

Intimate Care Policy

Approved by:

Daniela Schwartz

Date: November 2025

Next review due by:

November 2027

Principles

All the students at Parayhouse School have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect in any situation. These guidelines are to safeguard both the student and the staff. They will apply to every member of staff involved with any aspect of the intimate care of student.

Intimate care can be defined as those personal, and often private, aspects of daily living that a non-disabled person would carry out independently. Some of our student will require assistance with toileting, dressing and undressing for swimming and P.E. and managing menstruation. All staff must be sensitive to the individual needs of each student.

Consistency in the planning and implementation of intimate care programmes will help the student understand more clearly what to expect in particular situations. No student should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or discomfort.

This policy and its guidelines are consistent with the ethos and the aims of the Parayhouse School and the current legislation for safeguarding children. It is cross-referenced with the school policies / procedures on:

- Relationships and Sex Education
- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- School Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Plan and Policy
- Moving and Handling
- Health and Safety
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Aims

We will:

- Treat every student with dignity and respect, ensuring the maximum amount of privacy
- Encourage the students to independently carry out as much of their intimate care as they can
- Involve them as much as is possible in the planning and implementation of their individual intimate care programmes
- Be responsive to each student's reactions and concerns
- Ensure that practice in intimate care is consistent
- Be aware of and anticipate the needs of the students
- Take gender, age, personal and cultural factors into account when planning intimate care programmes
- Encourage each student to have a positive image of his or her own body
- Safeguard students against any form of abuse

- Safeguard staff against false allegations of abuse

- Ensure, as far as possible, that a staff member of their own gender accompanies students needing assistance with particular aspects of intimate care
- Ensure intimate care arrangements continue to meet the individual needs of students by reviewing them as required
- Teach students about giving informed consent

Implementation of Our Aims

Communication

We will:

- Be aware of, and use, each student's preferred means of communication (e.g. PECS, verbal, symbolic) to anticipate their needs and preferences and be able to communicate our actions at an appropriate level and listen to and honour their communication with us.
- Pay attention to the preferred communication methods (expressive and receptive) or all student to ensure they understand as much as possible. It is important to remember that some students may have anxieties around toilet training and other aspects of personal/intimate care also have difficulties transferring skills between home and school due to the difference in environments.

Respect, dignity and privacy are paramount at all times

Respect:

To respect a student's privacy and dignity requires a person-centered approach. It is important to think about the impact on the whole person when attending to their needs:

- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Social
- Spiritual
- Religious
- Cultural

Dignified care

Key elements of dignified care include:

- Respectful communication.
- Respecting privacy.
- Promoting autonomy and a sense of control.
- Supporting students in a respectful and sensitive manner.
- Promoting inclusivity, a sense of participation and consent
- Focusing on the individual.
- Recognising human rights (such as equality, respect and autonomy).

We will:

- encourage the student to have a positive image of their own body. confident, assertive student who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. as well as basics like privacy, the approach taken to the student's intimate care can convey lots of messages to them about what their body is 'worth'. a positive, respectful attitude to the student's intimate care is therefore very important.
- ensure that we maintain the dignity and privacy of student by closing toilet doors, using curtains or screens as appropriate, asking other staff, student and visitors to refrain from entering toileting or changing areas on other business whilst these areas are in use

Ensure that the focus is on the needs of the student at all times and that all communication is with them, not about them

We need to be thoughtful and respectful in the language we use around personal care. Our words should never suggest anything negative about the student themselves. For example, rather than saying someone or something is "dirty" we can describe what is happening in a neutral way – such as saying a nappy need changing or that there is a strong smell. It is important to separate the person from the task or item and ensure that no language used can be interpreted as a judgement about the student.

Communication should be kept positive at all times - we are dealing with normal human functions so it is important that our language promotes understanding and dignity. Avoid words that could cause shame or discomfort such as "naughty", "dirty" or "smelly" as they can be harmful. Instead, use language that affirms each person's worth and encourages a safe, non-judgmental environment.

Respect a student's dignity by ensuring that their intimate care needs are discussed, if necessary, discreetly and not in a public place, or in front of other student or staff.

Showers, changing clothes and toilets

Students are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes, showering or going to the toilet. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard them with regard to health and safety considerations.

Therefore, adults will:

- Announce their intention of entering changing rooms
- Avoid remaining in rooms unless the student's needs require it
- Avoid any physical contact when students are in a state of undress unless their needs require it
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour unless the student's needs require it

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising students in a state of undress, another member of staff is present.

However, this may not always be possible and therefore, staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. **Adults must not change in the same place as student or shower with them**

For those circumstances where another member of staff is not available to be present when supervising students in a state of undress, the member of staff should always let a colleague know where they are with the student so their whereabouts is known.

Personal Autonomy

We will ensure that:

- Students are given the opportunity to carry out as much of their intimate care for themselves as they are able to given their age and abilities, i.e. Try to avoid doing things for a student that they are able to do alone, or are able to assist with. We recognise that the level of support a student may vary e.g. increasing in a less familiar venue or if they are dysregulated or while they are learning a new skill or extending their skills.
- If a student is fully dependent, we will talk through what is happening and give them choices wherever possible. Individual intimate care needs will be developed by the class team with support from parents/carers to suit the skills and needs of each student. These may be linked to the student's moving and handling needs/plan as appropriate.

- If a student expresses dislike or discomfort concerning aspects of intimate care we will try to establish the cause and address it.

Safeguarding and Staff Responsibilities

- Parayhouse School procedures will be adhered to at all times and staff will carry out all intimate care with reference to the stated aims of this policy.
- All students will be taught personal safety skills, and how to give consent, carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- If a student is known to have been sexually abused, their individual plan will recognise that they may choose to have a second member of staff present for
- Intimate care. The DSL will be involved in sharing this information with key staff and developing a plan with the student. Relevant staff should be aware of the plan and how to report anything that is not a usual part of the student's intimate care routine – E.g. If cream is being use on the genital area.

The following incidents must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding lead or any member of the Senior Leadership Team

- If a member of staff accidentally hurts a student whilst carrying out a part of their intimate care programme
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a student's presentation, e.g. Marks, bruises, soreness etc. They must immediately report concerns to the appropriate manager/DSL.
- If the student seems to be sexually aroused by the member of staff's actions
- If the student becomes sexually provocative
- If the student misunderstands or misinterprets an action or instruction
- If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff

It is essential that any of these incidents is investigated and the outcomes recorded. Some of these areas could be cause for concern about the student. There is also the possibility that the student or another adult may misconstrue something that a member of staff has done.

Any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice must report this immediately to the School Headteacher / DSL or the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Head Teacher.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures and protocols will be followed (see Child protection and Safeguarding policy).

Health and Safety

When attending to the intimate care of student's staff must:

- Be aware of the Health and Safety policy
- Always wash hands before commencing intimate care and after removing gloves.
- Always wear gloves and ensure these are used for one purpose only and never used for supporting more than one student
- Always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a student who is menstruating or has soiled

- Place any soiled waste (urinary or faecal) should then be placed in a bin (complete with a liner) which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste.
- Any soiled clothes must be placed in a red bag to be sent home, and a letter sent home to go with this.

Role of parents

Seeking parental permission

For students who need routine or occasional intimate care (e.g. for toileting or toileting accidents), parents will be asked to sign a consent form.

For students whose needs are more complex or who need particular support outside of what's covered in the permission form (if used), an intimate care plan will be created in discussion with parents

Where there isn't an intimate care plan or parental consent for routine care in place, parental permission will be sought before performing any intimate care procedure.

If the school is unable to get in touch with parents and an intimate care procedure urgently needs to be carried out, the procedure will be carried out to ensure the student is comfortable, and the school will inform parents afterwards.

Creating an intimate care plan

Where an intimate care plan is required, it will be agreed in discussion between the school, parents, the student (when possible) and any relevant health professionals.

The school will work with parents and take their preferences on board to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible, dealing with needs sensitively and appropriately.

Subject to their age and understanding, the preferences of the student will also be taken into account. If there's doubt whether the student is able to make an informed choice, their parents will be consulted.

The plan will be reviewed once a year, even if no changes are necessary, and updated regularly, as well as whenever there are changes to a student's needs.

See appendix 1 for a blank template plan to see what this will cover.

Sharing information

The school will share information with parents as needed to ensure a consistent approach. It will expect parents to also share relevant information regarding any intimate matters as needed. Where an intimate care plan is in place for a child, parents may not be notified every time the student is supported. Where no intimate care plan is in place, intimate care support will be logged on Medical Tracker and the parent notified.

Role of staff

Which staff will be responsible

All staff members can be required to provide intimate care and have this set out in their job description.

All staff at the school who carry out intimate care will have been subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with a barred list check before appointment, as well as other checks on their employment history. Supply staff will not be expected to undertake intimate care.

We will:

- Respect each student's right to privacy
- Discuss intimate care arrangements with parents/carers on a regular basis and update them accordingly. The needs and wishes of students and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
- Understand that student who have been abused may feel unsafe with only one member of staff present. In these circumstances they will be asked regularly if they want one or two members of staff present.
- Ensure that volunteer workers or school students (16 and younger) on placements do not assist with toileting, dressing, or undressing after swimming.

How staff will be trained

Staff will receive:

- Training in the specific types of intimate care they undertake
- Regular safeguarding training
- If necessary, manual handling training that enables them to remain safe and for the pupil to have as much participation as possible

They will be familiar with:

- The control measures set out in risk assessments carried out by the school
- Hygiene and health and safety procedures

They will also be encouraged to seek further advice as needed.

Staff during their probation training period will undertake the following before they are able to undertake intimate care:

- Intimate care policy will be sent to new starters when they begin
- New starters will complete intimate care course (mainly if working in Willow / Ash)
- Week 3 – new starter's class teacher will meet with SenLT, check list will be completed & any concerns will be discussed, if needed.
- Week 3 of working at PHS new starter to meet with the class teacher regarding the students' intimate care needs and their plans
- Week 4 - new starter to shadow key staff from their class when supporting students with intimate care
- Week 5 - able to begin intimate care with students.

Intimate care procedures & How procedures will happen

It is best practice from a health and safety and safeguarding perspective to have 2 members of staff present. Where this is not possible, staff will ensure they follow the below;

- For primary age students, male and female staff will be able to conduct personal care until girls reach puberty.
- In the secondary setting, and after primary age girls reach puberty, male staff will not be involved in the personal care of girls.
- Male and female staff may work together to support the personal care needs of boys throughout the school.

The student will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves.

We will do our best to meet students and parent's wishes relating to personal care, but we may be constrained as we employ significantly more female than male staff (this is out of our control as job vacancies usually attract a significantly higher number, if not only, female candidates).

When carrying out procedures, the school will provide staff with:

- protective gloves
- masks
- aprons
- cleaning wipes (wet wipes or water wipes)
- yellow bin for soiled wipes and cleaning items
- red dissolvable bags for soiled clothing items to be placed in and then sent home
- cleaning supplies

For students needing routine intimate care, the school expects parents to provide, when necessary, a good stock (at least a week's worth in advance) of necessary resources, such as nappies, underwear and/or a spare set of clothing.

Any soiled clothing will be contained securely in red dissolvable bags, clearly labelled, and discreetly returned to parents at the end of the day. The red dissolvable bags can be placed into a washing machine directly, so parents do not need to handle any soiled items. The bags will dissolve in the wash.

Appendix 1: Template intimate care plan

Appendix 1: Template intimate care plan	
Name of student	
Type of intimate care needed	
How often care will be given	
What training staff will be given (if needed)	
Where care will take place	
What resources and equipment will be used, and who will provide them	
How many of staff are typically required to help	
What is the preferred method of communication with the student	
How procedures will differ if taking place on a trip or outing	
Name of senior member of staff responsible for ensuring care is carried out according to the intimate care plan	
Name of parent or carer	
Signature of parent or carer	
Date	

This plan will be reviewed annually.

Next review date:

To be reviewed by:

Appendix 2: Template parent/carer consent form

PERMISSION FOR SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE	
Name of student	
Date of birth	
Name of parent/carer	
Address	
I give permission for the school to provide appropriate intimate care to my child (e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will advise the school of anything that may affect my child's personal care (e.g. if medication changes or if my student has an infection)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand the procedures that will be carried out and will contact the school immediately if I have any concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>I do not give consent for my child to be given intimate care (e.g. to be washed and changed if they have a toileting accident).</p> <p>Instead, the school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be given intimate care (e.g. be washed and changed).</p> <p>I understand that if the school cannot reach me or my emergency contact if my child needs urgent intimate care, staff will need to provide this for my child, following the school's intimate care policy, to make them comfortable and remove barriers to learning.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent/carer signature	
Name of parent/carer	

Date	
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Appendix 3 – Template letter

Hammersmith & Fulham College Gliddon Road

LONDON W14 9B Tel: 020 8741 1400

Email: H.Bristow@parayhouse.com

V.Carnevale@parayhouse.com

Dear Parents/ carers,

Following queries relating to intimate care we are re-sending our Intimate Care Policy with some additional information, including a new consent form to be completed and returned. The consent form needs to be added to this letter

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the intimate personal areas of the body.

Intimate care tasks that students may need support with could include:

- Helping someone use the toilet
- Changing continence pads/nappies (faeces and urine)
- Washing / cleaning intimate parts of the body
- Changing sanitary wear
- Dressing and undressing (underwear)

Students who require intimate care are treated with respect at all times; their welfare and dignity is of paramount importance, and all safeguarding procedures are followed.

If a student requires intimate care, they will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the student responsibility for washing themselves.

If intimate care has been given, parents will be informed by letter with details of what care was provided and by whom (see appendix: Intimate Care Recoding Form).

If parents do not give consent for their child to be given intimate care (e.g. to be washed and changed if they have a toileting accident), the school will contact the parent or emergency contact, and it will be the parents' responsibility to organise for their child to be given intimate care (e.g. be washed and changed).

However, if the school cannot reach a parent or the emergency contact and a student needs urgent intimate care, staff will need to provide this, following the school's Intimate Care Policy, to make them comfortable and remove barriers to learning.

For students who require regular intimate care, an intimate care plan will be formulated. If such a plan is necessary, we will contact the family directly.

If you have any questions, please let us know

Many thanks.