



Intimate Care

Introduction

At Bridgewater we recognise that there are times when children of all ages need help and support with intimate care. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children undertake their duties in a professional manner. We recognise 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, embarrassment or pain.

Definition

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene.

In the cases of specific procedures only staff suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure ie, carrying out suction to children when needed.

Our approach to best practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance

Staff who provide intimate care are appropriately trained to do so by the relevant medical professional who is working with the child and their family.

Suitable equipment will be provided to assist with children where necessary following.

In the 0-3 service all children are allocated a key worker. The role of the key worker is to build a positive and caring relationship with each child they care for. Wherever possible the intimate care of each child will be undertaken by their key worker. In the absence of this key worker a worker who is familiar to the child will undertake intimate care.

In the case of children over the age of 3 who require intimate care, the arrangements will be discussed with the parents/carers and an individual care plan will be developed. The needs and wishes of the children and parents /carers will be taken into account wherever possible. Each child's right to privacy will be respected and consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many adults need to be present when intimate care is being carried out. Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult, unless there is a reason for 2 adults to be present which is clearly documented.

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy possible based on their ages and ability. Staff will encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves for example give the child responsibility for washing themselves.

Agreed on: Autumn 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2025