

The Rydal Academy

Intimate Care Policy

Accepted by: The Rydal Academy LGB September 2014

Approving Body: Local Governing Body

Committee: LGB

Review Cycle: 3 years

Last reviewed: July 2024

Date of next review: July 2027

Introduction

Staff who work with young children, and pupils who have additional or special needs will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of individual needs.

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products, personal hygiene and sun protection. Intimate care in these circumstances may demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the genitals or unclothed areas of the body such as arms and legs. Examples include: care associated with continence, menstrual management and sun safety as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Pupils' dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at The Rydal Academy work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to wherever possible.

Staff deliver a personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social, Health and Relationships Education, to all pupils as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work, alongside talks from the school nursing team, are shared with parents/carers who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

The Rydal Academy 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. We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Our Approach to Best Practice

All pupils who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with pupils who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental issues.

There is careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care to discuss needs and preferences. The pupil will be made aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle, pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each pupil to do as much for

themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the pupil responsibility for washing themselves or removing wet clothing.

Each pupil's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a pupil needs help with intimate care.

The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints, e.g., staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

The Protection of Children

Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.

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 pupil's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the designated person for Child Protection. A clear record of the concern will be completed, and a referral made to Darlington Children's Services, if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the pupil at greater risk of harm. (The Child Protection Policy will be followed)

If a pupil becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the pupil's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed. (Refer to Staff Discipline and Child Protection policies)

Refer to:

- Policy for Administration of Medication
- Policy for Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Intimate Care Policy