

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy



Intimate Care Policy

Last review Oct 2023 Next review Oct 2024

The Ethos of St Peter and St Paul

“Our school is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do.

Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith.”

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

The uniqueness of the individual

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God’s image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a student of God.

The search for excellence

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

The education of the whole person

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help students to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

The education of all

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

Moral principles

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:

Any person recruited to the service of the school, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the school and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

Policy for Intimate Care

Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a student 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. 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.)

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one; it will require staff to be respectful of the student's needs. The student's dignity should always be preserved; with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Intimate Care Policy For St Peter and St Paul Academy

St Peter and St Paul Academy 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. St Peter and St Paul Academy recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No student; should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our Approach To Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The student who requires intimate care; will be treated with respect at all times; the student's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in lifting and moving) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.

The student will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the student.

Each student's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each student's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a student is toileted. Where possible one student will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible the same student will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the student who will take turns in providing 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.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the student's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

The Protection of Children:

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.

All children 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 student's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the student's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed and referred to the Headteacher.

If the allegation is about the Headteacher, it should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

Changing facilities

Children who have long - term incontinence will require specially adapted facilities. Currently St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy has three disabled toilets around the school site. The dignity and privacy of the student will be of paramount concern. An area, which can be made private by the use of a screen, is acceptable. Consideration should be given to the sighting of this area from a health and safety aspect, dependant on the needs of the student. The area will not be situated in a thoroughfare, as a changing mat will have to be used on the

floor when a student is to be changed. This is the recommended method of changing a student, as it avoids an adult having to lift a student and cause possible back injury.

Equipment Provision

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy would ask for clarification regarding who is responsible for providing equipment when children require changing, and guidance on the nature of intimate care required.

Parents have a role to play when their child is still wearing nappies. The parent should provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat etc. and parents should be made aware of this responsibility. Schools are responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Health and Safety

Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a student who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a soiled nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste. The bin should be emptied on a weekly basis and it can be collected as part of the usual refuse collection service as this waste is not classed as clinical waste. Staff should be aware of the school's Health and Safety policy.

Further Health and Safety advice for schools can be found in the Health and Safety Handbook, available to schools through the Education, Arts and Libraries (EAL) website

Special Educational Needs at St Peter and St Paul Academy

Children with special needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each student. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the student, those with parental responsibility and the organisation should be easily understood and recorded.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought (with advocacy arrangements made for those who can't) in regular reviews of these arrangements.

Guidance to safeguard children and education staff with regard to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (Physical contact, first aid, showers/ changing clothes, out of school activities, and photography) Physical Contact.

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to 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 students this will be in response to the student'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 student, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must

therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

Physical contact which is repeated with an individual student or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the student, the organisation and those with parental responsibility.

Children with 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 student. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the student's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for it should be documented and reported to the DSL.

Extra caution may be required where a student has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the student's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the student without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases only the minimum force necessary should be used for the minimum length of time required for the student to regain self-control.

In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported to the DSL. Under no circumstances would it be permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment, to modify behaviour, or to make a student comply with an instruction. Physical forces of this nature can, and likely to, constitute a criminal offence.

Students in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed student 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 not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a student's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the student needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. It may be more suitable to involve the student's relative or school's counsellor.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same student 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 their line manager or other appropriate person.

First Aid and intimate care

Staff who administers first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The student'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 should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between the school, those with parental responsibility and the student concerned should be documented and easily understood. The necessity for such requirements should be reviewed regularly. The student's views must also be actively sought and, in particular, any discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

Physical Education and other skills coaching

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with students from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.

Staff should 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 student might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable student in the demonstration.

Showers/changing clothes

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing 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 or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless student 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's 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.

Further Guidance

- 'Working Together To Safeguard Children', Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures.
- Circular 10/95, Protecting Children from Abuse; The Role of the Education Service. DFEE

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/YourChildsWelfareAtSchool/DG_4016091

- What To Do IF You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused. Summary (2003)

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/dfes-04320->

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