

Intimate Care Policy

March 2024

Introduction:

First Portadown Presbyterian Church is committed to ensuring that all leaders responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in an appropriate manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Leaders that provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of safeguarding issues. Leaders will work in partnership with parents / guardians to provide continuity of care.

Definition:

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure to intimate personal areas.

Intimate personal care tasks can include:

- Body bathing other than to face, arms, and legs below the knee.
- Toileting, wiping and care in the genital and anal areas.
- Dressing and undressing.
- Application of medical treatment other than to arm, face and legs below the knee.
- Supporting with the changing of sanitary protection.

Scope:

This policy applies to all leaders undertaking personal care tasks with children but particularly to those who are in their early years. In addition to this there are other vulnerable groups of children and young people that may require support with personal care on either a short, longer term or permanent basis due to SEN and disability, medical needs or a temporary impairment. This could include:

- Children and young people with limbs in plaster.
- Children and young people needing wheelchair support.
- Children and young people with pervasive medical conditions.

Best Practice:

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires care will be treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance. Leaders who provide intimate care should be fully aware of best practice. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist children who need special arrangements.

There is no legal requirement that two adults must be present, however, in order to completely secure against any risk of allegation, a second leader may be present where resources allow. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure. Leaders will encourage each child to do as much for his/herself as possible.

Children who require regular assistance with intimate care will have written care plans (see Appendix A) agreed by staff, parents/guardians.

Where a care plan is not in place, parents/guardians will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and soiled him/herself). It is recommended practice that information on intimate care should be treated as confidential and communicated in person - telephone or by sealed letter. Every child's right to privacy will be respected.

Wherever possible the child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing.

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding Procedures will be adhered to. If any leader has concerns about physical appearance, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate Designated Person.