

RHONDDA CYNON TAF MODEL INTIMATE CARE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

The following example may be used to assist schools with writing their own individual Policy.

Introduction

(Name of School or Centre) School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

This Policy recognises there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment, discomfort or pain. The child or young person's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance and every child and young person's privacy will be respected.

Rationale

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out procedures that:

- safeguard **children**, young people and staff by providing a consistent approach within a framework, and
- recognise the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in providing intimate care for children and young people.

Children and young people should be able to participate in all aspects of community life and consequently intimate care procedures will be carried out in a variety of settings. It is therefore important that appropriate facilities and equipment are available wherever possible.

There is recognition that intimate care raises complex issues; whilst it may not be possible to eliminate all risks, the balance should be on the side of dignity, privacy, parental and where appropriate pupil choice and safety. All employees regardless of their position, are obliged to take reasonable care to ensure their own and others health and safety and to work within policy and procedural guidelines.

Aims

This Policy aims to:

- safeguard the rights and well being of children and young people with regard to dignity, privacy, choice and safety
- ensure that children and young people are treated consistently when they experience intimate personal care in two or more settings
- assure parent/carers that all staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that individual concerns are taken into account and when possible are acted upon
- enable parent/carers to be involved in any decision about the Intimate Care of their children
- provide appropriate guidance, training, supervision and reassurance to staff and to ensure good practice
- ensure that parents/carers and children and young people (where appropriate) are actively involved in the development of agreed Intimate Care protocols
- ensure the school/centre shares details of an agreed individual Intimate Care protocol with other agencies that support the pupil
- provide staff with information and appropriate training in Intimate Care

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care involves helping pupils with aspects of personal care, which they are not able to undertake for themselves, either because of their age and maturity or because of developmental delay or disability. Children and young people with disabilities may require help with moving and handling, eating and drinking and all aspects of personal care including:

- Washing
- Dressing and undressing (including swimming)
- Toileting & Menstruation
- Cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself
- Applying Sun Cream

This level of care required will be determined by a Health Service Practitioner who will complete a Health Care Plan. Any specialist training identified as necessary for a staff group to carry out that plan should be provided by a health care professional. This may include:

- Supported Eating (including tube feeding)
- Administering medication (e.g. rectal diazepam)
- Physiotherapy Exercise Programme/Manual handling
- Massage/Intensive interaction
- Care of Tracheostomy
- Applying topical medicines (e.g. eczema creams)
- Tube Feeding

Approach to Best Practice

- The management of all children and young people with intimate care needs to be carefully planned
- Any staff that provide intimate care must be trained in Child Protection
- Staff working with older children and young people with disabilities will require training in Moving & Handling under Health & Safety guidelines.

Principles of Best Practice:

The child and young person who requires intimate care will be treated with respect at all times and there will be recognition that their welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. This means that:

- the child or young person will be encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible and helped to achieve the highest level of autonomy possible given age and ability. Independence to carry out aspects of intimate care as part of his/her personal and social development will be promoted and targets may be set in developing these life skills.
- facilities appropriate to the child or young person's age and individual needs should be provided where possible and practicable.
- consideration should be given to ethnicity, culture, beliefs and religion, and any special requirements relating to intimate care should be identified, provided for and documented accordingly.
- There will be an awareness of and responsiveness to the child or young person's reactions including verbal and non-verbal communication and any previously agreed and identified signals particular to that child/ young person.

- opportunities during intimate personal care to teach children and young people about the value of their own bodies, to develop their personal safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem will be maximised.
- 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 is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present, (e.g.) when physical disability necessitates more than one member of staff to provide care, or when there is a need to safeguard staff. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented. To discourage over familiar relationships, best practice would recommend a rota of staff that are able to undertake this task with the child/young person. This will depend on staff ratios in individual schools.
- It is not generally considered necessary for two adults to provide intimate care. A second adult should be notified when a child is to receive an aspect of intimate care and both staff should upon completion of this activity, sign the changing log
- an exception to this would be where the need for two staff has been identified in a pre existing Risk Assessment.
- there is positive value in both male and female staff being involved in the care of children. However, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the gender of the member of staff to undertake the intimate care tasks.
- If a child, young person becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be considered 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.

Letter of Permission

Permission must be sought from the parent/carer before any form of Intimate Care can be undertaken. All those staff working with the child or young person should know that permission has been given before undertaking any Intimate Care. (Appendix: A)

The Protection of Children

The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 and the School/Centre Child Protection Policy will be adhered to.

If a member of staff has any concerns about any presentation of a child or young person, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc; this must be reported immediately to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

In (School name), this person is:

NAME:

CONTACT DETAILS.....

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 will be followed alongside the Schools/Centres Child Protection Policy.

This Policy was presented to the School Governing Body and approved on:

Date:.....

This Policy will be reviewed on:

.....

Signed: Headteacher.....

Signed: Chair of Governors

Sian O Donovan
Safeguarding Co-ordinator