

Pathways School

Personal and Intimate Care Policy

Policy Monitoring

Date of last review: December 2022

Reviewed by: Saima Ali Majid, Chair of Trustees

Neil Jones, Headteacher

Date of next review: February 2023

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures

1. Introduction

This Personal and Intimate Care policy forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities, which is based on the principle that all students are to be protected from maltreatment and grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. The policy aims to provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose roles include personal and intimate care, and to assure parents/carers that staff are knowledgeable about such care, and that the parents/carers individual concerns are considered.

Staff contribute to preventing the impairment of student's health or development and will act to enable all students to have the best outcomes. Pathways School expects all staff, trustees and volunteers to share this commitment.

2. Links to other school policies and practices

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

3. Definitions

3.1 Personal Care

Personal Care encompasses those areas of physical and medical care that most people carry out themselves but which some are unable to do because of disability or medical need.

Personal Care tasks can include, but are not restricted to:

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

3.2 Intimate Care

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. In some cases, it may be necessary to administer rectal medication. Intimate Care tasks specifically

identified as relevant include physical assistance given to a person in connection with:

- Eating or drinking (including the maintenance of established parenteral nutrition)
- Toileting (including in relation to the process of menstruation)
- Washing or bathing
- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Oral care, or
- The skin, hair and nails (with the exception of nail care provided by a chiropodist or podiatrist) or the prompting, together with supervision, of a person, in relation to the performance of any of the activities listed, where that person is unable to make a decision for themselves in relation to performing such an activity without such prompting and supervision.

At Pathways School the students are encouraged to participate in their own personal or intimate care, while expressing choice and having a positive image of his/her body.

4. Policy

Students with a diagnosis of autism may not have sufficient understanding or awareness that certain behaviours directed towards themselves and others is not appropriate, and anyone involved with their personal and intimate care needs to be sensitive to their individual needs. Pathways School follows the principles of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). PBS is designed to approve desired behaviours rather than disapprove undesired behaviours. Pathways School embraces the principles outlined in the Children Act 1989, updated 2004, believing that all students have a right to be protected from abuse. It is the intention of the procedures within this policy to ensure that the appropriate action is taken immediately where it is alleged that a student is suspected of being abused. The prime concerns at all times must be the welfare and safety of the student(s).

5. Principles of Personal and Intimate Care

Students should be encouraged to participate in their own personal and intimate care as part of a general approach towards aiding participation in daily life. It is essential that every student at Pathways School is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible.

Staff who provide personal and intimate care are trained to do so (including safeguarding and health and safety training in moving and handling) and are fully aware of best practice. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual students taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

Individual personal and intimate care plans will be drawn up to meet the particular needs and wishes of students, and their parents and carers. These plans address the health, safety and welfare of the relevant student, and will also reflect the wishes of the particular student, parents or carers that a member of staff of the same sex as the student will attend to that

student's intimate care needs, but recognise that there will be circumstances where there is an immediate need for intimate care (e.g. incontinence) and it would be detrimental to the welfare of the student to delay providing intimate care until a member of staff of the same sex had become available. In this instance and other emergency situations, parents will be informed by telephone as soon as possible following the event.

6. Staff must adhere to the following principles

- Every student has the right to be safe and secure;
- Every student has the right to personal privacy, dignity, respect and a professional approach from staff when meeting their individual needs;
- Every student has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate and personal care to the best of their abilities;
- Every student has the right to express their views on their own personal and intimate care and have such views taken into account;
- Every student has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.

7. Touch

Pathways School recognises that touch is a fundamental part of wellbeing, emotional and social development care, and learning for the students. Touch may be used routinely in a number of ways, including communication, therapy, to give reassurance and communicate security, through play, when teaching new skills, and for protection. It is important that staff are clear and open as to the reason for using touch. The use of touch is discussed during staff meetings and training to give guidance and support for the safeguarding of both students and staff.

8. To ensure the health and safety of staff and students at Pathways School

- All staff assisting with personal/intimate care must be employees of the school or setting, including full, part time, and bank staff. In some circumstances, unpaid employees, such as voluntary workers may assist provided they have been trained and DBS cleared.
- Staff receive training in good working practices which comply with health and safety regulations such as dealing with bodily fluids, wearing protective clothing, manual handling, child protection, HIV and infection, whistleblowing, and risk assessment. Staff also receive training for very specific intimate care procedures and follow student individual health and safety risk assessment procedures where relevant.
- Positive links are made with other agencies involved with children and young people with specific care needs to enable the school to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals, and it will ensure the student's wellbeing and development remains the focus of concern.

- Staff will be asked to evaluate the training procedures and the effectiveness of the procedures whenever they have had occasion to put them into practice.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the policy and procedure are implemented.