

Active Care Intimate Policy

Version 1

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Purpose

This Intimate Care Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for providing personal and intimate care to children in our wraparound childcare provision. The safety, dignity, and well-being of the children are our top priority, and we aim to maintain high standards of care while respecting children's privacy and fostering independence. We work with children reception age and above, and do not offer nappy changing as a service, all children attending Active Care should be toilet trained.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers involved in the care of children within our wraparound childcare provision. It is relevant to situations where intimate care is may be required, such as toileting (due to accident/illness), changing clothes, and other personal hygiene assistance.

Aims

- To safeguard the dignity and rights of each child.
- To provide clear and safe practices for intimate care that protect both children and staff.
- To promote independence and support children in learning self-care skills wherever possible.
- To ensure staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in providing intimate care.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to activities that involve physical contact or close proximity to the child's body. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Toileting and changing clothes.
- Washing or cleaning the child if they have soiled themselves.
- Attending to children who have vomited on themselves or in close proximity.

Principles of Intimate Care

- **Respect and Dignity:** Staff should always respect the child's privacy and dignity. Children should be encouraged to carry out as much of their own intimate care as possible, depending on their age and ability.
- **Communication:** Children should be spoken to in a reassuring and supportive manner during intimate care tasks. Before any intimate care procedure, staff should explain what is being done in a way that is appropriate for the child's understanding.

- **Consent and Choice:** Where appropriate, children should be encouraged to express their preferences regarding their care. Their consent should be sought, and their responses should be respected at all times.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal information regarding a child's intimate care needs should be treated as confidential. Only those staff members involved in the care of the child should be informed of any necessary details.
- **Safeguarding:** Safeguarding is paramount. Staff should be mindful of their actions and ensure they are never left vulnerable to allegations. Wherever possible, intimate care should be provided by a member of staff of the same gender as the child, and staff should inform a colleague when they are attending to a child's intimate care needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Staff:** All staff providing intimate care must be trained and understand the importance of following this policy. They should respect the child's dignity, maintain professional boundaries, and ensure their own actions are transparent and accountable.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Parents/guardians will be informed of this policy and their consent for intimate care will be sought at the time of registration. Parents should provide relevant information about their child's personal care needs and preferences.
- **Children:** Children should be encouraged to communicate their needs and express their preferences when it comes to intimate care. Their comfort and sense of control in these situations should always be a priority.

Procedures for Intimate Care

1. **Toileting**
 - o Staff will support children to use the toilet independently wherever possible.
 - o If a child has an accident, staff will offer assistance in changing clothes and cleaning, ensuring privacy and dignity.
2. **Changing Clothes**
 - o If a child requires a change of clothes due to soiling or other circumstances, staff will provide the child with privacy and assist as needed.
 - o Staff will encourage the child to do as much as possible independently.
3. **Medication Administration (if applicable)**
 - o For any medication that requires intimate care (e.g., creams), staff will follow the medication policy and ensure they have consent from parents/guardians.
 - o The child will be treated with respect and given explanations as needed.

Hygiene Practices

- Staff will wear gloves and appropriate protective clothing when carrying out intimate care tasks.
- After each care task, staff will clean and sanitise any equipment and areas used.
- Staff and children must wash their hands thoroughly after intimate care activities.

Safeguarding and Record Keeping

- Staff will always aim to provide intimate care in a way that minimises risk to both the child and themselves.
- Any incidents or concerns arising during intimate care must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and recorded appropriately.
- In the event of a child becoming distressed during intimate care, the staff member should comfort and reassure the child, while following safeguarding procedures if necessary.

Staff Training

- On sites where intimate care is offered, staff will receive training on how to deliver intimate care in line with this policy, including safeguarding, hygiene, and maintaining the child's dignity.
- Staff will also be supported in understanding the emotional impact of intimate care and how to engage with children in a reassuring manner.

Review and Monitoring

This Intimate Care Policy will be reviewed annually or as required due to changes in legislation or guidance. Feedback from staff, parents, and children will be considered during the review process to ensure the policy remains effective and relevant.