

Intimate Care Policy

St Laurence in Thanet Church of England Junior Academy



This set of values is reflected in all our policies.

Joy Hope Forgiveness Love Resilience

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1. Aims

St Laurence-in-Thamet Church of England Junior Academy is committed to ensuring that every pupil who requires intimate care is supported safely, respectfully and with dignity. Intimate care will be provided in a way that promotes each child's wellbeing, independence and inclusion.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Intimate care is carried out properly by suitably trained staff and in line with any agreed plan.
- The dignity, privacy, rights and wellbeing of every child are safeguarded.
- Pupils who require intimate care are not discriminated against, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Parents and carers are assured that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and take account of their child's individual needs.
- Staff work within health and safety, infection control, manual handling and safeguarding procedures that protect both pupils and staff.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in their own care and develop independence wherever this is safe and appropriate.

For the purposes of this policy, intimate care is any care that involves toileting, washing, changing clothing or continence products, menstrual care, or touching or carrying out a procedure involving a child's private or intimate areas.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy has regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

As an academy, the school also acts in accordance with its funding agreement, articles of association and the policies and procedures of Aquila, The Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust, where applicable.

3. Role of parents and carers

3.1 Seeking consent

For pupils who may need routine or occasional intimate care, including help following a toileting accident, parents and carers will be asked to complete the consent form in appendix 2.

Where a pupil has more complex, regular or specific needs, an individual intimate care plan will be agreed with parents and carers. Where appropriate, the pupil and relevant health or care professionals will also contribute.

Where there is no consent or plan in place, the school will normally seek parental permission before providing intimate care. However, where care is urgently required and parents or carers cannot be contacted, staff will provide the minimum care necessary to protect the pupil's dignity, health and comfort. Parents and carers will be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

3.2 Creating and reviewing an intimate care plan

An intimate care plan will describe the pupil's needs, the support to be provided, the staff involved, the location and equipment to be used, how privacy will be protected and how the pupil will be encouraged to participate and develop independence.

The school will take account of the preferences of parents and carers and, according to the pupil's age, communication needs and understanding, the wishes and preferences of the pupil. Where there is doubt about a pupil's ability to make an informed choice, parents and carers will be consulted.

Plans will be reviewed at least twice each academic year and sooner whenever the pupil's needs, health, equipment, staffing or circumstances change. A template is provided in appendix 1.

3.3 Sharing information and providing supplies

Parents and carers must share relevant information about their child's health, continence, medication, infection, skin condition, equipment or changes in need. The school will share relevant information about care provided and any concerns or changes observed.

Parents and carers are expected to provide an adequate supply of any personal items needed by their child, such as spare clothing, underwear, continence products, wipes, creams or period products, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in the care plan.

4. Role of staff

4.1 Staff responsible for intimate care

Intimate care will only be provided by appropriately appointed members of staff who have an enhanced DBS check and have received suitable information, guidance or training. This will usually include teachers, teaching assistants, the SENCo, designated safeguarding staff, first aid staff or other named staff where the duty has been agreed as part of the pupil's provision.

No member of staff will be required to provide intimate care unless the responsibility is consistent with their role and they have been appropriately prepared and supported.

The SENCo, supported by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, will:

- Oversee the implementation of this policy.
- Ensure that suitable staffing, training, risk assessment and equipment are in place.
- Oversee the development and review of individual intimate care plans.
- Act as, or identify, a point of contact for pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- Ensure that safeguarding, health and safety or professional concerns are addressed promptly.

4.2 Training and support

Staff providing intimate care will receive guidance appropriate to the tasks they undertake. This may include:

- The pupil's individual care plan and communication needs.
- Safeguarding and professional boundaries.
- Infection prevention and control, including hand hygiene and the use of personal protective equipment.
- Safe moving and handling, where required.
- Use of specialist equipment, where required.
- Promoting dignity, independence, consent and choice.
- Recording and reporting procedures.

Staff will be familiar with relevant risk assessments and will seek further advice where they are uncertain or where a pupil's needs change.

5. Intimate care procedures

During toileting, changing and any other intimate care procedure, the school will balance the pupil's privacy with safeguarding, communication and support needs. Staff will explain what they are doing, seek the pupil's cooperation and consent as far as possible and encourage the pupil to complete any part of the task they can manage safely.

5.1 Staffing arrangements

In most circumstances, one appropriately trained member of staff will support one pupil. A second member of staff will be present or immediately available where this is required by the care plan or risk assessment, including where:

- Two people are needed to move or position the pupil safely.
- Specialist equipment requires two trained staff.
- The pupil's behaviour or medical needs create an additional risk.
- There is a known and recorded risk of allegations or misunderstanding.

Where a pupil requires regular intimate care, the school will identify a small team of familiar staff, normally two or three people, to provide consistency and cover absence, emergencies and educational visits.

Staff allocation will take account of the pupil's and parents' preferences wherever reasonably possible. A member of staff may support a pupil of a different sex where this is appropriate, agreed and recorded, and where the pupil's dignity and wishes are respected.

5.2 Location, privacy and equipment

Intimate care will take place in the most suitable designated toilet, accessible toilet or other agreed private area. The chosen location must protect the pupil's dignity while allowing staff to work safely. Doors will be closed sufficiently to preserve privacy but safeguarding arrangements will remain proportionate to the pupil's needs and the agreed plan.

Before providing care, the member of staff will ensure that another appropriate adult knows where they are and that support can be obtained promptly if needed. Staff will remain within reasonable hearing distance of colleagues where this is compatible with the pupil's privacy and dignity.

The school will provide appropriate equipment and supplies, which may include:

- Disposable gloves and aprons.
- Handwashing and cleaning materials.
- Disposable paper or wipes.
- Suitable waste bags and covered bins.
- A changing mat or other agreed equipment where required.
- Privacy signs and recording forms (Appendix 3).

Any soiled clothing will be placed securely in a clearly labelled, sealed bag and returned discreetly to parents or carers at the end of the day, unless another arrangement has been agreed.

5.3 Recording and communication

Routine intimate care will be recorded in line with the pupil's plan. Records will include the date and time, the type of care provided, the staff member or members involved and any relevant observations, such as changes in frequency, discomfort, skin condition, injury or refusal of care.

Parents and carers will be informed of significant incidents, concerns or changes. Records will be factual, proportionate, securely stored and shared only with those who need the information to safeguard or support the pupil.

5.4 Safeguarding concerns

If a member of staff observes marks, bruising, soreness, injury, unusual behaviour or any other concern while providing intimate care, they must follow the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures and report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

If a pupil is accidentally hurt or there is a difficulty during the procedure, the member of staff will make the pupil safe, seek first aid or medical assistance where required and report the incident immediately to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Parents and carers will be informed unless doing so would place the pupil at increased risk or conflict with safeguarding advice.

If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, responsibility for the pupil's intimate care will be transferred to another suitable member of staff as soon as possible. The allegation will be managed under the school's safeguarding and allegations procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer where appropriate.

Where the school notices an increasing or unexplained pattern of wetting or soiling, it will discuss this sensitively with parents and carers and, where relevant, health professionals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed where the pattern continues or where there are other indicators of a safeguarding concern.

5.5 Toileting accidents and continence support

Pupils will not be punished, shamed or excluded from learning because of a toileting accident or continence need. Staff will respond calmly, discreetly and sensitively.

Where a pupil needs help following an accident, staff will:

- Explain what support is needed and seek the pupil's cooperation.
- Encourage the pupil to do as much as they can independently.
- Provide privacy, clean clothing and appropriate hygiene support.
- Dispose of waste safely and arrange secure return of soiled clothing.
- Record the incident and inform parents or carers in accordance with the pupil's plan or consent arrangements.

Where a pupil has repeated incidents, the school will work with parents, carers and relevant professionals to agree or review an intimate care plan. The school may recommend that medical advice is sought where appropriate.

5.6 Menstrual care

The school recognises that pupils may begin menstruating while at junior school and will respond sensitively, without shame or stigma. Age-appropriate teaching about puberty and menstrual health will be provided through the PSHE curriculum (please see PSHE policy for more details).

Sanitary towels and spare underwear are available discreetly from the school office or a named member of staff. Pupils will be shown how to use and dispose of products safely and hygienically.

Staff will not normally assist directly with changing a sanitary product. Where a pupil's SEND, medical or physical needs mean that direct assistance is required, this will be agreed with parents or carers and recorded in an individual intimate care plan. The pupil's wishes and dignity will remain central.

5.7 Educational visits, residential visits and off-site activities

A pupil who requires intimate care will not be prevented from taking part in educational visits or other school activities solely because of that need. Planning will include suitable staffing, facilities, equipment, travel arrangements, privacy and emergency procedures. Any differences from the usual care arrangements will be agreed with parents or carers and recorded in the pupil's plan or visit risk assessment.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and SENCo, or sooner if legislation, guidance or the school's arrangements change. It will be approved by the Governing Body.

Individual intimate care plans will be reviewed at least once each academic year and whenever the pupil's needs or circumstances change.

7. Links with other policies and procedures

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and procedures:

- Accessibility plan
- Child protection and safeguarding policy

- Health and safety policy
- SEND policy and SEND information report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- First aid policy
- Educational visits policy
- PSHE and relationships and health education policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Whistleblowing policy
- Behaviour policy
- GDPR policy

Appendix 1: Intimate care plan

Name of pupil	
Date of birth / year group	
Type of intimate care needed	
How often care is likely to be required	
Pupil's communication, preferences and signs of consent or distress	
What the pupil can do independently	
Support to be provided by staff	
Named staff / small team	
Training required	
Where care will take place	
Resources and equipment required and who will provide them	
Moving and handling arrangements, if applicable	
Recording and communication with parents/carers	
Arrangements for educational visits, residentials and off-site activities	
Known risks and agreed control measures	
Senior member of staff responsible for the plan	

Agreement and review

Name of parent/carer	
Relationship to pupil	
Parent/carer signature and date	
Pupil's views / signature where appropriate	
School representative signature and date	
Plan start date	
Next review date	

Appendix 2: Parent/carers consent for intimate care

Name of pupil	
Date of birth / year group	
Name of parent/carers	
Address and contact details	

Please tick one of the following options:

- ☐ I give permission for St Laurence-in-Thamet Church of England Junior Academy to provide appropriate intimate care to my child when required, including support with changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting.
- ☐ I do not give routine consent for my child to receive intimate care. I understand that the school will contact me or an emergency contact so that appropriate care can be arranged. I also understand that, if no contact can be reached and urgent care is required, staff may provide the minimum care necessary to protect my child's dignity, health and comfort in accordance with the school's policy.

I agree that:

- I will tell the school about any health, medication, infection, continence or personal care matter that may affect my child.
- I will provide the personal supplies agreed with the school, including spare clothing or continence products where needed.
- I have read or been given access to the school's Intimate Care Policy and understand the procedures that will be followed.
- I will contact the school promptly if I have any questions or concerns.

Parent/carers signature	
Name of parent/carers	
Relationship to pupil	
Date	

Appendix 3: Intimate Care / Changing Log

Child's name:

Class:

Date	Time	Reason / type of care	Support provided and outcome	Any concerns or observations (including skin condition)	Clothing / items returned or used	Staff member (name / initials)

Recording guidance: Complete the log immediately after care has been provided. Record facts only and note any concerns in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. This log must be stored securely and treated as confidential.