

Personal Care Policy

Date Approved by Governing Body:	
Last Review:	
Next Review Date:	
Chair of Governors:	

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

CONTENTS

Introduction	page 4
The Disability Discrimination Act	page 4
Aims	page 4
Definition of Personal Care	page 4
Definition of Personal Care	page 5
Basic Principles	page 5
Vulnerability to Abuse	page 6
Working with Parents/ Carers	page 6
Links with Other Agencies	page 7
Good Practice Guidance	page 7
Training	page 9
Managing Risk	page 10

Appendix A

Form 1 – Risk assessment	page 12
Form 2 – Permission for School to provide Personal Care	page 13
Form 3 - Agreement between student and personal assistant	page 14
Form 4 – Working Towards Independence Record	page 15
Form 5 - Personal Care Management Plan	page 16
Form 6 - Record of Personal Care Intervention	page 17

UFFCULME SCHOOL PERSONAL CARE POLICY

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Safeguard the rights, welfare, and dignity of children and young people
- Provide clear guidance and reassurance to staff involved in personal and intimate care
- Ensure that personal care is delivered in a respectful, consistent, and trauma-informed manner
- Promote independence, choice, and self-esteem for pupils wherever possible
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, and external professionals
- Remove barriers to learning, participation, and inclusion
- Ensure staff are protected through clear procedures, training, and recording systems

Health and Personal Care Introduction

Uffculme School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, and independence of all pupils. We recognise that some pupils may require support with personal or intimate care as a result of disability, medical needs, or developmental stage.

Personal care is viewed as an enabling support, not a barrier to learning. When delivered appropriately, it enables pupils to access the curriculum, participate fully in school life, and develop independence in line with their individual abilities.

This policy provides clear guidance to ensure that personal and intimate care is delivered:

- **Safely and consistently**
- **With respect for pupils' dignity, privacy, and rights**
- **In partnership with parents, carers, and relevant professionals**
- **In line with safeguarding, equality, and health and safety legislation**

All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and to act in accordance with agreed procedures and individual care plans.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is underpinned by current legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Equality Act 2010, which places a duty on schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015, updated 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest statutory guidance)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Human Rights Act 1998

Uffculme School recognises its legal duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, and foster good relations for pupils with disabilities. Personal and intimate care arrangements are planned and reviewed on an individual basis to ensure compliance with these duties.

Aims

The aims of this policy and associated guidance are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children and young people
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff who have responsibilities that may include personal care
- To assure parents and carers that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that individual concerns are taken into account
- To remove barriers to learning and participation, protect from discrimination, and ensure inclusion for all young

people as students.

Definition of Personal Care

'Personal Care' can be defined as care tasks of a personal nature, associated with bodily functions, bodily products and personal hygiene, which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of, the sexual parts of the body. In some cases, it may be necessary to administer rectal medication on an emergency basis. As far as is possible and especially with older students' Personal Care will be provided by a member of staff who is of the same gender as the student.

Personal care tasks specifically identified may include:

- Dressing and undressing (underwear)
- Helping someone use the toilet
- Changing continence pads (faeces)
- Changing continence pads (urine)
- Bathing/ showering
- Washing personal parts of the body
- Changing sanitary wear
- Inserting suppositories (emergency epilepsy medication)
- Inserting and monitoring pessaries

Definitions

Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to tasks of a sensitive and personal nature that involve direct or indirect contact with a pupil's intimate body areas. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Support with toileting
- Changing continence pads
- Cleaning intimate body areas
- Support during menstruation
- Administration of emergency medication where intimate contact is required

Because of the nature of intimate care, these tasks require clear planning, parental consent, robust safeguarding arrangements, and adherence to professional boundaries at all times.

Personal Care

Personal care refers to support provided with activities of daily living that do not usually require intimate contact but may still involve physical assistance. This may include:

- Support with eating and drinking
- Washing non-intimate body parts
- Dressing and undressing
- Hair and skin care
- Prompting or supervision with toileting
- Administration of oral medication

Both personal and intimate care form part of the school's duty to remove barriers to participation and to support pupils to access education with dignity and confidence.

Principles of Good Practice

- Personal and intimate care must be planned and delivered as part of a holistic approach to a pupil's education, wellbeing, and development.
- The following principles underpin all practice at Uffculme School:

- Pupils have the right to feel safe, respected, and valued
- Pupils have the right to privacy, dignity, and choice
- Care should be provided in a manner that minimises intrusion and promotes independence
- Pupils should be supported to express preferences and give consent or assent, using their preferred method of communication
- Personal care plans should focus on skill development and progression towards independence
- Cultural, religious, sensory, and emotional needs must be respected
- All care must be delivered in line with safeguarding procedures and agreed protocols

Safeguarding and Vulnerability

Children and young people with disabilities are recognised as being at increased risk of abuse and discrimination. Providing personal or intimate care places a significant responsibility on staff to act professionally, transparently, and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Factors that may increase vulnerability include:

- Increased reliance on adults for personal care
- Limited communication or understanding
- Reduced access to relationships and sex education
- Multiple carers or settings
- Behaviour or presentation being attributed to disability rather than potential harm

All staff must:

- Be familiar with the school's Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Follow agreed Personal Care Plans
- Report any concerns, disclosures, or changes in behaviour immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Any allegation or concern relating to personal care will be managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance and the school's allegation management procedures.

Pupil Voice, and Trauma-Informed Practice

Uffculme School recognises the importance of pupil voice and informed consent in all aspects of personal and intimate care.

Wherever possible:

- Pupils will be involved in discussions about their care
- Their preferences, routines, and boundaries will inform care plans
- Consent or assent will be sought before care tasks begin, using appropriate communication methods

Staff will take a trauma-informed and sensory-aware approach, recognising that personal care may cause anxiety, distress, or emotional discomfort. Care will be delivered calmly, predictably, and with sensitivity to the pupil's emotional state.

Consent and Assent

The school recognises that respecting a pupil's rights, dignity, and autonomy is central to the provision of personal and intimate care.

Consent refers to a clear agreement for care to be provided.

Assent refers to a pupil's expressed willingness to participate in personal care, even where they may not have the capacity to give formal consent.

Written consent will be obtained from parents or carers before personal or intimate care is provided and will be recorded within the pupil's Personal Care Plan.

Wherever possible, pupils will be involved in discussions about their care and their views, preferences, and routines will inform how care is delivered.

Pupils will be supported to express assent or refusal using their preferred method of communication, including verbal language, symbols, signs, gestures, objects of reference, or behaviour.

Staff will seek the pupil's assent before care tasks begin and will talk through what is going to happen in a clear, age-appropriate, and reassuring way.

If a pupil shows distress, resistance, or withdrawal of assent, staff will pause and consider alternative approaches, unless there is an immediate health or safety risk.

Where a pupil lacks capacity to give informed consent, care will be provided in the pupil's best interests, in line with agreed care plans and safeguarding procedures.

At all times, staff will act in a manner that promotes dignity, choice, and independence, while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the pupil.

Working with families

Establishing effective working relationships with parents/carers is a key task for all schools and is particularly necessary for children/young people with special care needs or disabilities. Parents/carers should be encouraged and empowered to work with professionals to ensure their child/young person's needs are properly identified, understood and met.

Although they should be made welcome, and given every opportunity to explain the student's particular needs, they should not be made to feel responsible for the young person's care in school. They should be closely involved in the preparation of Individual Health Care Plans or a Personal Care Plan. Staff have a duty to remove barriers to learning and participation for students of all abilities and needs.

Plans for the provision of personal care must be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectations, roles and responsibilities. Records should also reflect arrangements for ongoing and emergency communication between home and school, monitoring and review. It is also important that the procedure for dealing with concerns arising from personal care processes is clearly stated and understood by parents/carers and all those involved.

The school will work sensitively with pupils and families regarding gender identity, ensuring dignity, safety, and individual preferences are respected wherever possible.

Links with other agencies

Due to the nature of their diagnosis our children and young people may be known to a range of other agencies. It is important that positive links are made with all those involved in the care or welfare of individual students. This will enable school based plans to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals and will ensure student well-being and development remains the focus of concern.

Arrangements for ongoing liaison and support to school staff where necessary should also be formally agreed and recorded. It is good practice for schools to identify a named member of staff to co-ordinate links with other agencies for individual students. At Uffculme this would ordinarily be a member of SLT.

Schools have a responsibility to teach toilet training and other personal care skills, as an essential PHSE basis in order to

be able to access the rest of the curriculum. For some children and young people, achieving continence may not be possible. Assistance with the management of their toileting needs should be provided sensitively to allow them continued access to the full curriculum, life in the establishment, and dignity in front of peers and staff.

Good Practice Guidance

In many schools, education and other settings, designated staff are involved on a daily basis in providing intimate/personal care to students with special educational needs arising from learning difficulties, sensory impairments, medical needs and physical disabilities. This places those staff in a position of great trust and responsibility. They are required to attend to the safety and comfort of the students and to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect.

The time taken to carry out this care can also be used to promote personal development, as even the youngest child can be encouraged to become aware of and value their own body and extend their personal and communication skills. If such opportunities are denied, then they may not learn to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate. Confident and self-assertive children and young people who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse.

Religious and cultural values must always be taken into account when making arrangements for managing intimate/personal care needs for children and young people, and stereotypes should be challenged. Staff concerned should begin by simply asking questions about the student being supported and try to discover things about their background and experience.

It is vital that staff meet with parents/carers and the student prior to admission, to discuss whether a personal care plan is required and those staff most likely to be involved in providing the personal care aspects.

Examples of positive approaches to personal care which ensure a safe and comfortable experience for the student:

- Get to know the student beforehand in other contexts to gain an appreciation of his/her mood and systems of communication
- Have a knowledge of and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivity related to aspects of personal care
- Speak to the student by name and ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity. Address the student in age appropriate ways
- Give explanations of what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way
- Agree terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions that will be used by all staff and encourage students to use these terms
- Respect a student's preference for a particular sequence of care
- Give strong verbal and visual prompts that enable the student to anticipate and prepare for events e.g. show the clean pad to indicate the intention to change, or the sponge/flannel for washing
- Encourage the student to undertake as much of the procedure for themselves as possible, including washing personal areas and dressing/undressing
- Seek the student's permission before undressing if she is unable to do this unaided
- Provide facilities that afford privacy and modesty
- Keep records noting responses to personal care and any changes of behaviour

Practical considerations for senior leaders to ensure health and safety of staff and students:

- Adults assisting with personal care should be employees of the school. However Long term supply staff may also be required to support personal care. Long Term supply staff will only participate in this process once school and students have built a relationship of mutual trust. Agency staff will always be guided by the expertise, knowledge and skill of school staff.
- Staff should receive training in good working practices which comply with Health and Safety regulations such as

dealing with bodily fluids: wearing protective clothing, Team Teach, Child Protection, HIV and Infection Policy, Whistle Blowing, Risk Assessment. Identified staff should also receive training for very specific personal care procedures where relevant.

- Where a routine procedure needs to be established, there should be an agreed personal care plan involving discussion with school staff, parents or carers, relevant health personnel and the student. All parties should sign the plan. The plan must be reviewed on a regular basis. The school's complaints procedures should be known to all, and followed where necessary.

The Personal Care Plan should cover:

- Facilities
- Equipment
- Staffing
- Training
- Curriculum specific needs
- School trips / outings
- Individual strategies and aids that promote independence.
- Arrangements for review and monitoring of the Personal Care Plan
- Details of the schools Complaints Policy and Procedures

Staffing levels need to be carefully considered. There is a balance to be struck between maintaining privacy and dignity for students alongside protection for them and staff. It is important for school to decide on practical ways of dealing with staffing levels. Some procedures may require two members of staff for health and safety reasons. This should be clearly stated in the Personal Care Plan.

As far as possible, personal care procedures should be carried out by one person, protection being afforded to a single member of staff in the following ways:

- Personal care staff implement the strategies in the "examples of positive approaches" section outlined above.
- Personal care staff notify the teacher, line manager or other member of staff, discreetly, that they are taking the student to carry out a care procedure.
- A signed record is made of the date, time and details of any intervention required that is not part of an agreed routine. See relevant form in Appendix. A decision can be made at the Personal Care Plan meeting as to whether a regular record needs to be kept of routine procedures.
- If a situation occurs which causes personal care staff embarrassment or concern, a second member of staff should be called if necessary, and the incident reported and recorded.
- When staff are concerned about a student's actions or comments whilst carrying out the personal care procedure, this should be recorded and discussed with a line manager immediately.

Other practical considerations for senior leaders:

- There should be sufficient space, heating and ventilation to ensure safety and comfort for staff and student
- Facilities with hot and cold running water. Anti-bacterial handwash should be available.
- Items of protective clothing, such as disposable gloves and aprons should be provided. No re-use of disposable gloves
- Special bins should be provided for the disposal of wet and soiled pads. Soiled items should be "double-bagged" before placing in the bin
- There should be special arrangements for the disposal of any contaminated waste/clinical materials
- Seeking advice on general continence issues through the School Nurse or Health Visitor. For specific conditions,

the School Nurse, Health Visitor and/or parents/carers should be able to provide links with relevant specialists

- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials should be available. Anti-bacterial spray should be used to clean surfaces
- Supplies of clean clothes (the student's own where possible) should be easily to hand to avoid leaving the student unattended while they are located
- Adolescent girls will need arrangements for menstruation in their plan
- Schools should have a supply of sanitary wear which can be provided for girls in a sensitive and discreet way
- All personal care records will be stored securely and managed in line with data protection legislation. Access will be restricted to staff with a legitimate professional need

Training

The requirement for staff training in the area of personal care will vary greatly and will be largely influenced by the needs of the students for whom staff have responsibility. Consideration will be given, however, to the need for training on a whole school basis and for individual staff who may be required to provide specific care for an individual student or small number of students.

Whole staff group training should provide staff with opportunities to work together on the range of issues covered within this document thus enabling the development of a culture of good practice and a whole school approach to personal care. Whole school training should provide disability awareness, and opportunities for staff to increase knowledge and enhance skills.

More individualised training will focus on the specific processes or procedures staff are required to carry out for a specific student. In some cases this may involve basic physical care which might appropriately be provided by a parent or carer.

For any student requiring intimate care, it may be appropriate to discuss this with the school nursing or health visiting service.

Recording and Confidentiality

Accurate, factual, and timely records are essential to safeguarding pupils and staff.

Personal care plans and records will be stored securely

Information will be shared only with staff who have a legitimate professional need to know

Records must be completed in line with agreed procedures, particularly when care is non-routine or concerns arise

All records will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation

Managing risk

These guidelines aim to manage risks and ensure that employees do not work outside the remit of their responsibilities. It is essential that all staff follow the guidance set out in this policy and take all reasonable precautions to prevent or minimise accident, injury, loss or damage.

It is of particular importance with regard to:

- Staff training
- The recording of activities as necessary
- Consent being obtained from parents/ carers
- The Personal Care Plan being written with, and signed by parents/carers
- The presence of two adults when invasive medical procedures are performed unless the
- parents/carers have agreed to the presence of one adult only

Related guidance and policy documents

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Supporting Students with medical needs in school
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety policy
- GDPR Policy

The **Appendices** provide a selection of forms to support care to be used as required

Appendix I

Risk Assessment

Child's Name:

Date of Risk Assessment:

	Yes / No	Notes	Actions
1. Does weight /size/ shape of pupil present a risk?			
2. Does communication present a risk?			
3. Does comprehension present a risk?			
4. Is there a history of child protection concerns?			
5. Are there any medical considerations? Including pain / discomfort?			
6. Has there ever been allegations made by the child or family?			
7. Does moving and handling present a risk?			
8. Does behaviour present a risk?			
9. Is staff capability a risk? (back injury / pregnancy)			
Are there any risks concerning individual capability (Pupil) General Fragility Fragile bones Epilepsy Other			
Are there any environmental risks? Heat/ Cold			

If Yes to any of the above identify on personal care plan.

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Appendix 2

Permission for school to provide personal care

Child's Full Name	
Male/ Female	
Date of Birth	
Parent/ Carer's Full Name	
Address	

I understand that;

I give permission to the school to provide appropriate personal care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, sanitary pads, washing and toileting.

I will advise the head teacher of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of personal care

Signed _____

Full Name _____

Relationship to Child _____

Date _____

Appendix 3

Agreement between student and personal assistant – **example to be amended as required**

Child's Name _____ Class/ Year Grp _____

Date _____

Review Date _____

**I will always check if it is OK to help you.
I will look, listen, and wait for your answer in your own way.
If you show me you are not happy, I will stop and listen.**

Support Staff

As the personal assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- *When I am the identified person I will stop what I am doing to help you in the toilet. I will avoid all unnecessary delays.*
- *I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times.*
- *I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing*
- *I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally*
- *If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you.*
- *I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Personal Management Plan*

Child

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- *I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me*
- *I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times • I will only use the agreed emergency signal for real emergencies.*
- *I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet*
- *I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.
I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change*

Signed _____ Member of Staff

Signed _____ Child (if appropriate)

Appendix 4

Working Towards Independence Record

Child's Name _____ DOB _____

Date of Record _____ Review Date _____

I can already

Aim:

I will try to

Signed _____ Parents/ Carers

Signed _____ Member of Staff

Signed _____ Site SLT

Signed _____ Child (if appropriate)

Appendix 5 Personal Care Management Plan

Child's Name _____ Class/ Year Grp _____

Date of Record _____ Review Date _____

Area of Need	
Equipment required	
Location of suitable toilet facilities	
Arrangements for Educational Visits:	
Support required	Frequency of support

Working towards Independence

Child will try to	Personal Assistant will	Target achieved (date)

Signed _____ Parents/ Carers

Signed _____ Member of Staff

Signed _____ Site SLT

Signed _____ Child (if appropriate)

