



Oatlands College Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

Oatlands College aims to ensure that students who require assistance with intimate care receive appropriate support at school. We appreciate that students may feel especially vulnerable when being helped with intimate care and the staff involved need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. The individual student's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance. This policy has been developed to safeguard both students and staff.

Aims of the Policy

1. To ensure that students who require assistance with intimate care receive appropriate support at school.
2. To ensure that the dignity and privacy of the student involved are maintained at all times.
3. To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner.
4. To safeguard students and staff.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal care needs of each individual student. This may include helping a student to use the toilet; changing nappies or carrying out a procedure that requires direct or indirect contact with an intimate area of a student; or any procedure carried out while the student is in a state of whole or partial undress.

The supervision of students while they are dressing and undressing will also be considered as intimate care.

Principles of Intimate Care

In accordance with the fundamental Principles of Intimate Care, every student has the right:

- To be safe.
- To have privacy.
- To be valued as an individual.
- To be treated with dignity and respect.
- To be consulted on their own intimate care.
- To have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Parents/Guardians Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to advise the school of the intimate care needs of their child as soon as they start school in Oatlands College or if the needs of the child change.

School Responsibilities

Oatlands College is committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students who require assistance with intimate care. All staff working in Oatlands College adhere to the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Parents/guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the principal, AEN coordinator, year head, and/or SNA to discuss the specific care needs of the student and how the school will meet them. Where possible, Parents/guardians should provide the school with professional reports and/or relevant contact details. Professional reports should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting intimate care needs of the student. Professional reports may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the student at all times. An Intimate Care Plan will be developed based on parental and professional information and an application for SNA access and necessary equipment will be completed if required. This plan will be signed by a parent/guardian and reviewed on an ongoing basis to inform future arrangements. Where appropriate parents/guardians will be asked to provide a spare change of clothes and underwear that will be kept in the school.

Relevant staff will be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they will carry out and only the named staff identified in a student's Intimate Care Plan should undertake the intimate care of that student. Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed in the Intimate Care Plan.

The school may be unable to offer the choice of a same sex carer to students who require assistance with intimate care. The intimate care of students may therefore be carried out by a designated member of staff as identified in a student's Intimate Care Plan.

Guidelines for Good Practice

- All students have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.
- It is best practice to provide help only if it is required by the student.
- The staff member should encourage the students to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Staff are required to wear protective gloves when assisting a student.

Responding to Incidents (i.e., wetting, soiling, vomiting)

The staff of Oatlands College acts 'in loco parentis' and can deal with a toileting or vomiting accident in school.

A staff member must always be cognisant of their duty of care regarding effective supervision of all the students in the class when assisting a student during an incident.

In the event of an accident involving wetting, soiling or vomiting, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Parents/guardians are contacted and asked to collect their child.
- The student will be provided with wipes, a change of clothes and a bag for the soiled clothing.
- The student will clean and change clothes themselves.
- The staff member /designated personnel will assist the student with dressing only if necessary.
- If a staff member/designated personnel is required to go into the toilet cubicle, a second adult must be present.
- Parents/guardians are informed of details of the incident upon collection.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the staff member/designated personnel will do what is possible to make the student comfortable.

Concerns

Any concern about the conduct of a staff member who is assisting a student with intimate care practice must be reported immediately to the Designated Liaison Person/Deputy Liaison Person for Child Protection in accordance with the Oatlands College Safeguarding Statement.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29th January 2023.