

# WEST DERBY SCHOOL



## Intimate Care Policy

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Signed:	S Graham (Headteacher)
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## **Introduction**

At West Derby School a small number of pupils will require assistance with their intimate care needs at some point during their school career. The extent to which they will require assistance will vary immensely from pupil to pupil and must be considered on an individual basis. When assisting pupils with intimate care issues, staff must take into account the effect of the pupil's disability upon their ability to independently manage their own needs and the level of understanding of each pupil.

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy are to:

- provide staff with clear guidelines and reassurance when working with pupils in intimate care situations
- protect and safeguard the welfare of all pupils and staff involved in intimate care situations
- demonstrate a clear commitment to child protection, safeguarding and well-being in all aspects of school life
- maintain the dignity of pupils at all times
- nurture the potential for maximum independence in all intimate care situations
- reassure parents that all staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.

## **What is meant by 'intimate care'?**

Intimate care encompasses all areas of personal care which most people would usually carry out for themselves. These areas include washing, dressing, using the toilet, eating and some aspects of behaviour management. Some pupils will need assistance in all of these areas while others will require minimal assistance or will be as independent as their peer group.

## **The School in Context**

West Derby School is a secondary mainstream school, and there are a small number of boys who, due their disability, will require support for intimate care.

Professionals and parents are encouraged to see situations from a child's point of view. However, this requires a balanced and empathetic approach. It may be necessary to adopt specific strategies in relation to particular areas of difficulty in order to assist a child to maximise their potential and preserve their dignity.

As with all situations at West Derby School, the welfare of the pupil is paramount and, as such, all areas of intimate care should be considered for a pupil and an agreed approach implemented by the staff who work directly with the pupil. This agreed approach may be laid out in a variety of documents, but the aims or approach to a pupil's intimate care needs should be made explicit. This could occur in any of the following which constitute a 'care plan' at West Derby School:

- Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
- Support and Intervention Plan (SIP)
- Individual Learning Programmes

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

Any guidance offered throughout the course of this document is not prescriptive and it is acknowledged that situations may occur which are not addressed within this policy. In such circumstances staff should refer to another, relevant policy, some of which are suggested at the end of this policy. Staff must also use their professional judgement in situations which are out of the ordinary, but the following principles must be adhered to:

- no member of staff is obliged to provide intimate care thus intimate care at West Derby School must only be provided by those who have specifically indicated their willingness to do so (either as part of their agreed job description or otherwise)

- wherever possible, allow a pupil to express a preference regarding the choice of his carer and encourage them to voice their views about their preferred carer
- allow the pupil to make a choice in the sequence of care or use a predictable sequence to allow the pupil to anticipate events
- ensure privacy appropriate to the pupil's age and level of need
- allow the pupil to care for themselves as far as possible
- be aware of, and responsive to, the pupil's reactions
- when carrying out intimate care away from West Derby School, remember the main issues of privacy and safety
- wherever pupils can learn to assist in carrying out aspects of intimate care they should be encouraged to do so. This practice fits into giving pupils life skills and developing their independence.

In line with the "Guidance for safer working practices for those working with children and young people in education settings" (Safer Recruitment Consortium), staff at West Derby School should observe the following guidelines when working in intimate care situations:

*Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.*

*Adults should:*

- *explain to the child what is happening*
- *consult with colleagues where variation from agreed procedure is necessary and share this information with parents if appropriate*

### **Partnership with Parents**

Regular consultation with parents is important in all areas of a pupil's school life and intimate care issues are no exception. Programmes of work that are embarked upon to improve a pupil's independence with toileting, hygiene, eating or dressing should be discussed with parents at Parents' Evenings, at Annual Review meetings or over the telephone if this is not possible. Parents' religious and cultural views must be taken into account. Any targets set as part of these programmes should be shared with parents. It is important to consider information from parents as vital in gaining a full perspective as to a pupil's intimate care needs and how they may present differently at home than at school.

### **Child Protection and Confidentiality**

All staff at West Derby School have a responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of pupils at all times. This includes:

- working in an open and transparent way
- recording and reporting any incidents related to child protection
- being aware of the designated person for child protection
- being responsible for their own actions and behaviour and avoidance of conduct which may lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions

Please refer to the school Child Protection policy for further details.

### **One to one working**

Some intimate care situations will involve staff working on a one to one basis. This can increase the potential for vulnerability of both staff and pupils. To minimise the risks to all whilst maintaining dignity:

- ensure there is visual access and/ or an open door in one to one situations
- other staff are aware of the task being undertaken
- ensure any unusual or distressed behaviour that occurs in one to one situations is reported to a line manager / and DSL.

Any member of staff who feels uncomfortable about one to one working should discuss their concerns with a line manager immediately.

### **Use of toilets**

When staff are assisting pupils to use the toilet, priority must be given to preserving the pupil's personal dignity at all times. Parents should be encouraged to be involved in all toilet training programmes or strategies to address toileting issues. Staff should promote the appropriate use of toilets and the associated hygiene skills and encourage pupils to be as independent as possible.

Practical considerations when assisting pupils to use the toilet:

- gloves/ disposable aprons should be provided and readily accessible
- supplies of cleaning materials should be provided for cleaning and disinfecting changing surfaces and should be used after each time the surface has been used
- supplies of fresh clothes should be easily to hand
- wet or soiled pads should be disposed of in the special bins provided
- wet or soiled clothing should be rinsed then placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home. An arrangement should be made with parents as to sending in supplies of clean clothing.

### **Eating and mealtimes**

Practical considerations when assisting pupils with eating issues:

- supplies of face cloths/ wipes should be readily available for pupils
- prior to meal times all pupils should wash their hands and have access to hand and face washing materials after meal times if necessary
- separate cloths should be used for wiping hands/ faces and tables

If a pupil misses a meal or there is a change in their eating habits parents must be kept informed.

### **Health and Safety/ Medical needs**

- Members of staff involved with cleaning or changing pupils with continence problems should use appropriate protective garments and plastic gloves.
- Universal practices should be assumed to protect staff and pupils when dealing with intimate care situations. These include:
  - (i) good hygiene procedures
  - (ii) the use of good hand washing techniques
  - (iii) the application of waterproof dressings to any cuts (staff or pupils)
  - (iv) the use of protective gloves when administering first aid
  - (v) the use of protective gloves if tending to blood/ vomit spillages
  - (vi) the proper disposal of soiled items

The use of an appropriate protective device for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is to be encouraged.

### **Other Related Policies/Documents**

- West Derby School Child Protection Policy
- West Derby School Health and Safety Policy
- West Derby School PSHE Policy
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (Safer Recruitment Consortium)