



Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children

Date: November 2023

Review: November 2025

Policy Intention

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children has been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting, including nappy changes
- Menstrual Care
- Photographs
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- 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 and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Procedure

- All staff employed at Finch Nest Preschool are appointed in line with our [Safer Recruitment Policy](#).

- We ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. [Safeguarding, Child Protection](#).
- All staff are trained in the specific types of intimate care (if appropriate) that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by Finch Nest Preschool, parents/carers and child (if appropriate).
- Intimate care arrangements are recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- Staff will not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the Agency, parents/carers and child (if appropriate).
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this in line with the [Safeguarding, Child Protection and Public Interest Disclosure \(Whistleblowing\) Policies](#).

Guidelines for Good Practice

1. Involve the child in their intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation

A lot of care is carried out by one staff member / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort / safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

As a child can have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers / staff ensures practice is consistent.

4. Be aware of own limitations

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

5. Promote positive self-esteem and body image

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

6. If you have any concerns you must report them

If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If during the intimate care of a child, you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's personal file.

Other useful policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy