



Personal and Intimate Care Policy

Arrangements for Review:

Diane Daniels is responsible for the implementation of this policy and conducting regular reviews. This policy was adopted in July 2010 and will be reviewed in **September 2011**

Policy Context:

To provide guidelines for the management of intimate care for the children at Seashells and Sheerness Neighbourhood Nursery, and are to be viewed as expectations upon staff, which are designed to protect both children and staff alike.

Policy:

In most cases in the children's centre the parent or carer will be present and will therefore be able to attend to any of the intimate needs of the child. However if the parent or carer is not present or not able to attend to the child then the following procedures should be followed. Only a staff member with a full and current CRB check is able to carry out this sort of care.

Children who are not yet toilet-trained will not be excluded from taking part in activities at the centre.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Every child is treated with dignity and respect. Privacy is ensured appropriate to the child's age and situation, regardless of whether it is staff or a parent or carer attending to the child's needs.

The child should be involved as much as possible in his or her own intimate care. Try and avoid doing things for a child, allow the child to be as independent as possible. This is important for tasks such as removing underclothes as it is for washing the private parts of a child's body. Support children in doing all that they can for themselves. If a child is fully dependent on you, talk with him / her about what you are doing and give choices where possible.

Be responsive to a child's reactions. It is appropriate to 'check' your practices by asking the child (particularly a child you have not previously cared for) – "is it ok to do it this way?", "Can you wash there?" If a child expresses dislike of a certain person carrying out his / her intimate care, try and find out why. Conversely, if a child appears distressed or dislikes you, ensure your manager is aware of this.

Encourage the child to have a positive image of his / her own body. Confident, assertive children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to abuse. As well as the basics like privacy, the approach you take to a child's intimate care can convey lots of messages about what his / her body is worth.

Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. As far as appropriate and keeping in mind the child's age, routine care of a child should be enjoyable, relaxed and fun.

Make sure the practice of intimate care is as consistent as possible. The manager has a responsibility for ensuring the staff has a consistent approach.

This does not mean that everyone has to do things in an identical fashion, but it is important that approaches to intimate care are not markedly different between individuals.

Certain intimate care or treatment procedures can only be carried out by nursing or medical staff. Staff that have been formally trained and assessed as competent must only carry out other procedures, such as rectal Valium or suppositories. If any member of staff

is unsure about how to manage personal or intimate care then they should ask the parent, Nursery Manager or Centre Manager or a suitable member of staff.

Report any incident as soon as possible to the Nursery Manager or Centre Manager and make a brief written note of it. This is for two reasons: first, because some of these could be cause for concern, and secondly, because the child or another adult might possibly misconstrue something you have done.

If you are concerned that during the intimate care of a child:

- a. You accidentally hurt the child
- b. The child seems sore or unusually tender in the genital area
- c. The child misunderstands or misinterprets something
- d. The child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- e. The child has a very strong emotional reaction without apparent cause (sudden crying or shouting)

All of these points must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager, Centre Manager or designated child safeguarding person, in line with Seashells Child Protection Policy.

Intimate care is to some extent individually defined and varies according to personal experience, cultural expectation and gender:

- Children with additional needs are sometime taught to do as they are told to a greater degree than other children. This can continue into later years. Children who are dependent or over-protected may have fewer opportunities to take the decision for themselves and may have limited choices. The child may come to believe they are passive and powerless.
- Increased numbers of adult carers may increase the vulnerability of the child, either by increasing the possibility of a carer harming them or by adding to their sense of lack of attachment to a trusted adult.
- Physical dependence in basic core needs e.g. toileting, bathing, dressing, may increase the accessibility and opportunity for some carers to exploit being alone with and justify touching the child inappropriately.

The above is taken largely from the NSPCC publication “The ABCD Pack: Abuse and Children who are Disabled”. For more details about this publication, or to order a copy, please visit: www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/Resources/Disability/disability_wda62080.html

Arrangements for complaint

These are defined in the Children’s Centre’s Complaints Policy.

Policy Implementation

- All staff are made aware of this policy as part of their induction, reviews, and training.
- This policy is linked to all Centre policies including: Health and Safety, Risk Management, Safeguarding, Hygiene, Sickness, First Aid, Medication.