



Intimate Care and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Ratified Date:	20 th May 2019
Signed:	
	Lynne Thornton, Chair of Governors
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Section 1 – Intimate Care

Introduction

At Cumbria Academy for Autism, we recognise that there may be occasions when pupils require the assistance of staff with intimate and personal care procedures. This may be necessary, for example:

- During the provision of medical care,
- When assisting young children with toileting,
- When assisting young children with dressing/undressing, for example during PE or swimming,
- As part of a care package for children with disabilities.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework which ensures that all staff follow practices which maximise the safety, dignity and independence of children at all times whilst minimising the potential for their actions being called into question.

General

- Depending on their abilities, age and maturity children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible during intimate or personal care procedures.
- All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required.
- The emotional responses of any child to intimate care should be carefully and sensitively observed and where necessary any concerns passed to the Headteacher and parents/guardians/carers.
- It will not be appropriate for a member of staff to initiate intimate care procedures with a child without first alerting a second member of staff to the fact, the location and the details of the care to be provided, usually wherever possible, with 2 staff members in attendance.

- Photographic equipment, including mobile phones or computers with a camera facility will not be permitted in the vicinity whilst the intimate or personal care procedure is being carried out with an individual child in a private setting; whether or not the equipment is turned off.

Each time intimate care is administered to a child, the details (time, place, member/s of staff present, reason) must be recorded in an Intimate Care Book.

This means that staff should:

- Adhere to the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken explain to the child what is happening
- Consult with senior staff/welfare/SLT and parents/guardians/carers where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents
- Ensure that any changes to the agreed care plan are discussed, agreed and recorded.

Supporting Personal Care

Young people are entitled to receive respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Adults need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils with whom they work.

This means that staff should:

- avoid any physical contact when children are undressed (unless assistance needed – e.g. for their age and stage of development)
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering

This means that staff should not:

- change in the same place as children
- shower or bathe with children
- assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves

Children with disabilities

- Where a child requires regular intimate or personal care, the nature of the child's intimate care requirements and the way in which that care is best provided in line with the child's uniquely individual characteristics should be determined with parents/guardians/carers and where possible and appropriate, with the involvement of the child, as part of a personal care plan.
- The additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical or learning disability will be taken into account and be recorded as part of the child's agreed care plan.
- The plan will be annually reviewed.

Child focused Principles of Intimate Care

Best Practice

Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care can/may have written Individual Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP'S), health care plans or intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents/guardians/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil should also be present wherever possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account.

The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips.

Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the pupil and parents/guardians/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan. Where a care plan or EHCP is not in place, parents/guardians/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). It is recommended practice that information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in person by telephone or by sealed letter, not through the home/school diary where relevant.

In relation to record keeping, a written record should be kept in a format agreed by parents and staff every time a child has an invasive medical procedure, e.g. support with catheter usage (see aforementioned multi-agency guidance for the management of long term health conditions for children and young people).

Accurate records should also be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care; these can be brief but should, as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case.

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 are trained in personal care (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 in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

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. SEN advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account. 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.

Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a pupil of the same gender, there is research which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors. It is important that the process is transparent so that all issues stated above can be respected; this can best be achieved through a meeting with all parties, as described above, to agree what actions will be taken, where and by whom.

Adults who assist pupils with intimate care MUST be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.

All staff should be aware of the confidentiality; sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

Health and Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products and disposal of large amounts of waste products or any quantity of products that come under the heading of clinical waste.

Section 2 - Emotional Health and Well Being

Rationale

The emotional health and wellbeing of all members of The Cumbria Academy for Autism is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. We believe that emotionally healthy people will be able to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- Become aware of others and empathise with them
- Learn
- Develop a sense of right and wrong
- Face challenges, resolve issues and setbacks and learn from them
- Use and enjoy solitude

Emotional Health and wellbeing is one of the four aspects of work that schools need to develop when working towards and maintaining National Healthy School Status. The department of Health's White Paper recognises that there should be more support for emotional wellbeing and resilience as it is "fundamental to people's capacity to get the most out of life for themselves and for their families". It also recognises that there is "an inseparable link between good emotional and physical health and success in learning and achievement". "Life skills and emotional resilience acquired in childhood and adolescence help people cope with challenges throughout their lives."

The aim of The Cumbria Academy for Autism is to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing to help pupils and staff to understand and express their feelings and build their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn, accept change and move forward.

Curriculum Organisation

The culture and ethos of The Cumbria Academy for Autism is positive and is proactive in its approach and welcomes opportunities to promote emotional health and wellbeing through the formal and informal curriculum. Staff use a variety of methods to ensure that emotional health and wellbeing is being addressed. These complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school.

Our approach includes:

- Class codes of conduct
- Clearly identified rewards and sanctions understood by all
- Rewarding positive behaviour and achievement
- Setting appropriately challenging tasks
- Providing a forum for listening and talking e.g. using circle time as a tool for personal, social and health education and citizenship
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration
- Developing social competence
- Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience.

Emotions play a huge role in a person's ability to learn effectively. We believe that positive emotions and thoughts are central to effective learning. We place high value on a child's emotional intelligence and positively seek to develop and enhance the emotional curriculum in a number of ways:

- Mutual Respect
- Teachers model the behaviour we expect from pupils, parents and carers.
- Positive self-esteem is key to our learning and teaching and is developed through: Focus on positive praise and rewards, Whole class rewards systems, Clear, known system of sanctions
- Positive strategies for responding to negative comments
- Care – teachers care
- Parents are connected with what happens at school through regular newsletters, volunteer help at school, social events organised by school and the 'Friends of' the school group, curriculum events
- Trust exists between pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers
- Close links between other professional agencies who support our pupils
- Genuine concern
- Excellent systems of pastoral care
- Integrated curriculum – PSHE/Circle time focus on emotion, self-awareness, relations skills and social awareness
- Creativity, innovation, developmental learning are highly valued The Language of emotion is used to gain an insight in to how children are feeling

The school places emphasis on encouraging students to participate in school and community events. A range of extra-curricular opportunities will be provided that enable our young people to extend interests and talents beyond the formal curriculum. These will include – lunchtime clubs e.g. film, art activities, playing musical instruments, singing karaoke, computers, seasonal outdoor activities – afterschool activities which may take place at school or at a local venue e.g. bowling - residential trips with a specific focus e.g. outdoor education, the "Arts".

The delivery of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the carrying needs of the pupils in their care.

The Cumbria Academy for Autism believes that a whole school approach is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all students. Our methods include:

- High quality in class support - All classrooms will consist of a class teacher, HLTA and STA, therefore all members of staff have a responsibility for the emotional wellbeing of students
- Additional support is provided by a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Recognising and responding positively to a child's emotional and/or behavioural needs
- Communicating with parents positively and realistically to create a partnership approach to their child's emotional health and well being
- Liaising with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support.
- All children will be allocated a 'Key Person', who they can chat to as needed.
- Parents can 'drop-in' through appointment to deal with issues or be provided with support where needed.

Clear policies on Child Protection, Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and Attendance are promoted in school and provide the foundations for emotional health and wellbeing. Alongside these are other practices to promote well health:

- A school Council with elected membership from all classes that meet regularly
- A school system of awards for curriculum based efforts and achievements as well as celebrating positive behaviour.
- Achievement assemblies that take place regularly
- Termly Achievement Assemblies, including rewards for attendance

Parental Involvement

The Cumbria Academy for Autism parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents through:

- Daily Home School diary for communication with parents. Targets recorded within the home school diary and progress is updated and celebrated.
- Report three times a year, Termly of all progress, including final end of year review report., AET, IEP & numerical targets (NC, GCSE or Vocational:
- Parents evening, twice a year: Christmas and Easter. New parents will have an extra parents evening in early October to review settling in.
- Termly review meeting, parents may attend for their child's IEP review.
- Annual review meeting once a year
- Open door policy for parental questions and concerns.
- Parents will be contacted by Form tutors and TAs in first instance and work up the SLT structure.
- Coffee mornings will be set up for parents to meet each other, support and network.
- Parental events will be set up for parents to meet trainers, educators
- Parental social events: Open events, Summer and Christmas fairs.

Staff Development

- The importance of staff wellbeing will be of great importance. Staff recruitment and retention along with staff surveys will be used to assess whether staff are happy and supported in what they are doing. Staff wellbeing is important to maintain a positive learning environment within the school.
- CPD will be a priority with all staff attending a week of training and INSET at opening. We will deliver in house training to meet the Mission, vision and Values. We will also hire in experts to improve staff knowledge and expertise. Training opportunities will be sought that are cost effective and known to have impact. Safeguarding, health and safety and team teach will be a requirement for all.
- Staff will be encouraged to consider their future career plans and CPD will be promoted to train up and share expertise. Work shadowing and future planning will be considered for staff. Training will be shared with the whole teams by individuals who go off site reporting back what they learn. Staff will be encouraged to deliver INSET training sharing best practice and knowledge that they have.
- The school will actively encourage and pay for Skills Network Training for staff to achieve Level 1 and 2 qualifications in relevant CPD, Autism training and understanding behaviour that challenges etc. Staff will be encouraged to undertake specific training on Autism so that the whole Academy is trained in understanding autism with an accredited qualification.
- Training will be sought and offered for TAs to train as teaching assistants from Level 1 to Level 3. Teachers will be encouraged to take further qualifications in NPSL, NPML and NPQH.
- Staff will also be offered the opportunity of taking GCSE qualifications as External students if they want to improve or gain the English Maths GCSE, Etc.
- Finally training needs will be identified and offered during the school year, education and training for staff is a personal priority as education is beneficial for all.

Cumbria Academy for Autism recognises the importance of positive emotional wellbeing among its employees.

It also recognises the potential adverse effects on both individuals and groups of:

- High levels of occupational and organisational stress
- The effects of factors within the workplace that cause unacceptable levels of occupational and organisational stress.

The school recognises its responsibility to:

- Identify the causes and factors which may cause occupational and organisational stress and assess the levels of risk involved
- To take all reasonable practicable steps to reduce or minimise risks

Cumbria Academy for Autism recognises the potential adverse effects on the emotional health of staff through harassment, victimisation or intimidation at work. The school has a Code of Conduct Policy and a Whistleblowing policy which is issued to all members of staff.