



**Birtenshaw Education Services  
Personal Care Policy**

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This Personal Care Policy should be read in conjunction with other school and organisational policies: Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, SEND Policy, Code of Conduct.

Personal or intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children, young people and vulnerable adults and young people carry out for themselves, but which some are unable to do.

Disabled learners may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.

Birtenshaw School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate or personal care of children, young people and vulnerable adults will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these supporting adults are in a position of great trust.

Birtenshaw takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults in its care.

Birtenshaw takes seriously its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010 which requires that any child, young person or vulnerable adult with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all learners, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The person'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 person is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no-one should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parents and carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

### **Principles**

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

### **Best Practice:**

- The management of all children, young people and vulnerable adults with intimate or personal care needs will be carefully planned.
- Staff who provide intimate or personal care are trained to do so (including Safeguarding, and Moving and Handling where appropriate) and fully aware of best practice.
- Where specialist equipment and facilities above that currently available in the school are required, every effort will be made to provide appropriate facilities in a timely fashion, following assessment by the Occupational Therapist.

- There is careful communication with any person who requires intimate or personal care in line with their preferred means of communication to discuss needs and preferences.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, young people and vulnerable adults taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- Children, young people will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence possible, according to their individual condition and abilities
- Individual plans will be drawn up for any person requiring regular intimate or personal care
- Staff supporting children, young people and vulnerable adults with intimate or personal care will be familiar and known to them
- Any proficient member of staff can provide intimate or personal care to any pupil/learner
- Careful consideration will be given to individual situations to determine how many adults should be present during personal or intimate care procedures. Where possible one learner will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present.
- Intimate or personal care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers where appropriate
- The needs and wishes of children, young people and vulnerable adults and parents will be taken into account wherever possible, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation

## **Safeguarding**

The Governors and staff at this school recognise that learners with Special Educational needs and Disability are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.

Birtenshaw's safeguarding procedures will be adhered to.

It is acknowledged that personal care involves risks for children, young people, vulnerable adults and those adults providing as it may involve staff touching private parts of a person's body. Best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in personal 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, people 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 person's presentation, for example unexplained marks or bruises s/he will immediately report concerns to the manager. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Social Care if appropriate, in accordance with Birtenshaw's Safeguarding 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 person becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to a manager. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Head of Service) 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 person's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a person makes an allegation against an adult working in the organisation this should be reported to the manager of the service (or to the Deputy Chief Executive – Operations, if the concern is about the Head of Service) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the safeguarding policy. It should not be discussed with any other member of staff or the member of staff against whom the allegation relates.

Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague or about any improper practice will report this to their manager in accordance with the safeguarding procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

### **Medical Procedures**

Service users who are disabled might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers/social workers as required, documented in the 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.

Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with LA guidance. If an examination of a child, young person or vulnerable adult is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the person's privacy and dignity.

### **Massage**

Massage is now commonly used with learners who have complex needs and/or medical needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation.

Massage undertaken by staff should be confined to parts of the body such as the hands, feet and face in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and learners.

Any adult undertaking massage must be suitably qualified and/or demonstrate an appropriate level of competence.

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Reviewed September 2020

Review September 2021

Care plans should include specific information for those supporting children, young people and vulnerable adults with bespoke medical needs.