

GORDON'S SCHOOL

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

The core principle that guides everything we do is **Putting Students First**.

1. Introduction

Gordon's School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children or young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children/young people with respect when intimate care is given. No child/young person should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

This policy has been written for staff, students and parents/guardians and is to be considered in conjunction with Gordon's School Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

2. What is Intimate Care?

Intimate care is any personal care that most people usually carry out for themselves.

This is any care which involves washing, touching, assisting with or performing an invasive procedure such as cleaning a student who has been incontinent. This policy aims to protect both staff and students, promote inclusion and the welfare of students.

3. Guiding Principles

- The management of all children/young people with intimate care needs will be carefully planned and should be a positive experience for all involved. The child/young person who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.
- Staff who provide this care are trained to do so (including Safeguarding and Child Protection) and are fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist with children/young people who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist/occupational therapist.
- Staff should always wear gloves and a plastic apron (available in the School Medical Centre and all First Aid kits) when dealing with bodily fluids.
- Soiled linen, wipes and gloves must be disposed of in a polythene waste disposal bag and placed in the designated clinical waste bin in the School Medical Centre.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children/young people taking into account developmental changes such as puberty e.g. menstruation.
- Whenever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will not usually be involved with the delivery of Sex and Relationships Education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.
- If staff are involved, care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.
- Children/young people will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will ensure each child/young person does as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up as appropriate and shared and agreed by the child/young person and their parents/carers.

- Each child/young person's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many carers need to be present when the child/young person is being cared for. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. In this case, the reasons should be clearly documented and reassessed regularly.
- Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence, for example female staff supporting boys when there is no male staff.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the Care Plan. The needs and wishes of children/young people and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

4. Safeguarding Children

- All children/young people will be taught personal safety skills via the PSHE programme. These skills should be relative to their age, ability and understanding and will be shared with parents/carers to enable them to be consolidated within the home/community.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical or behavioural changes in a child/young person's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness or reluctance to go to certain places/people etc. s/he will immediately pass their concerns to Deputy Head Pastoral or the Assistant Head Pastoral.
- If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity. If the student is a weekly or full boarder, the School Nurse and Deputy Head Pastoral should be contacted at the earliest opportunity.
- If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed in line with school policy.

5. Students with long-term Medical Conditions

- Individual Health Care Plans for students with long-term conditions requiring intimate care, such as incontinence, will be written by the School Nurse, in consultation with the student and parents/guardians.
- All care will be documented by the care giver and this documentation will be reviewed regularly by the School Nurse. Specially adapted facilities and adequate staff training may be necessary as part of the planned health care provision for the student.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to provide change of clothes, disposal bags, wipes and any other necessary equipment. Gordon's School will provide gloves, plastic aprons and clinical waste disposal bins.

6. Confidentiality

- Staff may have access to confidential information about a child/young person in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in the interests of the child/young person.
- If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Ms Helen Carruthers
Deputy Head (Pastoral)
October 2025