



# **PERSONAL AND INTIMATE CARE POLICY (Orchard Hill College)**

**The OHC&AT Board of Directors has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies across all OHC centres and settings – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

Peter Lauener  
Chair of OHC Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Lauener", with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

# Personal and Intimate Care Policy (Orchard Hill College)

## INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is a 'family' of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), which works together for mutual benefit. OHC&AT is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. The safety and welfare of our pupils and students is of the utmost importance. All adults working in OHC&AT settings must protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and be aware that any pupil or student may be abused or at risk of abuse.

OHC&AT will act in accordance with the documents 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfE 2015), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges' (DfE 2019) and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (DfE 2015), as well as the clear safeguarding principles and processes laid out in our Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy and associated policies/procedures. OHC&AT takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils and students in its care and to protect the staff who carry out the intimate care of pupils and students. Meeting a student's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

OHC&AT recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 which requires that any person with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

This policy applies to students attending Orchard Hill College provision, and should be read in conjunction with OHC's Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy. There is a separate Personal and Intimate Care Policy for pupils/students attending OHCAT Academies.

## 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 which some people are unable to do due to 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 children involved in intimate self-care.

Orchard Hill College recognises that many of its students will require support with a range of daily personal and intimate care issues, including support with accessing bathroom facilities and with eating and drinking, both at College centres and within the

community. The overriding principle in all such support is the consent and dignity of the individual student at all times.

## **OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE**

All students who require intimate care are afforded dignity and respect for their adult status at all times; the student's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. There is careful communication with each student who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) in order to discuss the student's needs and preferences. Students' wishes, choices or decisions relating to personal and intimate care, whether stated or perceived, will be honoured.

Students are continually informed of procedures being undertaken during intimate care. Staff will be sensitive to all communication, verbal and non-verbal, that might indicate if the student is uncomfortable or unhappy, and will respect and respond to this. In compliance with OHC's Mental Capacity and Consent policy, a student's decision not to participate in an activity of intimate or personal care will be respected.

Staff who provide intimate care must be trained to do so (including comprehensive safeguarding training and, where appropriate, Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and must be fully aware of best practice. Specialist equipment will be provided to assist with students who need special arrangements, following assessment from an occupational therapist, as required.

Students will be supported to exercise as much independence or active participation in their personal and intimate care as is safe and appropriate.

Transfers and use of hoists during hygiene procedures will be carried out in accordance with OHC&AT manual handling procedures. Hygiene procedures will be carried out in accordance with OHC&AT's Infection Control Policy. Although all venues have temperature limiters fitted, when using hot water (e.g. showers) with any student, staff will constantly monitor water temperature by hand throughout in order to guard against possible system malfunction. Staff will notify Facilities immediately of any faults in any aspect of backroom fittings or water temperature.

Wherever possible and practicable – though this may not always be so – students will have their personal care needs met by a staff member of the same gender. It is always desirable that all female students have their intimate care needs met by female members of staff. There may be some exceptional circumstances where this general rule needs to be amended however; for example, in the case of an emergency where a male member of staff is the nearest person available to assist a female student to safety, despite the fact that that student may be in an 'intimate care context'. In such an event, it would be unethical and contrary to best health and safety practice to wait for a female member of staff and thus increase the risk to the student concerned.

Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements as necessary, via regular discussions related to the individual student's needs. The needs

and wishes of students and their parents/carers will be carefully considered alongside other relevant factors e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

All students are taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding, through Health and Wellbeing (HWB) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as well as incidentally throughout the day where relevant.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical or personal changes in a student's presentation when undertaking intimate care, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness, fearfulness etc., these must be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

If a student becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the student's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a student makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed. Please refer to the Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy for further details.

## **SAFE WORKING PRACTICES FOR STAFF**

All staff involved with the intimate care of OHC students must have an enhanced DBS check. Work experience students and volunteers must NOT be used to support students with their intimate care needs. Agency staff should not accompany students 1:1 during personal care unless authorised by the Principal and the relevant Head of Learning Centre (HOLC); these agency staff must also have an enhanced DBS check.

To ensure positive safeguarding practice, students who are able to manage most of their intimate care but just need oversight or minimal prompting can be taken to the toilet by one member of staff; visibility should be high, if respectfully discrete, while any assistance is being offered. Doors should not be locked while managing intimate care within College centres; however, there may be circumstances in which this is necessary e.g. to safeguard the student from interruption by other students. Any such circumstances must be detailed in the individual student's risk assessment. It is acknowledged that whilst in the wider community, intimate care needs of students may need to be met behind a locked door.

In an ideal scenario, if a student's intimate care needs are being attended to in the community, one staff member would supervise this in a cubicle whilst a second staff member stands outside of the unlocked door. However, this may not always be

possible (for example, due to other staff members being required elsewhere to maintain the health and safety of the overall group; or the student may require support from two staff members, in which case locking the door would help to maintain personal dignity). It cannot be guaranteed therefore, that students will have their needs attended to in an unlocked cubicle and it is important that staff risk assess the situation at the time.

It is important to consider that where a student requires two members of staff to support them with intimate care – which will be determined by individual need – then both of those staff members need to be ‘active’ and actively required to be there. This is to mitigate against the possibility of engendering a sense in that student that it is acceptable to have their intimate care needs attended to by one person whilst being ‘observed’ by another, which is plainly unsafe. Additionally, personal dignity is paramount and conversations between staff when supporting a student intimate care should be restricted and any dialogue centred on the needs of that student. Any student risk assessments should always be up to date and agreed with relevant parties. There may also be appropriate references to behaviour support strategies in this context.

The expectation is that staff will work in a ‘limited touch’ culture with respect to intimate care and that when physical contact is made with students this will be in response to the student’s needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Mobile phones, cameras or similar devices must not be carried by staff while providing intimate care.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The personal care needs of students will be organised by the lecturer in consultation with the student, parents/carers and other professionals as appropriate, and staff will be delegated appropriately by the lecturer in that class.

Lunchtime supervisors may also be involved in the intimate care of students and will follow the same procedures and receive the same training as class staff.

Any concerns regarding intimate care should in the first instance be referred to the lecturer, with the exception of safeguarding concerns which should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If concerns persist the lecturer should approach a member of the Senior Leadership Team to resolve the situation.

Orchard Hill College has regard to Deprivation of Liberty, which is a safeguard for people who lack capacity to make decisions regarding their own safety. OHC will provide a safe environment for the diverse needs of all its pupils and students, ensuring the safety and due liberty of them all as individuals. OHC will ensure that pupil/student choice and best interest is considered at all times and that decisions being made suit the needs of the pupil or student to whom they pertain.

## **POLICY REVIEW DETAILS**

<i>Version:</i>	1.1
<i>Reviewer:</i>	Jackie Van-West, Kelly Phillips, John Prior
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
<i>Date this version approved:</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
<i>Due for review:</i>	Spring 2023

## **RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy  
Equality & Diversity Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Infection Control Policy  
Lone Working Policy  
Mental Capacity & Consent Policy (OHC)  
Manual Handling Policy  
Recruitment & Selection Policy  
Risk Assessment Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Whistleblowing Policy