



Intimate Care Policy

Beaufort School

Governing Body Approval date	28/03/2022
Review	Annually
Review Due	27/03/2023

Background

Beaufort School caters for children between the ages of 2-11 years. Beaufort School is a community day special school for primary aged children with severe and profound learning difficulties.

The nature of most children's difficulties means that at some time during the school day they will require assistance with aspects of intimate care. Beaufort and Langley recognise that staff will need to manage all aspects of intimate care at all times with sensitivity, discretion and respect.

Definition

For the purpose of this document, the use of the word '**child**' will also include **young people**.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself
3. Assisting with toileting issues
4. Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
5. Providing first aid assistance
6. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
7. Feeding a child
8. Providing oral care to a child
9. Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. *

* In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam.) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child

Best practice

Beaufort School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times, treating all children and young people with respect and ensuring that no indignity, distress or pain is suffered.

Every child's right to privacy is respected. Staff will give careful consideration to the number of carers necessary to support a child with their intimate care routines. Where possible only one member of staff should assist a child unless there is an assessed need for two members of staff (e.g. moving and handling).

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- Every child has a right to be safe;
- Every child has the right to personal privacy;
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual;
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account; and
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

Parents and Carers are involved in their child's intimate care arrangements and these are regularly reviewed. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints e.g. staffing, equal opportunities legislation.

It is accepted that male members of staff will provide intimate care support only for male children. Students on work experience or training will not be expected to participate in any aspect of intimate care, but may assist with more general hygiene routines such as face and hand washing and teeth cleaning.

Assisting a child to change their clothes

This is more common throughout Beaufort School due to the nature of the pupils and less common at Langley School. An individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, they have an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on their clothes etc. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

Staff will ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so.

Toileting

At Beaufort School a majority of children are either toilet training or wear pads so therefore personal care is provided for children. If a child soils themselves in school staff members are to change the child in the hygiene room provided. The following guidelines outlined will be followed when changing a child:

- 2 staff support children when toileting
- The child will be given the opportunity to change their underwear in private and carry out this process themselves
- School will have a supply of wipes and protective disposable gloves
- Spare clothing to be provided by parents or school
- Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag to return to parents

Providing comfort or support to a child:

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context. If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Our Administration of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school. Parental permission **must** be given before any medication is dispensed in school. Some children will have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements included in our Administration of Medications Policy will have an Individual 'Care Plan'. This Care Plan will be formulated by the school nurse and if required, school staff will receive appropriate training when necessary.

Hydrotherapy and Swimming

Beaufort School has hydrotherapy room which is used by both schools. As well as hydrotherapy, Beaufort and Langley School participate in a swimming programme and attend different swimming baths or leisure centres outside school.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their 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, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. Where a child needs additional support for changing staff members will be aware of this.

Showering

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. 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, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. This means that staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children 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 children 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 children or shower with children.

It is best practice in our school that when an incident has taken place that has necessitated a member of staff to be present when children are changing that an incident report is made.

Risk assessments

Some children may need additional moving and handling support, given the nature of their difficulties. Apparatus (hoists) are provided to facilitate the safe handling of children, with advice from the physiotherapist/moving and handling trainer as required.

Curriculum links

As part of the PSHE schemes of work all children have the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of their bodies (change and growth) and personal care routines. Through intimate care routines opportunities will be provided for the children to develop their skills and become as independent as they can. Staff will take into account developmental changes of the children (including the onset of puberty and menstruation) and will adapt their practice according to the needs and level of understanding of the individual. Individual care plans and routines are established according to the needs of the child, incorporating their preferred means of communication e.g. PECS, symbol support, Makaton, objects of reference – a total communication approach.

Staff development

All staff, including Lunchtime Supervisors (LSAs) participate in regular training in PSHE (personal, social & health education) and SRE (sex and relationships education) which incorporate aspects of managing intimate care. Beaufort and Langley Schools are committed to providing as a minimum, Level 1 Child Protection training to its staff, as well as moving and handling training.

Child Protection

Staff will ensure that they have familiarised themselves and adhere to Child Protection Procedures. If a member of staff has any concerns regarding a change in a child's physical presentation e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, soreness, they will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead record this on 'My Concern' who will then follow procedures specified in the school Child Protection Policy.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Until the issues are resolved, the needs of the child remain paramount. Further advice may be taken from outside agencies if necessary. Ensure communication is used at all times of intimate care with the child.

If a child or professional makes an allegation against a member of staff, all agreed procedures will be followed according to Birmingham Area Child Protection procedures.