

INTIMATE CARE AND PHYSICAL CONTACT POLICY

2022-23

**Heaton School Policy Record**

**Physical Contact and Intimate Care Policy Agreed at:**

**T& L Committee 11.10.22**

**Signed and Approved by:**

**Headteacher --------------------------------------------- (Signature)**

**--------------------------------------------- (Name)**

**--------------------------------------------- (Date)**

**Chair of Committee--------------------------------------------- (Signature)**

**--------------------------------------------- (Name)**

**--------------------------------------------- (Date)**

**To Be Reviewed: Autumn 2024**

**Designated person: J Curtis, Headteacher**

**Heaton School Policy for Intimate Care and Physical Contact.**

Physical contact constitutes a necessary and integral part of the education of pupils at Heaton School and is every professional’s responsibility to prioritise when appropriate. It may be used to facilitate growth or to meet needs within the following areas:

* Emotional development
* Educational development
* Physical development
* Personal/social development
* Behavioural development
* Personal care
* Physical support to access the curriculum

Physical support to engage appropriately in speech therapy, occupational therapy, swimming, physiotherapy, swimming, peer massage and support.

Support may involve gentle physical prompting to ensure curriculum/environmental access. For pupils with behavioural difficulties, touch may be required to prevent personal injury, injury to others, or damage to the environment.

All adults in school use the following types of acceptable physical contact:

* Moving pupil’s head to gain eye contact, or to ensure that a pupil is able to listen.
* Physical prompting.
* A small hug for comfort and reassurance when a pupil is distressed.
* Co-active feeding.
* Oral skills (for example teeth cleaning) as part of PSHE.
* Removing objects from a pupil’s mouth.
* Choking – removal of an obstruction or putting pupil in head- down position over knee, and
* Wiping or cleaning a pupil when they have finished (or during) a meal.
* Guiding students when walking.

Swimming

* Changing pupils.
* Safety and support in the water – holding/supporting a pupil when entering the pool, and to maintain a safe body position.
* Teaching techniques in the pool – may involve splashing water at pupils, or holding to support them above the water.

In P.E. and on outside equipment

* Co-active support to access equipment.
* Saving pupil from falling.
* Holding a pupil on moving and static apparatus.

Personal care

Personal care is an essential and integral part of all teaching staffs’ roles. Personal care is the responsibility of all staff and where appropriate, staff are expected to assist young people in this area assisting colleagues.

To further the schools role in preparing for adulthood, where possible these time must be used to add learning opportunities in areas such as independence and communication and may be part of any individual’s day.

Examples of Personal care may include –

Supporting students in bathrooms

Washing faces

Assisting dressing for Swimming / PE / other activities

Applying sun tan lotion.

Assisting with administering medication as directed by school nursing service and Head Teacher

Wiping noses

Strapping children into vehicles.

Physical restraint – only in line with the behaviour policy.

Heaton School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Our policy for intimate care aims to provide guidance and reassurance to staff. It safeguards the rights and wellbeing of pupils, and assures parents/ carers that all staff are knowledgeable about intimate care. Staff who provide intimate care are taught to be aware of best practice, and the need to comply with school policies including:

* Child Protection
* Health and Safety
* Health care plans, risk assessments and medical details.

Staff will have regard to confidentiality of this information. Sensitive information about a child will only be shared with those who need to know.

Staff have responsibility for effective organisation of hygiene resources in care rooms. Staff always wear protective gloves and aprons during intimate care routines, and clean changing beds after use. Pupils provide their own intimate care hygienic materials.

Apparatus may need to be provided for pupils who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be responsive to any apprehensions, discomfort or disapproval shown by a pupil.

Photographs, symbols and words will be used as a communication tool with pupils who require this additional support.

Staff will work in partnership with parents to ensure consistency of approach. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation. Provision may be amended in the light of individual needs, but we promote each person’s right to equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life, including the provision of intimate care.

Staff will be supported and encouraged 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. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy possible, given their age and abilities.

Matters concerning intimate care will not be recorded in the home/ school communication diary as it is not a confidential document. Communication relating to personal care will be made through a sealed letter, class dojo direct message, personal contact or a telephone call between a staff member and parent/ carer.

There will be a high awareness of child protection issues where intimate care is provided. Heaton School follow the procedures set out by Stockport’s Safeguarding Children’s Board, and take account of guidance issued by the Dfes. All staff are trained in Child Protection awareness, and this training is regularly updated. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, (for example marks, bruises, soreness) she/he will immediately report concerns to the designated person for child protection.

Checklist for use of physical contact in work with people who have SEND and or learning difficulties:

1. Know why you do it

2. Have consent from the person/parent

3. Be prepared to discuss and explain your practices

4. Document – acknowledge it in planning, the curriculum and in policy

5. Document – use care plans, IEPs to explain usage

6. Work as a team with your colleagues and the person involved

7. Use of physical contact should be openly discussed

8. Have others present where practically possible