



## INTIMATE POLICY

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An academy within:



"Learning together; to be the best we can be"



Abbey School recognise that a child or young person's wellbeing is critical in maximising their potential. A child or young person's wellbeing includes physical and emotional health, safety and security. Many of our children and young people have a personalised timetable for physiotherapy positioning and exercises and also for personal care. For children and young people with complex care needs this can be carried out by the school's Well Being Team or class team.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other school policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Well Being Policy
- Safe Moving and Handling Policy

The schools are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate or personal care of children or young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust. This policy has been developed to safeguard children, young people and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the personal care of children or young people. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children and young people, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child or young person's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every child or young person is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which this policy and guidelines are based:

- Every child or young person has the right to be safe.
- Every child or young person has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child or young person has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child or young person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child or young person has the right to be involved and consulted in their own personal care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child or young person has the right to become as independent as possible with their own personal care.
- Every child or young person has the right to express their views on their own personal care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child or young person has the right to have levels of personal care that are as consistent as possible.
- To ensure that every child or young person has their personal care needs met whilst at school in an environment that supports their continued learning.

Personal care can be defined as any care which involves washing or touching intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children or young people are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing. It also includes supervision of children or young people involved in personal self-care.

Children or young people that require regular assistance with personal care have written risk assessments that are agreed by staff. These risk assessments are individual to each child or young



person and is reviewed, at least once, in the school year and at any time of change of circumstances, for example, residential trips, staffing changes or room changes. Every child or young person's right to privacy and modesty will be respected.

Careful consideration will be given to each child or young person's situation to determine who and how many staff might need to be present when he or she needs help with personal care. This will be determined through the means of the risk assessment. It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to write and update risk assessments, or the Well Being Team where appropriate. It is the responsibility of all staff supporting personal care to read and be familiar with these and to report any issues to the class teacher in order that the risk assessment and procedures are reviewed, relevant and improved where necessary.

When carrying out personal care, all children and young people will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his or herself as possible. There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with personal care in line with their preferred means of communication to discuss their needs and preferences. Staff who provide personal care should speak to the child or young person personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children and young people in a way that reflects their ages.

The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children, young people and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the staff caring. It is essential that parents and carers are included in making the decisions on how the school cares for their child. This is usually discussed at parent and carer meetings or via a child or young person's key worker. The school will work with home and offer their help and advice to ensure that children and young people have a consistent approach to their care, for example, the school will help devise a toileting programme that can be carried out at school and at home consistently.

Some children and young people have a personal care programme and records are completed where appropriate.

#### **Safeguarding:**

Adults who assist pupils with personal care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks. Anyone volunteering for the Well Being Team will be supervised at all times by a member of school staff but will still be subject to an enhanced DBS check. All staff undertaking intimate care are given appropriate training including Induction and Moving and Handling

#### **Training.**

Staff at this school recognise that pupils with special needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse and the school's child protection procedures will be adhered to. From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that personal care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child or young person's body. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in personal care and others in the vicinity) will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.



Where appropriate, children and young people 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 child or young person's presentation, for example, unexplained mark or bruises, they will immediately report concerns to the DSL OR DDSL by the means of completion of a C4C (Cause for concern) Form.

If a child or young person becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to a Senior Leader. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents or carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue is resolved so that the child or young person's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

Wherever possible staff care for a child or young person of the same gender. However, in some circumstances this principle may need to be waived, for example, female staff supporting boys or young men no male staff are available. Male members of staff should not normally provide routine intimate care for adolescent girls. This is safe working practice to protect children and to protect staff from allegations of abuse.

If a child, young person, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Head of School, Executive Head Teacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Head Teacher) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy: Allegations Against Staff Policy. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to.

Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher, CEO or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

**Policy review:**

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every 2 years. The review dates of this policy can be found on the first page.