



# Intimate Care Policy

STAGES THEATRE ARTS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise that, in rare circumstances, a child may require support with intimate care (for example, if they have an accident, are unwell, or need help to change clothing). We will ensure that any intimate care is provided sensitively, respectfully, and with the child's dignity, privacy and consent at the centre.

Intimate care is always carried out in a way that:

- Protects children's health, safety and dignity.
- Promotes children's independence wherever possible.
- Protects staff through safe working practice.
- Follows STAGES THEATRE ARTS safeguarding procedures at all times.

This policy should be read alongside our **Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Accident/Incident procedures, Safer Recruitment Policy, and Code of Conduct.**

Each member of staff including volunteers and visiting artists/practitioners follows this policy and is responsible for:

- Treating children with respect and maintaining their dignity and privacy.
- Ensuring intimate care is only provided when absolutely necessary and in line with this policy.
- Seeking the child's consent at every stage and stopping immediately if the child objects or becomes distressed.
- Recording and reporting any intimate care provided and any safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining appropriate hygiene and infection control procedures.

Any member of staff who disregards these expectations will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## **Responsibilities Of The Registered Person**

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that:

- This policy is implemented, understood and reviewed regularly.
- Staff receive safeguarding training and guidance on safer working practice.
- Parents/carers are informed of the approach and consent arrangements.
- Any concerns or allegations relating to intimate care are managed promptly and appropriately in line with safeguarding procedures.

## **Responsibilities Of The Manager**

The Club's manager is responsible for ensuring that at each session:

- Suitable arrangements are in place for privacy, hygiene and safety.
- Staff deployment supports safe practice (including avoiding unnecessary 1:1 situations).
- A supply of appropriate PPE is available (e.g., gloves, wipes, aprons, disposal bags), and staff know where it is stored.
- Parents/carers can be contacted promptly if an incident occurs.

### **When Intimate Care May Be Required**

Intimate care may be required where a child:

- Soils themselves (urine and/or faeces) and needs changing.
- Is sick and requires help to clean up/change clothing.
- Has a medical need or disability requiring agreed support (only where an individual plan is in place and staff are trained/briefed).
- Needs urgent support to remain comfortable, clean and safe.

STAGES THEATRE ARTS does not routinely provide intimate care as part of standard provision. Any support offered is **exceptional**, based on the child's needs, and guided by consent and safeguarding arrangements.

### **Principles Of Intimate Care**

Intimate care will:

- Be the minimum necessary to support the child.
- Be done *with* the child, not *to* the child (encouraging independence).
- Be carried out using clear, simple explanation and seeking consent throughout.
- Be conducted in a manner that protects both child and staff (safer working practice).
- Be recorded accurately, including who was present and what was done.

### **Consent**

#### **Children's Consent:**

- Staff will explain what is happening in an age-appropriate way.
- Staff will ask permission before helping.
- If the child refuses, staff will pause and offer reassurance and alternatives (e.g., parent/carer collection) unless there is an immediate health risk.

#### **Parental Consent:**

- On a parents/carers request for intimate care to be offered to their child, parents/carers are asked to sign an **Intimate Care Consent Form**, including consent for support if a child soils themselves.
- Where a child has an ongoing intimate care need, an **individual intimate care plan** will be agreed with parents/carers.

## **Safe Working Practice (Protecting Child And Staff)**

When intimate care is required, staff will:

- Ensure a **second adult is aware** and, where possible, in nearby proximity/line of sight (or within hearing distance) to support safeguarding and staff protection.
- Never carry out intimate care in a secretive way or behind locked doors.
- Maintain the child's privacy (e.g., closing a door if appropriate, using screens where available) while ensuring safe oversight.
- Keep touch minimal, appropriate and only for the purpose of care.
- Use PPE (e.g., gloves/aprons) and follow hygiene procedures.
- Respect cultural considerations and individual preferences where practicable.

No unauthorised photographs or recordings will be taken.

### **Procedure: If A Child Soils Themselves**

Staff will follow these steps:

- Reassure the child calmly and discreetly.
- Inform the session lead/manager immediately.
- Contact the parent/carer to advise of the situation and request prompt collection where appropriate.
- Check whether there is a change of clothes available (provided by parent/carer where possible).
- If the parent/carer cannot collect promptly and the child is uncomfortable/distressed, a staff member may support the child to change, in line with the consent form and safer working practice.
- Encourage the child to do as much as possible independently (e.g., removing clothing, wiping if they are able and appropriate).
- Staff will assist only as needed to ensure hygiene and comfort.
- Bag soiled clothing securely (double-bagged) and give to parent/carer.
- Clean and disinfect the area according to hygiene procedures, and dispose of waste safely.

If the child has diarrhoea/vomiting or appears unwell, staff will request collection as soon as possible.

### **Procedure: If A Child Is Sick (Vomits)**

Staff will:

- Reassure and support the child to a suitable space with appropriate supervision.
- Provide basic cleaning support and help the child change clothing where necessary and consented.
- Contact the parent/carer for collection.
- Record the incident and any first aid given.

## **Children With Ongoing Intimate Care Needs**

Where a child has a disability, medical condition, or ongoing continence need:

- STAGES THEATRE ARTS will agree an **individual intimate care plan** with parents/carers.

- The plan will include: agreed support, staff roles, privacy arrangements, resources required, communication preferences, and recording.
- Staff will only support where they are appropriately briefed and the setting can do so safely.

If STAGES THEATRE ARTS cannot safely meet the need, we will discuss reasonable adjustments and, where necessary, request parent/carer attendance/support.

## **Recording And Reporting**

All intimate care provided will be recorded on the same day and will include:

- Date/time and location.
- Reason intimate care was needed.
- What support was provided.
- Names of staff involved and who was informed.
- Any concerns, injuries, distress, or unusual observations (e.g., rash, marks) – recorded factually.
- Parent/carer notification and any agreed next steps.

If there is an injury, illness, or accident alongside intimate care, the **Accident/Incident Log** will also be completed.

## **Safeguarding And Allegations**

If a child makes a disclosure or there is any safeguarding concern during intimate care:

- Staff will follow STAGES THEATRE ARTS safeguarding procedures immediately.
- Concerns about staff conduct will be managed under the allegations/complaints safeguarding process.
- Staff must never investigate themselves; they must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/manager.

## **Hygiene, PPE And Disposal**

STAGES THEATRE ARTS will ensure:

- Gloves and aprons are worn where bodily fluids are present.
- Hands are washed thoroughly before and after.
- Surfaces are cleaned with appropriate disinfectant.
- Waste is disposed of safely (sealed bag; arrangements according to venue procedures).
- Any spillage is cleaned promptly and the area made safe.

## **Privacy And Dignity**

Staff will:

- Use discreet language and avoid embarrassment.
- Never discuss accidents in front of others.
- Allow the child choice (where possible): preferred staff member, whether they want a familiar adult present, and how support is provided.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.

**RELATED POLICIES:**

Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Accident/Incident, Administering Medication, Safer Recruitment, Use Of Technology, Visitors and Risk Assessments.

This policy was adopted by:

<p>This policy was adopted by:</p> <p>STAGES THEATRE ARTS</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> March 2026</p>
<p>To be reviewed:</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> March 2027</p>	<p>Signed:</p> <p><i>BC Vincent</i></p>