



## INTIMATE CARE AND RESPECTFUL TOUCH POLICY

### Aim:

- This policy is intended to safeguard the welfare of the child and protect staff by describing the circumstances in which physical contact may be necessary and how we can act safely and preserve the child's dignity.

### Rationale:

- There are circumstances in which physical contact is necessary in order to meet the emotional, safety and care needs of the children. Research has established that physical contact is important in developing relationships; the circumstances depend on the age and understanding and individual needs of the child. The paramount consideration is the welfare of the child.

### The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children;
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one;
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations;
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care;
- In partnership with parents discuss and agree individual children intimate care needs:

### Procedure:

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body.

Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities, to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self esteem. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times whilst ensuring safeguards are in place.

#### Intimate care is one of the following

- Supporting a child with dressing /undressing;
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed child;
- Assisting a child requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided;
- Cleaning a child who has a soiled nappy or soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell

#### Supporting dressing/undressing

It will be necessary sometimes for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed. Staff will always encourage able children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided where appropriate.

#### Providing comfort or support

- Children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be child initiated where age and stage appropriate. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen, if physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.
- If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.
- Our designated nappy changing areas and toilet procedures comply with best practice in terms of safeguarding and take into account the lessons learned from serious case review

There is always a second member of staff in the room, who is always able to observe what is happening whilst ensuring that the dignity of the child is maintained. The toilets have doors low enough to allow staff to assist children who request help and to ensure child safety but high enough to ensure the child has privacy when needed.

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### INTIMATE CARE PROCEDURE

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings. If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective non-latex aprons & gloves are worn;
- The procedure is communicated in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process;
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible;
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning;
- Privacy is given appropriately to the child's age and the situation;
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet;
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet. Potties are not to be rinsed and emptied in sinks;
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic nappy bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child;

### Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infections, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves;

### Protection for staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include;

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary;
- Allowing the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encouraging them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable;
- Allowing the child a choice in the sequence of care;
- Being aware of and responsive to the child's reactions;

### Safeguards for children

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff have an enhanced CRB disclosure and anyone without a disclosure cannot undertake intimate tasks.

All those working with children are closely supervised throughout a probationary period and are only allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their manager's satisfaction. It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students should only do so under the supervision of a trained level 3 qualified member of staff, if this is needed for their course work.

### Links:

- Risk Assessment
- Key Person
- Safeguarding
- Food & Hygiene
- Staff Induction
- Suitable Person
- Student, Volunteer

This Policy will be reviewed in 12 months

Version \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_