

Foxfield School



Intimate and Personal Care Policy

Introduction

Intimate care is any caring procedure which involves attending to a pupil when he/she is undressed or partially dressed. This policy and related procedures have been developed bearing in mind that all physical contact between staff and pupils:

- Should be aimed at meeting the needs of pupils.
- should respect the dignity of each pupil
- should be consistent with professional integrity of staff members

Rationale

The aim of the policy is to increase knowledge, enhance skills and promote good practice in this sensitive area. All staff will be made aware of the standards expected of them. Intimate care will be carried out only by regular school employees. Where possible, two staff members should assist but this is regularly not a possibility.

The Principal will establish good working practices regarding physical transfer of pupils, wearing of protective clothing and ensure safe practice in relation to procedures carried out.

- The personnel involved in intimate care needs of pupils are usually SNA's but teachers may be involved.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the pupil in a dignified and respectful way and allows the pupil the maximum level of privacy. The pupils independence will be encouraged.

At times only one member of staff may be sufficient in dealing with intimate care needs of pupil. In these cases the teacher must be informed that staff member and pupil are leaving the classroom for this purpose.

In some cases two staff members are required and these cases will be identified by teacher and class team.

Intimate care procedures involving female pupils will be carried out by female staff.

Short term substitute staff/work experience personnel will not be involved in intimate care needs of pupils

A Risk Assessment may be required for some pupils and will be carried out by school and Multi Disciplinary Team staff.

Disposable gloves and wipes are available to all staff. Change of clothing is stored in school for pupils

Elements of Good Practice

While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all situations, it is important that the elements of good practice be followed:

- Encourage the pupil to have a positive image of their own body.
- Get to know the pupil and gain an appreciation of his/her moods, likes/dislikes and verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Have a knowledge and understanding of any religious or cultural sensitivity related to aspects of intimate care for this individual.

- Address the pupil by name so that he/she is aware of being the focus of the activity
- Use actions, comments and remarks that are normal in the circumstances
- Before commencing to assist the pupil, explain what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way.
- In intimate care, the touch will be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive
- Where the pupil has very limited communication, give a visual clue such as pointing to a sponge or pad, use a picture board or other aid to signal intention to wash or change
- Provide facilities which afford privacy and modesty, e.g. Adequate screening.
- Have towels, clothing and toiletries to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation to see if a pad needs changing
- Bathe change or toilet pupils one at a time. Ensure supplies of fresh clothes are to hand so that the pupil is not left unattended while items are found.
- Access protective clothing such as gloves and disposable aprons, and ensure they are used where necessary
- Take special precautions when disposing of soiled material.
- Check in advance where possible that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on outings
- Never carry out an intimate care procedure unless the staff member knows how to carry it out correctly. If in doubt, staff will seek help or advice before commencing.
- Pupils who present with challenging behaviour may, from time to time, require the assistance of two staff members. Intimate care must not be undertaken, no matter how necessary, until the pupil is calm

Reporting

If during the intimate care of a person a staff member should report if:

- A pupil is accidentally hurt
- The pupil seems unusually sore, tender or bruised in the genital area
- The pupil appears to misunderstand or misinterpret what is said or done
- The pupil has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause

Any of the above incidents should be reported as soon as possible to the Principal/Deputy Principal who can indicate an appropriate response.

Ratification and Review

This policy has been approved by the Patron Body and was ratified by the Board of Management on The policy will be made available to all parents/guardians and educational professionals on our website and on request from the school. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Signed:

Chairperson, BOM.