



Interpersonal and Intimate Care Policy

Interpersonal and Intimate Care Guidelines Statement

Longridge School understands that there is an inevitable need to support some of our young people with personal care routines. We also recognise that, in order to meet the variety of physical and sensory needs of our young people, we may need to physically interact with them. In meeting a Young Person's intimate care needs it must be recognised that staff will always undertake their duties in a professional manner, and it is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust. We will work in close partnership with parents/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care. Where regular physical contact is needed, such as when supporting young people with personal care routines or by meeting their sensory needs, this should be recorded on a Toileting / Personal Care plan (appendix A & B) or be identified as a behavioural strategy within their Behaviour Support plan.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the below Longridge policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Disability, Equality & Accessibility Policy
- Health & safety policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- Staff code of conduct

Delivery and Management of the interpersonal contact guidelines

1. Underpinning Principles

- 1.1 These guidelines have been drawn up in order to ensure the protection of both students and staff.
- 1.2 Staff at Longridge School necessarily come into regular physical contact with students, and this contact is an integral part in the development of the student's physical, emotional and social development.
- 1.3 It is not intended that normal physical contact between staff and students be deterred, simply that staff are mindful of the purpose and consequences of that contact.
- 1.4 Many students, especially those with severe learning difficulties, complex needs and ASD value physical interaction as a way of communicating and interacting with others and it is important that staff feel that they are fully supported when engaging in such interaction, such as sensory activities, including deep pressure massage, side hugs, hand holding / hand over hand support and intensive interaction.
- 1.5 It should also be remembered that we are preparing our students for adulthood and as such should be teaching them acceptable ways of interacting with others, such as maintaining appropriate personal space, whilst recognising that this can take years to establish or embed.
- 1.6 All staff have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and students and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement, and is in line with best practice.

2. Student to Student Contact

- 2.1 Where an apparent problem has been identified this must be communicated to all staff associated with the student and the support measure required written into a Behaviour Support Plan.
- 2.2 Physical contact between students is generally discouraged as being inappropriate in the school environment although contact between students to greet, congratulate or comfort each other is acceptable, when done in a socially appropriate manner.

3. Staff Physical Contact with Students

- 3.1. It is acceptable to support, comfort, congratulate or greet in socially appropriate traditional ways.
- 3.2. 'Squeezes' within the context of intensive interaction, communication and sensory activities is acceptable provided two members of staff are present. This should always be from the side or back and where students seek this from the front staff should endeavour to reposition them to ensure front to front contact does not take place.
- 3.3. At times students may require comforting when distressed and a 'side on hug' would be appropriate in this circumstance. Students should never sit on the lap of a staff member.
- 3.4. Staff will necessarily need to use hand holding or friendly holds where appropriate to escort and guide students and to ensure their safety and the safety of others in the community.
- 3.5. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the student's reaction or feelings, and as far as possible, use a level of contact that is appropriate to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- 3.6. In the summer months it is acceptable and necessary for staff to apply sun cream to students. Where possible students should be encouraged to apply it themselves but, in many cases, it will be necessary for staff to offer assistance. It is essential that students are offered full protection from the sun and parents will be asked to sign a permission slip to enable staff to support students in this.
- 3.7. Staff may come in to contact with students when administering First Aid. It is best practice, where possible to have 2 staff members present when carrying out first aid. Any staff undertaking First Aid must have relevant and current training and certification.

4. Intimate care

- 4.1. Only adults employed by Longridge School are authorised to assist pupils with intimate care except in the case of students who are supported in school by registered carers from their residential home.
- 4.2. All staff supporting intimate care must have an up-to-date enhanced DBS.
- 4.2. Students and volunteers may not undertake or be present during any personal care.
- 4.3. All staff will undertake appropriate training to safeguard themselves and students when administering intimate care and will have undergone the equivalent of an annual Level 1 safeguard training course (delivered in September or via catch up sessions when required).
- 4.4. Intimate care routines will differ from student to student and staff who are unfamiliar with these routines should be supported by more experienced staff.

4.5. Where students with physical impairments require personal care and which involves manual handling, two members of staff must be present. Staff must also be up to date with their certification for competency in manual handling. Less experienced staff members must be accompanied by an experienced staff member who will lead the manual handling technique required to transfer students from wheelchair to changing bed. This will also include leading during intimate care.

4.6. Longridge recognises that there are students who require minimal assistance with personal care e.g. females changing sanitary wear, or students who are ambulant and need some assistance with pad changing. Taking into account aspects of dignity for these students, individual members of staff should inform another appropriate adult when they are going alone to supervise a student with intimate care, and should speak to the student personally by name, explain that they are there to support in a way that reflects the child's age and ability.

4.7. If the student requires additional physical support to ensure completion of a personal care routine a second member of staff should be present.

4.8. Where a student requires physical support during intimate care, this must be recorded on either a Toileting Plan sheet (see Appendix A) or the Student's Daily Care sheet (see Appendix B).

4.9. Individuals working in intimate situations with young people can feel particularly vulnerable. Where this occurs, the issue will be discussed confidentially between the staff member and the Head teacher or Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) to consider whether alternative arrangements, additional training or guidance may be needed. Staff are within their rights to ask a second staff member to be present when personal care is taking place.

4.10. No member of staff will carry any form of recording device whilst providing intimate care.

4.11. Care must be taken to ensure privacy and to retain the dignity of the student during changing. Students should be talked to and interacted with during the changing process and staff should ensure that they are fully focussed on caring for the needs of the student, avoiding unnecessary chatter between themselves.

4.12. Wherever possible the student should be given the opportunity to select the person(s) who supports them with personal care routines.

4.13. Students may require individual personal hygiene programmes such as showering, dealing with menstruation, nail cutting or hair-washing etc. Procedures for such care should be established in consultation with parents / carers.

4.14. Students should not be rushed on the toilet.

4.15. It is acceptable that female members of staff change female and male students.

4.16. Male members of staff must only support in the personal care of male students.

5. Residential Activities

5.1. During any residential activities students will not share a room with those of the opposite sex. Male staff members will not share a room with female students. It may be necessary at times for female members of staff to share a room with male students, depending on their level of need.

Staff should be discreet and consider theirs and others' dignity at all times. They should wear pyjamas and seek privacy when changing. Female students should also be asked to wear pyjamas.

6. Child Protection

6.1. The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures will always be adhered to, and all students will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

6.2. If a member of staff has a concern about physical changes in a student's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated safeguarding lead.

6.3. If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be investigated, and outcomes recorded.

6.4. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Safeguarding Procedures and Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff). 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 Head teacher, in accordance with the Safeguarding and or Whistleblowing policy.

<i>Last Reviewed</i>	<i>September 2023</i>
<i>Next Review Due</i>	<i>As required for updates or annually</i>
<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Head Teacher</i>

Appendix B

Daily Personal Care sheet

Day/Date	Student A	Student B	Student C
9.30 Arrival (Splints etc.)			
AM Therapies (Class Chair/Walker, etc.)			
11.15 Snack/Drink			
AM Personal Care			
1.00 Lunch/Drink			
PM Therapies (Class Chair/Walker etc.)			
2.30 Drink PM			
Personal Care			
3.15 Home (Splints etc.)			
Additional Info: Record in Home School Book			