

Meppershall Pre-school

Intimate Care Policy

Statement of intent

We intend to provide the highest level of intimate care for all children at the setting. 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.

Aim

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 issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at setting work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their development level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

The setting is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The setting recognizes that 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 or pain.

Method

All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes.

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.

As a basic principal, children 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.

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's 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. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc she/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate person for child protection. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred on if necessary. (*see safeguarding policy*)

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. The child's needs will remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.