

# *Richard Cloudesley School*

## **Intimate Care Policy**

**Approved by C&O**

**Committee:**

**March 2025**

**Date for review:**

**March 2028**

### **Introduction**

Richard Cloudesley School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will always undertake their duties in a professional manner.

The purpose of this Intimate Care Policy is to ensure that all pupils at Richard Cloudesley School receive appropriate and dignified care when assistance is required with personal hygiene and intimate care needs: we additionally recognise that we have a duty to safeguard all staff who undertake intimate care with a policy which informs practice.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of pupils' needs. Pupil dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. An awareness of child protection and safeguarding is paramount when planning and undertaking intimate care. If a member of staff has any concerns in relation to the intimate care of pupils, they must bring this to the immediate attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL).

This policy aims to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate, dignified, and respectful support. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

## Definition of intimate care

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to 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.

In the cases of a specific procedure only staff suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam).

### Examples include:

- Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
- Changing an incontinence pad or washing a child who has soiled him/herself
- Assisting with any toileting procedures for example cleaning intimate areas
- Providing oral care to a child
- Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided

## Sharing information

The school will liaise closely with parents or guardians to ensure there is a consistent approach to intimate care between home and school. It will expect parents to also share relevant information regarding any intimate matters as required.

If changes to the pupil's intimate care routine are required, these will be reviewed in consultation with the pupil and their parent or guardian and may also be in liaison with the school nursing team, continence team, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, school paediatrician, as appropriate.

## Role of parents

Parents are encouraged to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met.

## Providing personal hygiene resources

Parents or guardians should supply at least a week's worth of resources, including incontinence pads, feminine hygiene products if required, and a spare change of clothing for pupils.

- A limited supply of feminine hygiene products and spare clothes are available in school in the event of personal care emergencies.
- Any soiled clothing will be contained securely in a yellow bag and returned to parents/guardians at the end of the school day.

## Role of staff

Staff responsible for performing intimate care will have this responsibility outlined in their job role. This includes Teaching Assistants, Midday Meals Supervisors, Senior Teaching Assistants, and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants. On occasion, other staff members may assist with personal or intimate care on a voluntary basis; however, this is not a requirement of their role or stipulated in their job description. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Moving and Handling) and are fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from the school's risk assessor. All staff involved in intimate care will undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including a barred list check for children, prior to their appointment. Additionally, thorough checks on their employment history will be conducted.

## Our approach to best practice

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

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Each child's right to privacy will be respected.

All members of staff will use sensitive and appropriate **LANGUAGE** to describe and explain personal care arrangements and body parts they are cleaning. We will not, for example, talk about "toileting" or refer to the pupils in any careless or thoughtless manner. For example, we use the phrase "personal care" as a more sensitive use of language. We will not talk over pupils' heads about personal care arrangements. All pupils participate in regular PSHE and RSE lessons to learn about consent, public and private places, body parts, and puberty at an appropriate level for their understanding.

**WE WILL ALWAYS TREAT OUR PUPILS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.** We will use supportive AAC systems to equip pupils to know and understand the appropriate words for their private parts, thus equipping them with the appropriate pathways and words which they may choose to use in the future.

## Staffing of personal care arrangements

In the primary setting men and women will be able to conduct personal care until girls reach puberty. In the secondary setting, and after primary age girls reach puberty, men will not be involved in the personal care of girls. Men and women may work together to support the personal care needs of boys throughout the school. We will do our best to meet pupils and parents' wishes relating to personal care, but we may be constrained as we employ significantly more women than men.

For safeguarding and health and safety purposes, Personal care routines which involve any intimate care will be supported by **TWO** adults. The combination of partners will change to ensure that the same two adults do not continually support the same pupil (for safeguarding purposes).

Pupils with minimal personal care needs, who for example may require escorting to the toilet cubicle and are able to access the toilet independently following their personal care routine, including their own intimate care, may be supervised by **ONE** member of staff. (In such cases, pupils will have an individual personal care plan.) If intimate care is then required for this student, another staff-member must be present.

In most cases one child or young person will be supported by two adults unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present during their personal care routine.

Student nurses from partner organisations may be involved with personal care but always with an experienced member of staff.

**Secondary aged students on work experience, student teachers or short-term supply teachers will not be involved in personal care.**

## Infection control

- Adults should wear gloves when actively supporting intimate care.
- Adults should wash hands after assisting pupils and support pupils to wash their own hands.
- Changing beds should be wiped using antibacterial spray when pupils have finished using them.

## The protection of children

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

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of ability, development and understanding. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. (s)he will immediately report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be investigated, 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 child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

### **Photography/Video**

**Under no circumstances whatsoever do we ever photograph or video pupils in the toilets unless we have a parent's written permission.**

