



Our Lady Catholic Primary School

Intimate Care Policy



The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
A Catholic Academy

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At Our Lady School, we believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to every child of God.

Article 3: the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.

Article 23: a child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life in conditions that promote dignity, independence and an active role in the community.

Article 34: Governments must protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Principles

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and requires staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There should be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Definition

Intimate care is defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do. Disabled pupils may be unable to meet their own care needs for a variety of reasons and will require regular support.

In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure (e.g. the administration of a feeding tube).

Our Approach to Best Practice

- Our Lady School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.
- The management of all children with intimate care will be carefully planned.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health & Safety where appropriate) and are fully aware of best practice. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- Pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of independence possible, according to their individual condition and abilities.
- Individual Care Plans will be drawn up for any child requiring regular intimate care, to suit the circumstances of the child.
- Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many carers should be present when a child is toileted. 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 will be clearly documented.

- Wherever possible the child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships do not develop.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's Intimate Care Plan. The needs and wishes of the child and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunity legislation.

Child Protection/Safeguards for Children

All staff at Our Lady School are DBS checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within the school until all checks are completed satisfactorily.

Child protection procedures will be adhered to (see Child Protection Policy).

It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students should only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

All children 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 child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc, s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/ carers will be contacted as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue/s are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.