**Intimate Care Policy**

This policy is in line with multi-agency guidance as found in the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures ( 2005)

It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

**Definition of Intimate care -**

*‘As an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child’* (9.26 ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures)

In Pegasus Childcare Centre this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Pegasus Childcare Centre 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.

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 or pain and staff must be sensitive to each child’s individual needs.

**Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:**

* Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
* Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself
* Assisting with toileting issues
* Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
* Providing first aid assistance
* Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
* Feeding a child
* Providing oral care to a child
* Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided. In the cases of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure. (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam)
* Cleaning or wiping child’s nose or face after eating
* To assist child changing clothes during ‘rising five sessions’
* Assist putting child’s hair up away from child’s face
* Rocking a child softly to sleep during nap time
* Soothing child during nap time

Parents/carers have the responsibility to advise the Centre of any known intimate care needs relating to their child Principles of Intimate Care.

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

* Every child has a right to be safe
* Every child has the right to personal privacy
* Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
* Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
* All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
* All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account

**Assisting a child to change his/her clothes**

This is common during the child’s time at the nursery. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing - for example he/she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his/her clothes etc. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided where necessary. However if assistance is required this will be given in a calm and caring way. Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in the area for if they require assistance.

If at any point staff are concerned in any way parents/carers will be sent for and asked to assist their child and informed if the child becomes distressed.

Children with additional needs may require 2 members of staff to help assist with changing. One member of staff to change the child and another member of staff to comfy and distracted the child. A meeting with Parents/carers will be held before the child attends the setting, to gather all the information needed.

**Changing a child who has soiled him/herself**

If a child has soiled, a professional judgment will be made whether it is appropriate to change the child or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing.

In both circumstances the child’s needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout.

The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age - appropriate responses:

* The child will be asked to attend the toilet area.
* A staff member will be getting the child’s clean clothes and wipes out of their bag already. If they do not have any spare clothes or wipes. Pegasus Childcare Centre will supply these.
* Staff members will clean the child up as best they can and place their dirty clothes in a bag and send them home.
* Members of staff will be wearing PPE - Apron and gloves throughout.
* Staff member and child will wash their hands after to make sure both are clean.
* If a staff member is not happy with how the soiled things looked they may ring parents/carers to come and collect the child.

**Breakfast Club School Children -**

* Children will be given the opportunity to change themselves in the disabled toilet in private. Staff will make sure the child has everything they need in the disabled toilet and this will be done in private and not drawing attention to the situation.
* Staff member may help if the child requests so, making sure other member of staff are aware and are in ears and eye shoot of the situation to oversee.
* If the child is unable to complete this task unaided and does not feel comfortable with staff member helping,staff will call parents/carers for them to come and collect their child.
* If the child has no change of clothes and we do not have anything they could wear at Pegasus parents/carers will be called.
* When taking the school children over to the school staff member will hand child’s dirty clothes to the school staff member which is on the gate in a confidential way and not draw attention to it.

**Child Protection Safeguarding Guidelines**

Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary. Get verbal agreement to proceed (where possible) CARE, CONCERN, COMMUNICATE

**Pastoral Care Procedures**

Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her and be responsive to any distress shown.

**Basic Hygiene Routines**

Staff to also wear PPE and seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents/carers

**Providing Comfort or support to a child**

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly in early years) Where this happens staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch , rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff as noted above this should be discussed in confidence with the designated person of Child Protection.

**Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.**

Our Administration of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in nursery. Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in the nursery.  A small number of children have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements included in our Administration of Medications Policy will have an individual ‘care plan’. This care plan will be formulated by the relevant medical body. If required nursery staff will receive appropriate training.

**Guidelines For Good Practice**

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice safeguard both children and staff.

* Involve the child in the intimate care
* Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child’s age and situation
* Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent (where possible)
* Be aware of own limitation
* Promote positive self-esteem and body image
* If staff have any concerns they must report them straight away.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure the child is safe and report the incident immediately to the designated person and/or management. Report, record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents/carers and kept in the child’s personal file.

**Working with children of the opposite sex**

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by member of staff of the opposite sex with all the provisions followed.

**Communication with Children**

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child’s methods and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress children may communicate using different methods - words, signs- symbols, body language / movements, eye pointing etc

To ensure effective communication:

* Make eye contact at the child’s level
* Use simple language and repeat if necessary
* Wait for response
* Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response
* Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

***This Policy and Procedure has been adopted by Pegasus Childcare Centre***

**Signatures on behalf if the setting by:**

…………..………………………. **Chairperson**

…………Paige Shackleton……………………. **Manager**

…………Emma Thornalley……………………. **Deputy Manager**

**Date of Implementation** - September 2017

**Date  Reviewed**- September 2019          **Date Reviewed and updated** - September 2021

**Date Reviewed** – Sept 2023……………………………                 **Date Reviewed** - ……………………