

## *Escola Internacional de Alphaville*

### Intimate Care Policy

At Escola Internacional de Alphaville, our aim is to provide the highest level of care for our students and staff. Our goal is to ensure a safe environment for all students and guarantee that those who may require intimate care receive it in accordance with the following values:

- *Every child has the right to be safe.*
- *Every child has the right to personal privacy.*
- *Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.*
- *Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.*
- *Every child has the right to be involved in and consulted about their own intimate care as far as possible.*
- *Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have these views taken into account.*
- *Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care as consistent as possible.*

### Definition of Intimate Care

- *Intimate care can be defined as any care that involves washing, touching, or carrying out a procedure in personal and private areas that most people usually perform for themselves, but which some students are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties, or other special needs. Examples include care related to continence and menstrual management, as well as more common tasks such as assistance with washing, toileting, or dressing.*
- *It also includes the supervision of students engaged in intimate self-care.*

### Procedures

- *Students who require regular assistance with intimate care will have Individual Health Plans / Intimate Care Plans drawn up, agreed upon by staff, parents/guardians, and any other actively involved professionals, such as school nurses or physiotherapists.*
- *Ideally, the plan should be agreed upon in a meeting where all key staff and, whenever possible/appropriate, the students are present. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be considered. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and whenever circumstances change, for example, for residential trips or staff changes (when the staff member in question provides intimate care). These plans should also take into consideration procedures for educational visits/day trips.*
- *When relevant, it is good practice to agree with the student and parents/guardians on appropriate terminology for private body parts and functions, and this should be recorded in the plan.*

- When no Individual Health Plan / Intimate Care Plan is in place, parents/guardians will be informed the same day if their child requires assistance with intimate care needs (for example, if they had an "accident" and became wet or soiled). It is recommended that information about intimate care be treated as confidential and communicated personally by phone, rather than through the homework diary/planner.
- Regarding record keeping: a written record should be maintained in a format agreed upon by parents and staff whenever a child undergoes an invasive medical procedure.
- Accurate records must also be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care. These can be brief, but should at minimum include the full date, times, and any comments such as changes in the child's behavior. It should always be clear who was present in each case.
- These records will be filed by the school nurse and made available to parents/guardians upon request.
- All students will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy possible, given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each student to do as much as possible for themselves.
- Careful communication should be maintained with each student requiring intimate care, according to their preferred communication methods (verbal, symbolic, etc.), to discuss their needs and preferences. When the student is of appropriate age and understanding, permission should be sought before starting any intimate procedure.
- An individual staff member must inform another appropriate adult when they are about to assist a student with intimate care. Intimate care should be carried out with at least two adults present, to protect both the adults and the child.
- In general, intimate care should only be provided by school nurses if it is a medical issue. If a child requires intimate care due to an "accident," there should always be a minimum of two adults present.
- Adults assisting students with intimate care must be school staff members, not students or volunteers, and must therefore have undergone full safer recruitment checks.
- The religious views, beliefs, and cultural values of children and their families must be respected, especially when they may affect certain practices or determine the gender of the caregiver.
- No staff member should carry a mobile phone, camera, or similar device while providing intimate care.
- In all intimate care situations, the School Safeguarding Policy must be followed.