



The Outdoors School

THE OUTDOORS SCHOOL INTIMATE CARE, PERSONAL CARE AND TOILETING POLICY

Purpose and Scope

This policy identifies key issues and balances that need to be considered when working with learners who have medical and physical dependency needs.

The purpose of this document is to set out a clear framework within which all learners receive intimate and personal care they require in order to participate fully in services and activities across the school. As well as providing a clear policy statement, the document provides guidance for people who provide intimate and personal care.

This policy particularly applies to learners who want to participate in school activities and require personal and intimate assistance due to their specific requirements.

Introduction

An increasing number of learners with disabilities and medical needs are being included in mainstream, private, voluntary and independent sector settings. A significant number of these require assistance with intimate care tasks, especially toileting. Other learners may also experience difficulties with toileting for a variety of reasons. All of the learners we work with have the right to be safe, to be treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect.

This document is a response to requests for clear principles and guidance on the issue of supporting intimate and personal care needs with specific reference to toileting.

In the rest of this document the term parent/carer is used to refer to parents/carers and legal guardians or carers. Staff includes all adults working directly with learners in the school.

References, Legislation and Policies

The Children Act 1989

The Childcare Act 2004

The Childcare Act 2006

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Equality Act 2010

The Outdoors Group and School Policies as referenced in this document

Health and Safety at Work Regulations

- Lifting and handling children and young people
- Positive handling
- Safe disposal of waste
- Safe practices in First Aid

Definition of Intimate Care

There is a clear difference between personal and intimate assistance. 'Intimate Care' can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure

of, the sexual parts of the body. Help may also be required with changing colostomy or ileostomy bags, managing catheters, stomas or other appliances.

The Intimate care tasks specifically identified as relevant include:

- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Helping someone use the toilet
- Changing continence pads (faeces/urine)
- Washing intimate parts of the body

Definition of Personal Care

Personal Care generally carries more positive perceptions than intimate care. Although it may often involve touching another person, the nature of this touching is more socially acceptable, as it is less intimate and usually has the function of helping with personal presentation and hence is regarded as social functioning. These tasks do not invade conventional personal, private or social space to the same extent as intimate care and are certainly more valued as they can lead to positive social outcomes for people.

Those personal care tasks specifically identified as relevant here include:

- Skin care/applying external medication
- Feeding
- Administering oral medication
- Hair care
- Dressing and undressing (clothing)
- Washing non-intimate body parts
- Prompting to go to the toilet

Personal Care encompasses those areas of physical and medical care that most people carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do because of disability or medical need. Learners may require help with eating, drinking, washing, dressing and toileting.

Principles of Intimate Care and Personal Care

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

Every learner has the right to be safe

Every learner has the right to personal privacy

Every learner has the right to be valued as an individual

Every learner has the right to be treated with dignity and respect

Our Policy

All learners who require intimate and/or personal care are treated respectfully at all times; the learner's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so and are fully aware of best practice. For staff that have difficulty fulfilling this duty, support will be available to access appropriate training.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual learners taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

There is careful communication with each learner who needs support in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the learner's needs and preferences. The learner is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle, learners will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each learner to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the learner responsibility for washing themselves.

Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular learners as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the learner. These plans include a full risk assessment to address the personal safety and health of the learner and the carer e.g. moving and handling, infection control etc. These risks assessments will be for each site, as applicable.

Each learner's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each learner's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a learner needs help with intimate care. Where possible one learner will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible, the same learner will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a minimal rota of carers known to the learner who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Parents/carers will be involved with their learner's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the learner's care plan. The needs and wishes of learners and parents/carers will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each learner will have an assigned member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

An Intimate Care Plan will be drawn up in consultation between the learner, their parent/carer and school staff. All instances of intimate care provided will be noted on the Record of Intimate Care and double signed.

The Protection of Learners

Safeguarding Policy will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

All staff involved in the provision of intimate and/or personal care will have all relevant checks completed before allowing them to be left alone with learners (e.g. enhanced DBS)

and will be subject to robust internal procedures such as reference checking and monitoring.

Where appropriate, all learners 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 learner's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/designated safeguarding officer. Safeguarding procedures will then be followed and guidance provided to the member of staff.

If a learner 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.

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

Guidelines for Good Practice

This guidance is not prescriptive but is based on the good practice and practical experience of those dealing with such learners. All learners have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard learners and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of learners.

Treating learners with dignity and respect

Young learners and learners with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. Staff also need to be aware that in exceptional circumstances some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse learners. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation.

Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard learners and staff;

- *Involve the learner in the intimate care*
Try to encourage a learner's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a learner fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible. Check your practice by asking the learner or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
- *Treat every learner with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the learner's age and situation*
Staff can administer Intimate Care alone however, there needs to be awareness of the potential safeguarding issues for the learner and member of staff. Care should be taken to ensure adequate supervision primarily to safeguard the learner but also to protect the staff member from potential risk.

- *Be aware of your own limitations*
Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
- *Promote positive self-esteem and body image*
Confident, self-assured learners who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a learner about their body worth. Your attitude to a learner's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the learner's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.
- *If you have any concerns you must report them*
If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the designated safeguarding officer.

If a learner is accidentally hurt during the intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the learner, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated Practitioner. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the learner. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents/carers and kept in the learner's personal file.

- *Helping through communication*
There is careful communication with each learner who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the learner's needs and preferences. The learner is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- *Support to achieve the highest level of autonomy and independence*
As a basic principle, learners will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each learner to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the learner responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular learners as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the learner. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the learner and the carer and health.

Infection prevention control

Infection prevention and control is concerned with the prevention of avoidable risks of infection and the control and management of all unavoidable risks of infection to those administering and receiving intimate and personal care. We will manage infection risks related to the school, equipment, staff working practices and clinical practices arising from the intimate and personal care of learners.

Forward Planning with parents/carers and learners

Establishing effective working relationships with parents/carers is a key task for all schools and is particularly necessary for learners with special care needs or disabilities. Parents/carers should be encouraged and empowered to work with professionals to ensure their learner's needs are properly identified, understood and met. Although they

should be made welcome and given every opportunity to explain their learner's particular needs, they should not be made to feel responsible for their learner's care in the school, or for making teaching staff disability aware. They should be closely involved in the EHC plans.

Staff have a duty to remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils and students of all abilities and needs. Plans for the provision of Intimate/personal care must be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectations, roles and responsibilities. Records should also reflect arrangements for ongoing and emergency communication between home and setting, monitoring and review. It is also important that the procedure for dealing with concerns arising from personal care processes is clearly stated and understood by parents/carers and all those involved.

Working with other agencies

Learners with special care needs or disabilities will be known to a range of other agencies. It is important that positive links are made with all those involved in the care or welfare of individual learners. This will enable the school-based plans to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals and will ensure the learner's well-being and development remains the focus of concern. Parents/carers are sometimes made to feel guilty that this aspect of learning has not been achieved, whereas other delayed learning is not so stigmatising. The School has a responsibility to teach toilet training and other personal care skills, as an essential PHSE basis in order to be able to access the rest of the curriculum.

Resources and training

Each learner's right to privacy must be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each learner's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a learner needs help with intimate care. Where possible a learner will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented and explained to the learner.

Where possible the learner's keyperson is responsible for undertaking the care of an individual learner. When this is not possible a staff member who is known to the learner will take on that responsibility. This will be arranged with regard given to the information contained within "Our Policy". The staff member who is involved will always ask the learner for permission to assist them.

Space for privacy

If it is not possible to provide a purpose-built changing area, then it is appropriate to provide a changing mat. It may be possible to change some learners whilst they are standing. When changing a larger learner, it is desirable to use a pull-down changing table that has been correctly secured to the wall to take heavier weights.

Ensuring that privacy and dignity are maintained during the time taken to change a learner or when they are sitting on the toilet or potty is crucial. If necessary, a small screen can be used to support this basic human right. The time spent changing a learner should be a positive experience for the learner.

Suitable hygiene resources

- Staff should wear disposable gloves and aprons while changing a nappy, pad or soiled clothing, and a minimum of disposable gloves when assisting learners with toileting needs
- Soiled nappies or pads should be double wrapped disposed of in the domestic waste. This process is recommended for up to three learners, for more than three learners, nappies or pads should be placed in a hygienic disposal unit
- Agreed regular emptying of bins
- Changing area to be cleaned after use
- Water and liquid soap to wash hands as soon as the task is completed
- Hot hand dryer or paper towels available for drying hands

Guidance and training

For nappy/pad changing, written guidelines should specify:

- Who will change the nappy/pad
- Where nappy/pad changes will take place
- What resources will be used (Cleansing agents used or cream to be applied)
- How the nappy/pad will be disposed of
- What infection control measures are in place
- What the staff member will do if the learner is unduly distressed by the experience or if the staff member notices marks or injuries

All staff will have received Safeguarding and Health and Safety training and in-house training and support regarding issues and procedures around intimate care.

Learner's records

- Intimate Care Plan should be put in place in discussion with the parents/carers, staff and learner and monitored and review regularly. This should be kept on the learner's file
- Access to the files should be decided as part of the Intimate Care Plan
- Confidentiality is adhered to in line with the Data Protection Policy

Complaints Procedure

People have the right to express their dissatisfaction if they feel that they are not receiving the levels of support they need and deserve.

The complaints procedure for The Outdoors School is contained within the 'Complaints Procedure Policy' for The Outdoors Group Ltd and sets out the procedural steps to follow should any complaint be made against the setting or company.

Date issued/reviewed/amended: 16th December 2019

Signature of Director or Company Secretary:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shevek Pring', written in a cursive style.

Name: Shevek Pring

Review date set: 1st December 2020

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