



Timbertree Academy
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Intimate Care Policy

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Intimate Care Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Staff who work with children who have special needs will show understanding that the issue of intimate care is a challenging one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.
- 1.2** Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.
- 1.3** Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection legislation and guidance. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Timbertree work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.
- 1.4** Staff deliver PANTS (NSPCC), as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

2.0 OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE

- 2.1** All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.
- 2.2** Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex and relationship education to their children as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.
- 2.3** There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences. The child is aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- 2.5** As a basic principle a child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.

- 2.6 Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. In Early Years, children are changed in the Reception toilets or the disabled toilets where there is a changing station. There is always an additional adult to support the adult changing the child and parents are informed at the end of the session.
- 2.7 Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; their permission will be gained before a child is changed in school and parent's will be given the option to come to change their child themselves.

3.0 THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

- 3.1 Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.
- 3.2 Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- 3.3 If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead. A clear record of the concern will be completed on CPOMS.
- 3.4 If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- 3.5 If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (See Child Protection Policy)