Hope Tree School

Where difference is valued

Intimate Care Policy 2025

Introduction:

Hope Tree School takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a students' intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

There are also duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any student with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

In meeting a students' intimate care needs, it must be recognised that staff will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the school practice is based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Definition:

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some students 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 students involved in intimate self-care.

Aims:

- To ensure that all intimate care needs for students is carried out in line with the agreed plans.
- To ensure that staff are aware of agreed practice and the planning process involved, and are able to implement them.
- To ensure that where possible all intimate care plans are written involving the student, family and agencies involved.

Agreed Practice:

Any student who requires regular assistance with intimate care will have a written intimate care plan agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists.

Any intimate care plan will be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the student should also be present wherever possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account.

The plan will be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). The plan will include procedures for educational visits/day trips.

- Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the student and parents/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan.
- All students will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual student to do as much for herself as possible.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained in personal care (e.g. health and safety training in moving and handling) according to the needs of the student. Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- 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.
- There will be careful communication with each student who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences.
- Where the student is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.
- Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the student personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their age.

- An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a student with intimate care.
- The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.
- Adults who assist students with intimate 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.
- All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.
- No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Where a formal plan is not in place, parents/carers will be informed if their child has needed help with intimate care needs (for example, wet or soiled themselves).

School staff will communicate this information confidentially in person, by telephone or by sealed letter.

Additional Care Needs:

Students who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the Personal Plan or care plan that a member of the school staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly.

The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique. Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes. Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

Students might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the health care plan or Personal Plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so. It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.
Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with Health and Safety guidance. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

Protection of children:

Where appropriate, all children 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's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc, a clear record of the concern will be completed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

If a referral is going to be made, parents will be asked for their consent unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk of harm.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Signed:

Head of Learning

Head of Pastoral Care

Date: October 2025

Review Date: October 2026

Intimate Care Plan

Students name: Click or tap here to enter text.	D.O.B Click or tap here to enter text.	School site: **Hope Tree School**
Reasons for the plan: Click or tap here to enter text.		
Level of supervision: Click or tap here to enter text.		
What assistance is required: Click or tap here to enter text.		
When: Click or tap here to enter text. Where: Click or tap here to enter text.		
By: Click or tap here to enter text. Communication strategies with the child: Click or tap here to enter text. Facilities and Equipment Equipment required: Click or tap here to enter text. If toilet training programme, list details: Click or tap here to enter text.		
Arrangements when off-site		
Click or tap here to enter text.		

Plan completed by: Click or tap here to enter text. **Role:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Plan agreed by:			
Designation	**Name**	**Signature**	**Date**
Student			
Parent/Carer Assigned member of staff			

Head of Pastoral Care			