



CARE OF PUPILS

Adopted by Governors: 2004
Union Meeting (if applicable) NA

Next Review due: Summer 2025

Committee Reviewed at:FULL Summer 2023...

Signed by Chair of Committee:.....

Date:.....

Signed by Head Teacher:.....

Date:.....

INTRODUCTION

This policy is intended to help and guide staff in their work with pupils in the school. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:

- Guidance for Safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings
- Childs Act 1989 & Children and Families Act 2014
- Reducing the need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention June 2019
- Behaviour and Discipline in School DfE January 2016
- Education Child Protection – CYPS, Leicestershire County Council, 2014
- Safer Working Practice May 2019
- 'whistle-blowing' and allegations management policies
- health and safety policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs policy
- moving and handling risk assessment
- policy for the administration of medicines
- associated Leicestershire County Council policies
- Behaviour Policy
- ICT Policies

The policy is organised as follows:

- The School Ethos and Staff Code
- Toilet & Intimate Care Policy
- Bullying

SCHOOL AIMS & VISION

Birkett House is a school at the heart of its community. We aspire for all our pupils to work in an environment that encourages learning, equipping pupils with the tools and skills to achieve. We will work to encourage pupils to develop confidence, self-belief aware of the choices open to them. We will encourage tolerance and inclusion, where all pupils are able to build effective relationships based on strength of community, friendship and respect. In short, we expect the students of Birkett House to be both aspirational and inspirational.

- Through positive experiences, we will develop as fully as possible our abilities and interests and be proud of ourselves and our achievements.
- We will work in partnership preparing for life in and beyond school where we are able to contribute to our own futures and take our place in society.
- We will develop the skills we will need for a successful future.
- We will respect ourselves and others in an environment where we are confident, secure and happy.
- We will develop the skills we need to meet real life challenges.

The Ethos of the school sets out the characteristics, which we value and actively work to provide for our pupils. The aims of the school guide all our work; the ethos describes the "climate" in which our work takes place.

Ethos

Birkett House School will provide an environment:

- Where pupils are happy, secure, and safe.
- Where pupils learn, develop, and mature with dignity and respect.
- Where all pupils and staff are expected to respect each other and all people irrespective of race, gender, ethnic origin, ability, and social class.
- Where progress and attainments are recognised and praised with the highest expectations of achievement and behaviour.
- Where there is clarity about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- Where pupils are encouraged to interact co-operatively and constructively.
- Where we encourage good relationships, self-reliance, and responsibility.
- Where intimate care routines can take place with dignity and privacy.

In order that staff contribute to and promote the appropriate environment and characteristics of caring provision, they will observe the following:

- Be familiar with and consistently carry out programmes for individuals.
- In any uncertainty about any aspect of a pupils care or programme always ask. It is always better to question, than to put pupils or colleagues at risk. Information is always readily available.
- At all times communicate with pupils – Do not discuss pupils or their situations when they are present.
- Always observe strict confidentiality in matters to do with pupils and their lives.
- Communicate carefully with pupils attending to appropriate language, signing, body signing, and picture or symbol system.
- Be sensitive, respond and value to non-verbal communication, e.g. facial expression and body language.
- It is important for staff to communicate their intentions to pupils before and during activities and interaction.
- To use help scripts with staff and students for a consistent approach for students and 'saving face' for staff in front of students.
 - Significant changes about pupils and their care or other relevant aspects of their lives should be carefully communicated to the wider team.

CARE AND CONTACT

The nature of the school's work requires a significant level of personal contact with pupils including the following:

Toileting	Moving and Handling	Playing
Dressing / Undressing	Feeding	Medical Procedures
Showering	Bathing	Intensive interaction
Individual work	Swimming	

In all cases the pupils Individual Programme will determine the content and conduct of most situations which require personal contact. It is important to ascribe pupils' dignity and respect at all times.

TOILET AND INTIMATE CARE

1) Principles

- We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child'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 pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.
- Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.
- Where pupils with complex and/or long term health conditions have a personal care plan in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.
- All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.

2) Child focused principles of intimate care

The following are the fundamental principles

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

3) Definition

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

It also includes supervision of pupils involved in intimate self-care.

4) Best Practice

- Pupils who require regular assistance with intimate care have written personal care plans or intimate care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved, such as school nurses or physiotherapists. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the pupil should also be present wherever possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips.

- Where relevant, it is good practice to agree with the pupil and parents/carers appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions and this should be noted in the plan.
- Parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (eg has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself).
- Information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in through the home/school diary as necessary.
- In relation to record keeping, a written record should be kept in a format agreed by parents and staff every time a child has an invasive medical procedure, e.g. support with catheter usage (see aforementioned multi-agency guidance for the management of long term health conditions for children and young people). These records will be kept in the child's file and available to parents/carers on request.
- All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.
- Staff who provide intimate care are trained in personal care (eg health and safety training in moving and handling) according to the needs of the pupil. Staff should be fully aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the requirement to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual pupils taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- There must be careful communication with each pupil who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure. Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the pupil personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their ages.
- Every child's right to privacy and modesty will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each pupil's situation to determine who and how many carers might need to be present when s/he needs help with intimate care. SEN advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.
- An individual member of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to assist a pupil with intimate care.
- The religious views, beliefs and cultural values of children and their families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer. Whilst safer working practice is important, such as in relation to staff caring for a pupil of the same gender, there is research¹ which suggests there may be missed opportunities for children and young people due to over anxiety about risk factors
- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the school, not students or volunteers, and therefore have the usual range of safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks.
- All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

¹ National Children's Bureau (2004) *The Dignity of Risk*

- Health & Safety guidelines should be adhered to regarding waste products, if necessary, advice should be taken from the LCC Procurement Department regarding disposal of large amounts of waste products or any quantity of products that come under the heading of clinical waste.
- No member of staff will carry a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care. Refer to school policy on electronic devices

5) Child Protection and Safeguarding

- The Governors and staff at this school recognise that pupils with special needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse.
- The school's child protection procedures will be adhered to.
- From a child protection perspective it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in intimate 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, pupils 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 pupil's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Headteacher. A clear written record of the concern will be completed and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if appropriate, in accordance with the school's child protection 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. Due attention and appropriate procedures will be observed if female genital mutilation is witnessed or suspected.
- If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Headteacher. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Headteacher) 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 child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in accordance with the school's policy: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff and Volunteers. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to.
- Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

6) Physiotherapy

- Pupils who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the care plan that a member of the school staff should

undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly. The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique.

- Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.
- Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

7) Medical Procedures

- Pupils 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, 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 is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

8) Massage

- Massage is now commonly used with pupils who have complex needs and/or medical needs in order to develop sensory awareness, tolerance to touch and as a means of relaxation.
- It is recommended that massage undertaken by school staff should be confined to parts of the body outside that normally covered by a swimming costume in order to safeguard the interest of both adults and pupils.
- Care plans should include specific information for those supporting children with bespoke medical needs.

SCHOOL STATEMENT ON BULLYING

What is bullying?

Bullying is unwanted aggressive behaviour among young people that involves a real or perceived power imbalance, the behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical – hurting a person's body or possessions.
- Verbal – saying or writing mean things.
- Social bullying – involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships
- Cyber bullying – takes place using electronic technology.
- Peer on Peer abuse*

*refer to LA. Guidance for schools working with children, and young people who display sexually abusive behaviour. Safeguarding Policy 2019-20

Why challenge bullying?

There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviours in schools:

- The safety and happiness of pupils
- Educational achievement is hampered
- Providing a model for helpful behaviour. If they observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged, other pupils may learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those pupils who are being bullied will feel let down by adults in authority.
- No school can claim with confidence that bullying does not occur in their environment. We must respond positively and effectively to bullying.

BULLYING IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE

All staff should:

- Be aware of what constitutes bullying and help pupils to understand what we mean by bullying
- Be aware of potential bullying via internet/mobile phones etc.
- Listen to any child who feels they are being bullied
- Be aware of pupils who cannot speak for themselves and the interaction that occurs around them
- Think about times of the day, parts of the building etc. where bullying may occur.
- Stop play fights, mock kicking etc.
- Deal with incidents of bullying promptly
- Report ongoing bullying to the Headteacher.

Children should be encouraged to:

- Include others in their games and groups
- Not laugh if someone is being bullied
- Tell staff if they see bullying
- Never join in with bullying.

It is appropriate to include bullying during curriculum work in the area of PSHE.

If a child bullies we will:

1. Try to help them understand the effect their behaviour is having on another child.
2. Help them think of ways to make amends
3. Give an appropriate sanction
4. Support the child who is being bullied.

If a child is bullied we will:

- Immediately comfort
- Take concerns seriously
- Take steps to protest/prevent
- Longer term deal with bullies