



Education-My Life Matters (CIC) Independent School and Alternate Provision

Intimate Care Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Staff who work with learners who have special needs will realise that the issues of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 Learner's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to learners have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at Education-My life Matters ISAP will work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to C&YP wherever possible.
- 1.4 Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum as part of Personal, Social and Health Education to all learners as appropriate to their development level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with carers/parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.
- 1.5 Education-My Life Matters CIC (EMLM) ISAP is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of learners will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. EMLM recognises that there is a need to treat all learners with respect when intimate care is given. No learner

should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

2.0 Our Approach to Best Practice

- 2.1 All learners who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the learner's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.
- 2.2 Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in moving and handling) and are fully aware of best practice.
- 2.3 Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual learners taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible, staff who are involved in intimate care of C&YP will not usually be involved with the delivery of sex and relationships education to safeguard both staff and children/young people.
- 2.4 There is careful communication with each learner who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss a learner's needs and preferences. The learner should be aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.
- 2.5 As a basic principle, learners will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each learner to do as much as possible for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the learner responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the learner. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the learner and the carer and health.
- 2.6 A learner's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each learner's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a learner needs help with intimate care. Where possible, one learner will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.
- 2.7 Wherever possible, the same learner will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers

known to the learner who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time, guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

- 2.8 Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis; a clear account of the agreed arrangements will be recorded on the learner's care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
- 2.9 Each learner/young person will have an assigned senior member of staff to act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

3.0 The Protection of Children

- 3.1 Education Child Protection procedures and Inter Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to.
- 3.2 Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- 3.3 If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc, she/he will immediately report concerns to the DSL. A clear record of the concern will be completed and referred to Social Care and/or the CDAIU (police) if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the learner at greater risk of harm. (See the Education Child Protection Procedures, available from the school).
- 3.4 If a learner becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the learner's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- 3.5 If a learner makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (See the Education Child Protection Procedures)

