

Review Initiated by	Headteacher
Last Review	Autumn 2024
Next Review	Autumn 2025

SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL: INTIMATE CARE POLICY

This Policy applies to the whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Applies to:

- all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and non-teaching), the Trustees/Governors and volunteers working in the school.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the pupil's needs. The pupil's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There should always be a high awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues. As such, staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents, carers and health professionals, where appropriate, to provide continuity of care to pupils/young people wherever possible.

2. Aims

- 2.1. Saint Christina's School takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. We recognise our duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010 which requires any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities and must not be discriminated against.
- 2.1. 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.
- 2.2. 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.

- 2.3. Members of staff other than EYFS staff for whom this intervention is more routine, will normally be given the choice as to whether they are prepared to provide intimate care to pupils. All staff undertaking intimate care will be given appropriate guidance / training by the Head of EYFS.
- 2.4. This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Equal Opportunities

At Saint Christina's School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the School, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy / maternity or marriage / civil partnership. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the School feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in School life.

3. Best Practice

- All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.
- Staff who provide intimate care should be trained in personal care procedures, in line with school policy (e.g. health and safety training in moving and handling) according to the needs of the pupil. Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- 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. It is a matter of courtesy and professionalism to speak to child about why, for example, they need to be cleaned up before starting this sort of procedure. This has the added benefit of teaching children about consent with regard to their body.
- 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. SEND advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Staff will liaise with the SENCO on the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs in relation to intimate care. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.
- An individual member of staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is present when assisting a pupil around intimate care.
- The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.
- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the School, not students, volunteers or temporary members of staff and therefore have the necessary safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.

- All staff should be aware of the School's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.
- Health & Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products. The clinical waste bin should be used to dispose of appropriate waste products only.
- No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.
- No phones are permitted within the EYFS area during school hours and are stored securely in lockers outside of the EYFS or in the staffroom – **see EYFS Policy**.

4. **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

- Saint Christina's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be adhered to.
- From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this School best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in intimate care and others in the vicinity) will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.
- Where appropriate, pupils 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. unexplained marks, bruises, etc., s/he will immediately report concerns to the DSL / DDSL.
- A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if appropriate, in accordance with the School's Child Protection procedures. Parents/carers will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made but this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child at increased risk of suffering significant harm.
- If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the Head of EYFS, DSL and the Headteacher (unless they are the object of the distress). The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the DSL or Headteacher) and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue/s is/are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against any adult working at the School this should be reported to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) in line with the **Allegations against a member of staff Policy** and protocol. Staff should be aware of the **Whistle-blowing Policy** and will know that all concerns, including low-level concerns (see **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**) must be passed on to the Headteacher. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to. The School will follow the procedures that are laid out within the policy and protocol.
- Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the School or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher, in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child protection procedures and Whistle-blowing policy.

5. Medical needs and procedures

- Pupils with additional or complex health needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. These needs will be discussed with parents/careers and documented in an individual Health Care Plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.
- It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.
- If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

6. Monitoring and Review

6.1. This policy is subject to annual review by the Governing Body, Headteacher, Senior Management Team.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Allegations Against a Member of Staff Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid (including administration of medicines)
- EYFS Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- SEND Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy