



RADLETT LODGE SCHOOL

INTIMATE CARE GUIDANCE

Guidance Aims

This document is designed to protect young people from abuse, provide guidelines for good practice and to ensure both staff and pupils are clear about the rights of young people.

It is also aimed at protecting staff from feeling vulnerable and to help them feel secure that their actions are not misinterpreted.

Philosophy

All young people have a right to be safe, protected and cared for. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) recognises the fundamental human rights for dignity of all young people and the urgency of ensuring their well-being and development.

At Radlett Lodge School, intimate care skills, e.g. toileting, bathing, dressing, etc. are taught as part of the waking hour curriculum. In the residential provision there is a high emphasis on developing these skills. The teaching of intimate care is essential to enable the child to achieve independence.

All new staff follow an induction programme which includes safeguarding training. New staff will not initially be involved in intimate care with any pupil. Before taking responsibility for intimate care, the new member of staff will discuss the safeguarding procedure and policy with their line manager and will have a discussion around the individual care needs of each young person.

New staff will shadow an experienced member of staff assisting the individual pupil with their intimate care. Agency staff will be expected to follow the same procedure as permanent staff. New staff will be required to shadow 6 different young people and log the dates on their intimate care form which will be signed by the member of staff who was shadowed. If the staff member is confident, they will then support the same child to bath while being observed by another experienced staff member who can ensure the safety of both the young person and the newer member of staff. Once this process is complete for each of the six young people, the staff member can then be signed off as competent to bath any young person in the service. The same process is undertaken for supporting the young people with toileting.

It is acknowledged that apart from parents the teaching/care staff at school have day-to-day contact with the young people and therefore are in a position to observe outward signs of abuse and to recognise developmental delays and changes in behaviour. For the safety of the young people to be maintained at all times, staff must act on any concerns they have (no matter how small they may seem) report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy or if they are unavailable, the most senior person on shift and complete the concern on CPOMS

(Safeguarding Policy). There is a member of the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead team on call, who can be contacted should the senior on sight require advice or support.

Residential pupils have a weekly hygiene sheet on which any marks or bruises are recorded. To ensure that marks or bruises can be accounted for, it is essential that school staff inform residential staff, and vice versa, of any incident that has occurred during the day/evening/night that has, or might result in, the child being bruised. Staff must use their discretion when informing others and consider the sensitivity of the incident and the need to follow the Confidentiality Policy. The young person's class teacher or Team Leader is to be informed depending on when the injury occurred (or other member of senior staff as available). Parents are to be informed (by an appropriate member of staff) via phone of any injuries or marks to their child along with an explanation of events that led to the injury. All incident and accident information is to be logged on CPOMS at the earliest opportunity.

When possible, the child should always receive help from someone of the same sex. Female pupils will ALWAYS receive help with intimate care from a female carer. Whenever possible, boys should be offered the option of a male carer. However, given the high ratio of female staff to male staff and the high ratio of boys to girls, it is often not possible and by necessity female carers must care for male pupils. Should a male pupil request a male carer, or if staff feel it is more appropriate, this will be respected. Pupils can also have the option of asking for two members of staff to be present.

Whilst staff are enabling young people to carry out intimate care, they may be placed in potentially vulnerable situations, e.g. alone in a toilet with a child. Staff may also feel vulnerable to allegations of abuse when alone and supporting a young person with intimate care. If, for any reason staff feel uncomfortable about being alone during intimate care, this must be discussed with their Line Manager so further support can be put in place.

All staff need to be aware of how their actions during intimate care affect the child. Consideration should be given to how we would feel if someone was with you during all aspects of intimate care. Young people have the right to make choices. Each child should be involved as much as possible in all aspects of their intimate care and care plans followed at all times to ensure the best experiences for all involved.

See also:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Codes of Conduct – Working with People we Support Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Use of bathrooms Risk Assessment

GUIDELINES

ALL YOUNG PEOPLE MUST BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES MUST BE IMPLEMENTED SENSITIVELY

- All young people must be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- Health and Safety guidelines must be adhered to at all times (see Health and Safety Policy).
- Staff are to regularly read the young people's care plans in order to refresh on information and to check for updates.
- On a regular basis (unless otherwise requested by the child), the BLSA or RCW allocated to a young person each shift is responsible for their intimate care on the residential site and classroom staff are responsible in school.
- RCW allocated to a young person each shift carries out a Health and Hygiene Check (to be recorded and signed) on Monday evening. BLSA allocated to a young person each shift carries out a similar check on Tuesday morning and records any differences, and so on throughout the week. Each child therefore has a record of any physical changes on a twice daily basis. These checks are carried out as discretely as possible. If a child is known to have had an accident that caused the injury, that is to be recorded on the hygiene sheet by the person working with the child or the staff member witnessing the incident, (e.g. R has a 10p sized blue bruise on the top of his right foot sustained during an accident in school today).
- It is important that any accidents or incidents in which a child may have sustained a mark/bruise are recorded on CPOMS to account for such marks.
- Parents must be informed of any marks or bruising to their child via a telephone call on the same day (and before the child returns home from school).
- It is essential to ensure privacy for each individual, e.g. closing bathroom doors, closing bedroom doors when changing, knocking on toilet, bathroom and bedroom doors before entering, having 'engaged/vacant' signs on door (colour coded 'green/red'), ensuring that young people are wearing clothes or dressing gowns when moving from the bathroom to their bedrooms.
- All young people should be involved as much as possible in their own intimate care.
- All young people are kept informed of what is about to happen, e.g. visual jigs and/or verbal instruction.
- Each new situation must be explained to the child, at a level they understand.

- Approaches should be consistent, e.g. using a flannel to wash their genital area. Care plans are to be followed at all times and any changes needed to care plans should be discussed with Team Leaders before implementation.
- If staff are unsure about any aspect of intimate care, they must ask before continuing.
- Any cream/medication required on genital area, etc. will require two members of staff to be present (see Medication Policy).
- ANY cause for concern, e.g. sore or marked genital areas, must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR BATHING

1. Place bath mat in the bath and ensure it is secure.
2. Put the cold water in the bath and then top up with hot water to make the water warm. Check water temperature before allowing the young person to get in.
3. Never let young people stand on the edge of the bath either when getting in or out of the bath.
4. Make sure young people are facing the taps when in the bath.
5. Ensure all toiletries are kept locked in the cupboards.
6. When spraying the bath with disinfectant, rinse it off again afterwards.
7. Any spilt water should be mopped up.
8. Young people should not be left unattended whilst they are using the bathroom.
9. Kneel by the side of the bath when helping a young person. This helps prevent straining your back and is less intimidating to a child.