



# **Intimate Care Policy**

**Updated: September 2021**

**Approved by: Executive Leadership Team**

**Review Date: Autumn 2022**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate care of their children

## **Principles**

The Trustees of the Elston Hall Learning Trust and the Trust Board / Local Governing Boards will act in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the September 2021 Government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Elston Hall Learning Trust takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. EHLT recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the schools' policies as below:

- Safeguarding policy and child protection procedures
- Staff code of conduct and guidance on safer working practice
- 'Whistle-blowing' policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Health and safety policy and procedures
- SEN & D policy

Elston Hall Learning Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust. We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain. Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have a health care plan in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.

Members of staff must be given the choice as to whether they are prepared to provide intimate care to pupils unless they have been specifically recruited to do so. All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training, where necessary, and awareness of the child's individual health care plan (IHCP) This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff.

### **Child focused principles of intimate care**

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are 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 is one of the following:

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell
- Supporting and providing assistance for pupils who are menstruating

### **Supporting dressing/ Undressing**

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

They are aware as children mature there is a requirement for separate changing arrangements and so in KS2 if required children are allowed to change in a different area in school.

### **Providing comfort or support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Reception). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips. Parents will provide the necessary supplies required for intimate care e.g. nappies, catheters, pads and wipes. Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the pupil and parents/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. There must be careful communication with each pupil 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 pupil 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 pupil personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their ages.

Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when s/he needs help with intimate care, but there will always be at least two staff.

SEN advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account. Unless otherwise agreed with the parents, two staff members will normally be present whilst intimate care is being provided.

Adults who assist pupils 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 with a barred list check. 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.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible.
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning
- Protective gloves are worn.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation but children will not be alone in a room with an adult with the door closed. The disabled / classroom toilets are the most suitable location.
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet – items that are soiled by the spillages are put into a yellow clinical waste bag and disposed of in the designated clinical waste bin.
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet.
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

If wetting/soiling occurs regularly then parents will be asked to provide spare clothing and if appropriate the pupil and parent will be referred to the school nurses team.

A sanitary hygiene bin is located in the girls toilet and a supply of sanitary towels are available in the school office.

Any soiled nappies are carefully disposed of in a yellow clinical waste bag and put into the designated nappy bin within each school.

## **Hygiene**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective clothing, disposable gloves / aprons.

## **Safeguarding**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk;

- Two members of staff to be present during any intimate care procedures.
- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

Whilst dealing with an intimate care procedure, should staff have safeguarding concerns about a child, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.