Mid North Education Centre

Making a difference by engaging and empowering

Student Toileting, Continence and Personal Care Procedure

Purpose

Mid North Education Centre is committed to ensuring that all students can access toilet facilities and receive any required toileting, continence, changing or personal care support in a way that protects their:

- safety
- dignity
- privacy
- wellbeing
- independence

This procedure establishes site expectations for:

- student access to toilet facilities
- supervision of toilet use
- single-student toilet access where appropriate
- individual toileting and personal care support
- safeguarding and staff responsibilities
- hygiene, documentation and reporting

This procedure should be read alongside Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people and relevant department health support planning requirements.

Guiding principles

All toileting and personal care at Mid North Education Centre must be:

- **Safe** – foreseeable risks are identified and managed
- **Respectful** – student dignity, privacy, cultural needs and personal boundaries are maintained
- **Authorised** – support is consistent with approved site arrangements and documented plans
- **Least intrusive** – physical assistance is limited to what is reasonably necessary
- **Independence focused** – students are supported to do as much as they can for themselves
- **Safeguarded** – appropriate staff awareness, visibility and accountability are maintained without unnecessarily compromising privacy
- **Inclusive** – toilet and personal care arrangements respect the student's identity, needs and right to safe access

1. Student Access to Toilets

General Access

Students must be able to access toilet facilities in a way that is safe, respectful and appropriate to their age, development, health and support needs.

To support student safety, privacy, dignity and appropriate supervision, Mid North Education Centre applies a one student at a time approach to toilet access wherever practicable.

- Only one student is to access or use a toilet area at a time unless an individual student plan, emergency or other authorised circumstance requires an alternative arrangement.
- Students should not ordinarily enter or remain in a toilet area with another student.
- Where more than one student enters a toilet area unexpectedly, staff should respond promptly and respectfully to restore appropriate privacy and supervision.
- Staff must remain aware of which student is accessing the toilet and monitor the duration of the visit at a level appropriate to the student's needs and identified risks.

Independent Toilet Use

Students who can toilet independently should be provided with appropriate privacy.

Staff should remain outside the toilet area unless:

- there is an identified supervision or safety requirement
- the student requests assistance
- the student's documented plan requires staff support
- there is a wellbeing, medical or emergency concern

Where monitoring is required but direct personal care is not, staff should position themselves so they can respond if needed while preserving the student's privacy.

Inclusive Access

Toilet and change access arrangements must respect student privacy, safety and inclusion.

Where relevant, the school will consider individual student needs relating to disability, medical condition, gender identity, communication, regulation and safety when determining appropriate toilet access arrangements.

2. Supervision and Individual Risk

Staff must consider the student's individual needs and any relevant documented risks when supporting toilet access, including:

- absconding
- aggression or unsafe behaviour
- inappropriate interactions with others
- sexualised or concerning behaviour
- property damage
- medical or continence needs
- distress, refusal or dysregulation
- other foreseeable safety concerns

Where additional controls are required, these must be documented in the student's relevant plan.

3. Individual Toileting and Personal Care Planning

Students who require staff assistance with toileting, continence care, changing clothes or other intimate personal care must have an approved and documented plan.

Depending on the student's needs, this may include:

- an Individual Toileting and Personal Care Plan
- a Continence Care Plan
- a Health Support Agreement
- a Health Care Plan
- a Transfer and Positioning Plan
- any other relevant department health or safety planning document

Plans must be developed in consultation with:

- the parent/carer
- the student, where appropriate
- relevant staff
- health or allied health professionals where required

Plans must be authorised by the Principal or delegate and reviewed regularly.

The plan should identify, as applicable:

- the student's level of independence
- communication needs
- how consent, refusal or discomfort may be communicated
- toileting routine and continence requirements
- physical assistance required
- equipment, transfer or manual-handling needs
- hygiene and infection-control requirements
- known behaviours, triggers or risks
- co-regulation and support strategies
- privacy and safeguarding arrangements
- emergency or unexpected toileting arrangements
- relevant medical or health requirements

4. Non-Negotiable Staff Practice

4.1 Two-Staff Safeguarding Arrangement

Where a student requires direct staff assistance with toileting, changing or continence care, 2 authorised staff will be allocated to the support unless an approved documented plan specifies an alternative arrangement.

Wherever practicable:

- one staff member provides the direct intimate care
- the second staff member provides appropriate safeguarding, visibility and assistance
- the second staff member does not unnecessarily observe the student's body or intimate care

4.2 Before Providing Assistance

Staff must:

- follow the student's current documented plan
- ensure required equipment and care items are available
- explain what is going to occur in a way the student can understand
- encourage the student to complete as much of the routine independently as possible
- consider the student's emotional and regulation state
- ensure the required staffing arrangement is in place

Only staff who have completed any required training for the student's care procedure may undertake specialised support.

4.3 During Personal Care
Physical contact must be limited to what is necessary, appropriate and respectful to support the student's health, hygiene and dignity.

Staff must:
- explain actions before providing physical assistance wherever possible
- use the student's established communication supports
- monitor verbal and non-verbal indications of comfort, discomfort or refusal
- preserve privacy by keeping the student covered wherever reasonably possible
- avoid unnecessary physical contact
- use verbal, visual or gestural prompting before physical assistance where appropriate
- maintain professional and respectful communication throughout

Personal care must be responsive to need, timely, respectful, developmentally appropriate, gender inclusive and culturally responsive.

4.4 Student Refusal or Distress
Staff must not use physical force, restraint, coercion or threats to make a student comply with routine, non-urgent toileting or personal care.

Where a student refuses assistance, withdraws consent or becomes distressed, staff will, where safe:
- pause or reduce physical assistance
- maintain privacy and dignity
- use the student's communication, visual and co-regulation strategies
- allow reasonable time for regulation
- seek additional staff assistance where required
- notify leadership where the situation cannot be safely resolved
- contact the parent/carer where required
- seek medical assistance where there is an immediate health concern
- document significant or recurring concerns and review the student's plan

5. Staff entry into student toilets
Staff must not enter student toilet areas unless required for:
- supervision
- safety
- toileting or personal care assistance
- medical or wellbeing support
- another authorised purpose

Entry must be limited to what is reasonably necessary.

Entering or using student toilet facilities without an appropriate purpose is a potential professional boundary breach.

6. Personal Devices, Photography and Recording
Personal mobile phones, cameras or recording devices must never be used during toileting, changing or personal care.

Staff must never photograph, video or audio-record a student while the student is:
- toileting
- receiving continence or personal care
- changing clothes
- partially dressed or undressed

Student images or recordings must not be taken, stored or shared in these circumstances.

7. Hygiene and Infection Control

Staff must follow department and site infection-control practices, including:

- appropriate hand hygiene
- use of required PPE
- safe disposal of continence products and waste
- safe cleaning of relevant surfaces and equipment
- student handwashing support where required

Any exposure to bodily fluids, injury, equipment failure or other WHS concern must be reported and managed in accordance with applicable department and site procedures.

8. Monitoring and Timeframes

Staff must monitor the length of time a student spends in the toilet where appropriate to the student's needs and level of independence.

Where a student remains in the toilet for an extended or unusual period, staff should:

- check on the student respectfully
- use the student's communication supports where required
- assess whether there is a safety, medical, behaviour or wellbeing concern
- follow the student's individual plan
- seek additional assistance where necessary

9. Documentation and family communication

Routine personal care should be documented where required by the student's individual plan.

Staff must notify the Principal or delegate and document:

- significant changes in toileting or continence needs
- recurring refusal or distress
- injuries or unexplained marks
- significant incidents during personal care
- equipment or manual-handling concerns
- safeguarding concerns
- other issues affecting student or staff safety

Families/caregivers will be informed of significant concerns, changes or incidents and involved in reviewing individual arrangements where appropriate.

Information about a student's toileting and personal care needs is private and must only be shared with people who require the information to support the student's health, safety, wellbeing or education.

10. Safeguarding Concerns

Any disclosure, unexplained injury, suspected inappropriate interaction, significant change in behaviour associated with personal care, or other concern indicating possible risk of harm must be responded to in accordance with department child protection and reporting requirements.

Staff must not minimise, delay or independently investigate safeguarding concerns.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal or Delegate

The Principal or delegate is responsible for ensuring:

- this procedure is implemented
- relevant individual plans are authorised and reviewed
- required staffing arrangements are established
- relevant staff have access to plans
- required training is completed
- identified risks are appropriately managed
- significant WHS or safeguarding concerns are followed up

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- knowing and following the student's current plan
- maintaining single-student toilet access expectations where applicable
- maintaining appropriate supervision
- protecting student dignity and privacy
- following the 2-staff arrangement where required
- maintaining professional boundaries
- reporting concerns promptly
- seeking assistance where circumstances fall outside the student's documented plan

12. Review of Individual Plans

Individual toileting and personal care plans should be reviewed:

- at least annually
- when the student's needs or independence change
- following a significant incident
- where refusal or distress becomes recurring
- following advice from families or health/allied health professionals
- where existing arrangements are no longer safe or effective

If a review date has passed, the current plan should continue to be followed until an updated plan is provided, unless it is no longer safe to do so.

Related Department Requirements

- Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people
- Continence Care Plan
- Health Support Agreement
- relevant department health support planning documents
- relevant WHS, infection control and safeguarding procedures

Document type	**Student Toileting, Continence and Personal Care Procedure**
Document version	2.0
Document status	DRAFT
Publication date	09/09/2026
Review date	10/12/2027
Author	All staff
Audience	Site Staff (Leaders, Teachers, SSO's)
Approval date	Governing Council TBA
Document Location	COMMON / WHOLE SCHOOL AGREEMENTS / POLICIES & PROCEDURES / 2027