



INTIMATE CARE POLICY:

Children and Young People's Service

Rationale

Staff who work with individuals who have special needs will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs. The Charity will ensure that individual's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them in all matters of intimate care. The Charity is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of individuals will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. HACS recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child or young person should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Definitions

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 and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Commitment

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

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. There will be 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 individual's

needs and preferences. The individual must be made aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle, individuals will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the individual responsibility for washing themselves.

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 needs help with intimate care.

Staff should not undertake intimate personal care alone at any point. They should be accompanied by another staff member at all times.