



## **Personal Care Policy**

Spa School Bermondsey is committed to ensuring all staff responsible for the personal care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

All pupils are treated respectfully and welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Every pupil's right to privacy will be respected.

We aim to establish age appropriate independence around personal care whilst considering each pupil's individual needs. We work closely with families to encourage a consistent approach both at school and at home.

It is not expected that pupils at Spa Bermondsey will require regular support with toileting, however there may be occasion where a pupil requires short-term support.

### **Rationale**

These guidelines set out procedures that safeguard pupils and staff by providing a consistent approach recognising the rights and responsibilities of all those involved in providing personal care for pupils.

Personal care can raise complex issues. Whilst it may not be possible to eliminate all risks the balance should be on the side of dignity, privacy, pupil choice and safety.

All staff are trained in safeguarding and are expected to follow the school policy and procedures to keep pupils safe.

### **Need for assistance with personal care**

Risks are minimised where there is both a culture which acknowledges the risks and practices which seek to prevent the possibility of abuse.

Key features include:

- procedures which respect the right of pupils to privacy and prevent staff members from putting themselves at risk
- training for all staff in preventing and recognising pupil abuse
- an awareness by all staff that our first duty is to protect the pupil - not to protect parents or members of staff
- staff, parents and pupils (where they are able to communicate) knowing clearly that concerns in relation to abuse should be referred to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding
- the Head of School (DSL) will investigate all allegations of abuse or improper practice.

Preventive Factors:

#### **(i) Staff training**

Practical help should be as unobtrusive as possible. Staff need clear messages about acceptable and unacceptable approaches to personal care.

Training times need also to be seen as staff support. Prevention of abuse is most likely to occur when there are respectful, professional relationships between staff and pupils. Rigid institutionalisation of care routines is unlikely to offer protection and may increase pupils' vulnerability.

#### **(ii) Social skills and independence training**

It can be easy to under-estimate a pupil's capacity to acquire self-care skills. Positive encouragement to self-management of incontinence, dressing and so forth are crucial. Better partnerships between schools and parents or carers can produce major improvements - and greater protection.

### (iii) Listening to pupils

'Listening' may mean 'observation' for some pupils with major communication difficulties. Listening may mean using a range of communication strategies. Good record keeping by staff can indicate when behaviour indicates that pupils are unhappy or having difficulty with a particular routine.

### (iv) Listening to parents and carers

We work in partnership with parents and carers to develop consistent approaches to supporting personal care and developing independence. All parents / carers will agree the Personal Care Support Plan with the Assistant Headteacher for the key stage.

### (v) Listening to colleagues

Professionals must accept that abuse can and does occur. An 'open mind' and a preparedness to accept and objectively analyse improbable and sometimes unbelievable scenarios are essential for the well-being of the pupils in our care.

## **Types of Personal Care**

Personal care involves support with aspects of care which pupils are unable to manage independently. This can include:

- Toileting
- Washing and drying
- Dressing and undressing, including swimming
- Support with eating or feeding
- Medical procedures and medication
- Dental Hygiene

Intimate care means physically supporting pupils in regards to toileting including continence and menstruation management, bathing or changing.

For most students requiring a plan at Spa Bermondsey, this will take the form of a Personal Care Plan and support will be around:

- verbal or visual prompting to clean selves after toileting
- verbal and visual prompting changing and disposing of sanitary products
- verbal or visual prompting and ensuring privacy when using shower facilities (often due to distress)
- verbal or visual prompting to change soiled clothes
- verbal or visual prompting to change after swimming
- supporting a student if they have stripped in a public place
- supporting a student if they have exposed themselves in public

It is expected that most support required around personal care will be for a short period of time and consultation with the OT should take to support pupils gain vital independence skills.

Intimate care is not part of our normal ways of working. Parents and carers will always be informed if their child has required intimate care (e.g. due to unexpectedly soiling themselves) and the need for a plan will be discussed as part of that conversation. Spa Bermondsey cannot meet the needs of pupils who require regular intimate care.

## **Aims**

All staff will:

- Safeguard the rights and well-being of pupils with regard to dignity, privacy, choice and safety.
- Ensure that pupils are treated consistently when they experience personal care whether at school or on educational visits into the community.
- Assure parents and carers that all staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that individual concerns are taken into account and, when possible, are acted upon.
- Provide appropriate guidance, training and supervision to staff to ensure safe practice.
- Ensure that agreed Personal Care Plans are shared and agreed with parents / carers.
- Encourage the pupil to care for themselves as far as possible. Staff will encourage independence and teach personal care skills. Targets may be set in developing these life skills.
- Provide facilities appropriate to the pupils' age and individual needs.
- Show awareness of and be responsive to the pupils' reactions, their verbal and non-verbal communication and signifiers.
- Use opportunities during personal care to teach pupils about the value of their own bodies, to develop their personal safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem.

## **Communication and Permissions**

### **Letter of permission**

Permission must be sought from the parent/carer before any form of personal care can be undertaken. Parent/carers will also be asked to read and sign an agreement of care. Permission will normally be agreed during the transition process into Spa Bermondsey.

### **Personal Care Plans**

Any pupil who requires a Personal Care Plan will have this shared with families. This plan will be reviewed termly by the Assistant Headteacher for that key stage and any changes will be communicated clearly.

### **Staff communication with parents and carers**

Each pupil has a home-school book. This can be used to pass on information relating to care issues. This might include information requested by parents/carers.

Staff should

- Understand parental preferences and take account of these.
- Be compliant with the Data Protection Act with regard to dissemination of information.
- Maintain confidentiality by sharing information on sensitive issues via telephone, sealed letter or personal contact as appropriate.

### **Staff communication with the pupil**

- Appropriate use of differentiated language, signs, symbols, photographs or objects will be used as appropriate at all times.
- Staff work in a reassuring, supportive and focused manner with the pupil when involved in personal care

## **Responsibilities**

### **Management responsibilities:**

- To ensure staff receive ongoing training in good working practices which comply with health and safety regulations such as hygiene procedures, manual handling, awareness of medical conditions and associated first aid, safeguarding procedures and other aspects of Personal Care.
- To keep a record of training undertaken by staff and to ensure that refresher and updating of training is provided where required.
- To provide an induction programme for all new staff and ensure that they are made fully aware of the individual personal care protocols for the pupils they are supporting.
- To ensure that all new staff receive the appropriate assistance from experienced staff to provide the pupils they are supporting with the personal care as outlined in their individual Personal Care Plans.
- To offer additional training and advice to staff where needs have been identified

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- Staff must be familiar with the Personal Care Policy and procedures.
- Staff must adhere to Health and Safety Policies and procedures and must report any health and safety concerns to management.
- Staff will liaise with parents/carers and other appropriate services over the development and implementation of the agreed Personal Care Plan.
- Staff will liaise with other professionals regarding specific aspects of personal care (e.g. nursing) and their advice will be included in the pupil's Personal Care Plan.
- Staff will take part in annual training for all aspects of personal care support in which they are involved.

## **Safeguarding**

It is normal practice for two members of staff to be involved in a pupil's personal care, unless it is highlighted that a lower staff ratio is required due to the unobtrusiveness of the care. This will be recorded clearly in the Personal Care Plan. The people supporting a pupil will be permanent members of school staff. Only female members of staff should support female pupils with intimate care, unless there is an emergency.

New staff should not carry out personal care until assessed to be competent as part of their induction. Temporary agency staff should only carry out care if accompanied by a permanent member of school staff. Long term agency staff will be able to carry out care when they are assessed as competent by the SMT.

Staff will be encouraged to remain highly vigilant of any signs of improper practice including the breaching of school policies, as they do for all activities within the school. If staff have any concerns about supporting a pupil's personal care on their own they should first raise this with the SMT.

If any marks noticed on the pupil during personal care they should be reported immediately to the Head of School who is the designated safeguarding lead. Staff must not question the pupil or carry out any additional examinations.

Personal care relating to toileting, showering, changing or intimate care should be recorded on CPOMS. Relevant SMT members should be alerted if there are circumstances that are different to the agreed personal care plan or if there is no personal care plan in place.

## **GUIDANCE ON PROVIDING SPECIFIC TYPES OF PERSONAL CARE**

### **Toileting**

#### **Guidelines**

- Ensure facilities support privacy and dignity.
- Staff must receive training in good working practices, which comply with health and safety regulation, such as wearing of appropriate PPE and methods of dealing with body fluids.
- Adequate facilities are provided including toilet paper, liquid soap, flushable wipes, paper towels, suitable waste bins and appropriate PPE.
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials are provided for cleaning and disinfecting areas.
- Items of protective clothing (PPE) such as disposable gloves, aprons, masks are provided and readily accessible.
- Supplies of fresh clothes for pupils should be available when required. These are to be kept in a clearly labelled area.
- All staff must be made aware of good hygiene and its implications.
- When pupils require high-level support including cleaning after soiling, consideration should always be given to minimising contact while ensuring that the pupil's needs are being met with care and dignity. Staff are always gentle and non-invasive and use additional aids such as the shower if pupils require additional cleaning.
- During menstruation girls who are normally independent may need some support in changing and disposing of soiled pads. Staff should always be mindful of pupils' well-being and show care and respect when supporting them with personal care so that their wishes and feelings are considered throughout. Where appropriate girls should be shown how to dispose of soiled pads using the correct containers to support their independence. Female staff only should support female pupils.

## **Washing and Drying**

Pupils may require washing and drying of their hands, face or bodies including intimate areas as part of their personal care needs throughout the school day or when off site. Pupils should be encouraged to manage their own needs independently. When they do require support staff should always make sure that the pupils' dignity, personal wishes and comfort are at the centre of any procedure.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Hand Washing**

**Don't assume pupils know how to wash their hands.**

1. Wet hands under warm running water or immerse in warm water.
2. Apply a small amount of liquid soap.
3. Rub hands together carefully ensuring soap and water is applied to all surfaces of the hands. Be sure to rub between fingers, the palms and the back of the hands.
4. Rinse hands under warm running water or in clean warm water.
5. Dry hands, preferably using paper towels.

The use of a bowl with warm water may be required.

**Pupils must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.**

#### **Face cleaning**

Pupils may need to clean their faces. Wherever possible pupils should be encouraged and supported to clean their own faces using mirrors (where available), paper towels and water (or wet wipes). If pupils need adult support staff should ask the pupils permission where appropriate and talk to the pupil about what they are doing. Staff should always take care to be gentle and stop if the pupil indicates they are not comfortable with the care. As with all personal care, interactions should be kept to a minimum.

#### **Nose cleaning**

Some pupils may need help with blowing their noses or removing dry or wet nasal mucus. As with face cleaning adults should encourage pupils to be as independent as possible and use tissues for nose blowing. Dry nasal mucus may need to be removed with water and paper towels and gentle wiping.

Tissues must be disposed of appropriately and staff must wash their hands.

Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.

#### **Washing, showering and drying**

On rare occasions, pupils may need to wash their body and or intimate areas e.g. if they have had a loose bowel movement. As with toileting pupils, staff should support pupils to be as independent as possible and keep their personal space and privacy.

Where pupils require support staff should maintain positive relationships, be mindful of pupils' dignity and keep interactions to a minimum. During washing pupils should be covered as much as possible. Pupils should be cleaned by pouring warm water and using a shower spray, wiping should be kept to a minimum and adults should always be gentle in their interactions.

Pupils should always be encouraged to be as independent as possible and guided to dry themselves correctly. Any necessary support should be unobtrusive, gentle and with minimum interaction. Patting areas dry rather than rubbing should be encouraged. As in all interactions where pupils are undressed they should be covered as much as possible to maintain their dignity.

**Adults should always maintain high levels of hygiene during personal care procedures by wearing aprons, gloves and washing their own hands with soap and water after procedures.**

### **Dressing and Undressing (including swimming)**

Wherever possible the need to dress and undress is kept to a minimum. Where pupils need to dress or undress we will ensure that facilities provide privacy and modesty e.g. separate changing for boys and girls

#### **Guidelines**

Pupils should be encouraged, if able to dress/undress themselves as independently as possible. There should be a clear plan, appropriate to each individual for (un)dressing for those who require support.

Staff should always be mindful of covering pupils as much as possible to protect their dignity while they are being dressed or undressed and should always talk through procedures to the pupils.

When using public facilities staff should be aware in advance of the nature of the facilities, and ensure that school expectations related to privacy and modesty are maintained.

### **Support with Eating**

Eating is a social occasion however, some pupils are very easily distracted or become anxious in louder environments. An eating and drinking plan will be agreed for pupils who need specific support. Those who require additional support, such as those who are tube feed, have a Feeding Plan which is reviewed regularly by the HEN Team.

### **Dental Hygiene**

Pupils may need to brush their teeth as part of an agreed Dental Hygiene Plan. Pupils who are able to do this independently should be able to use one of the bathrooms to undertake this procedure.

#### **Guidelines**

If pupils need help to do this then the adult should talk through the procedure with the pupil and follow any guidance that has been given for this pupil's dental hygiene.

The pupil's belongings should be clearly labelled and stored safely.

Adults should always seek the pupil's agreement for procedures either verbally or as indicated by their body language and stop if the pupil does not agree or presents as unhappy with the procedure.

Adults should always be gentle and proceed as slowly as necessary to minimise discomfort.

## **Medical Procedures and Medication**

Spa Bermondsey aims to meet the needs of, and provide equal opportunities for, all its pupils. Due to the complex medical needs of many of the pupils they may have to take medication while attending school.

Medication will normally be administered by a member of SMT. Occasionally class staff may be requested to administer medication but this may only be done with permission of the Head of School or Deputy Headteacher and with the agreement of the parent/carer and would normally be for a short term condition.

## **Guidelines**

See the school policy for 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school'

## **Applying Topical Medicines and Moisturisers**

### **Guidelines**

- Staff may only apply topical preparations such as barrier cream, sun screen and insect repellent if supplied in a named container with written consent from the parent/guardian.
- As with the application of any cream or liquid to the skin staff should only do if agreed permissions and procedures have been followed and should minimise the amount of contact.
- Only a light layer of fluid should be applied and pupils should be supported to apply this as independently as possible.
- Where staff have to apply these preparations on the pupil the minimum amount of contact should be used and pupils should be kept informed of what the member of staff is doing and why.



# Permission Forms

## Permission for School to provide Personal Care

Pupil's last name .....

Pupil's first name .....

Parent/Carers name .....

I give permission to the school to provide appropriate personal care to my child.  
E.g. changing, toileting, feeding, showering, medical support or other.

Special arrangements for my child should be as follows (please continue on a separate sheet if required)

I wish to advise you that I would like the following to be the approach to this:

I will advise the head teacher of any medical issues which impact on the personal care of my child.

The medical issues are

Name.....

Signature.....

Relationship to pupil.....

Date.....

## School and parent agreement of care undertaken

The Parent/ Carer agrees to:

- ensure that the pupil is changed at the latest possible time before being brought to school.
- provide school with pads/ nappies/ pull-ups, a change of clothes, topical creams and all individual equipment required to meet their child's needs.
- the procedures that will be followed when their pupil is changed at school – including the involvement of male and female staff, the ratio of staff,
- inform the school should the pupil have any marks/ rashes.
- review arrangements should this be necessary.

The school agrees to:

- change the pupil whenever needed
- monitor the number of times the pupil is changed in order to identify readiness and progress for toilet training purposes.
- discuss any marks or rashes seen.
- review arrangements..

**I agree to the above**

**Consent statement**-(confirmation of your agreement to the prescribed care)

I confirm that I have read the above agreement of care.

Who do you want to help your pupil with their personal care? Please delete those which do not apply:

*I am happy for male or female staff to support my pupil with their personal care*

*I want only female staff to support my pupil with their personal care*

*I want only male staff to support my pupil with their personal care*

**Parent/Carer/name and signature**

**Date**

**Assistant Headteacher Name/Signature**



### **Guidelines for staff involved in toileting or personal care**

- Where possible pupils should be helped to change standing up and encouraged to independently carry out as much of their own personal care as they are able to.
- Disposable wipes should be used to clean the pupil's skin.
- Topical creams must only be used if provided by parents/carers in their original containers. Over the counter creams should be labelled with pupil's name. Prescription creams must display the pharmacy label. All topical creams are used on an individual basis and must not be shared. Written permission must be given by parents/carers.
- Any creams should be used sparingly as if applied too thickly they can reduce the absorbency of the pad / pull up.
- Disposable gloves, aprons must be worn.
- Any soiled or wet clothing should be placed in the laundry bag and taken for washing. It must be returned home at the end of the school day.
- Once the pupil has been changed any equipment used and all surfaces should be cleaned with a disinfectant spray and left to dry.
- PPE equipment including gloves and aprons and all cleaning materials used must be disposed of in a tied black carrier bag and removed immediately by the premises team.
- Hands should be thoroughly washed before and after any care carried out.