receive appropriate training from relevant professionals, pupils and parents and where appropriate from outside agencies.

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Dear Parents

I am writing to you regarding your child's need for support with intimate care routines. We have drawn up the attached guidelines to ensure that your child's needs are met in a professional and dignified manner at all times.

I would be grateful if you could sign and return the slip below once you have read the guidelines.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Oades

Headteacher

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I have received a copy of the School's Intimate Care Policy.

I *would/would not*\* like an opportunity to discuss the School's Intimate care Policy with a member of staff.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please delete as appropriate