

# **Personal and Intimate Care**

## **Policy**

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Contents

**1.0 Policy Statement**.....2

**2.0 Purpose of Policy** .....2

**3.0 Principles**.....2

**4.0 Scope**.....3

**5.0 Definition of Personal Care**.....3

**6.0 Definitions of Intimate Care**.....3

**7.0 Care Guidelines**.....4

**8.0 Reporting Concerns**.....4

**9.0 Record Keeping**.....5

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

All young people involved in activities and programmes with the Diocese of Killaloe will be supported to manage their own personal care. However, in circumstances where this is not possible Diocesan volunteers and employees will provide support in line with a person-centred approach and following best practice for child safeguarding. All personal care assistance will be in line with other policies of the Diocese of Killaloe. Personal care is defined as any care task (toileting, personal hygiene, dressing, etc.) of an intimate nature which the person is unable to undertake for themselves or needs some support/supervision in completing.

## **2.0 Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to support individuals who require assistance with their personal/intimate care needs. It will provide personnel/ volunteers with guidance on the provision of such care.

## **3.0 Principles**

The following principles underline this policy;

- The Diocese recognises that there is a need to treat all people with respect when intimate care is given or supported. While all children and young people will be encouraged to manage their personal care needs independently, personnel and volunteers will offer support and assistance when necessary.
- Personnel/volunteers will encourage each individual to do as much for himself/herself as she/he can.
- Each individual will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability.
- The dignity, respect and privacy of the individual is paramount. No individual should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.
- The management of intimate care needs to be carefully planned. 2 adults should be present in a supportive roles at all times if possible in order to ensure safe practice.
- The Diocese of Killaloe is committed, in so far as is reasonably practicable, to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all people who provide supports and services. The organisation will comply with all related Health and Safety legislation and any relevant codes of practice or safe practice recommendations.

## **4.0 Scope**

This policy applies to all diocesan staff and adult volunteers who may on occasion be involved in the provision or support of personal care for both children and vulnerable adults.

## **5.0 Definition of Personal Care**

Personal Care involves assisting and supporting individuals with their personal presentation. It is of a less intimate nature as it does not invade personal, private or social space to the same extent as intimate care.

Personal care tasks specifically identified (but not exhaustive) as relevant include:

- Skin care / applying external medication.
- Supported eating / Peg Feeding.
- Hair care.
- Dressing and undressing (clothing).
- Washing non intimate body parts.
- Shaving.
- Dental care.
- Applying deodorant.

There may be circumstances where an individual's or child's personal care may need to be carried out in a specific and consistent manner in accordance with their wishes and their developmental goals.

## **6.0 Definitions of Intimate Care**

Intimate Care is any task of an intimate nature which the person is unable to undertake for themselves. It is associated with bodily functions and personal hygiene which necessitate direct or indirect contact with intimate parts of the body.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified (but not exhaustive) as relevant include:

- Dressing and undressing (underwear).
- Assistance with use of the toilet.
- Changing incontinence wear.
- Bathing/showering.
- Washing intimate parts of the body.
- Changing sanitary wear.
- Inserting suppositories/pessaries.
- Administering enemas.

It is necessary that once intimate care needs are identified and agreed, they must be captured in each individual's Personal / Intimate Care Plan.

## **7.0 Care Guidelines**

- Every individual has their safety, dignity, privacy and right to exercise choice respected at all times.
- All aspects of personal / intimate care should be directed and guided by the individual.
- The intimate care needs of the individual should be identified by the leaders through discussion with parents/carers prior to the commencement of the activity.
- Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents/carers are usually in the best position to act as advocates.
- All interactions are individualised to promote the health and well - being of the individual.
- Individuals are encouraged to develop a level of independence through skill teaching and the use of assistive aids which promotes their dignity and privacy.
- Physical contact during intimate care assistance should be affirmative and supportive.
- If possible personal / intimate care should be carried out by two personnel/volunteers.
- Consent from parents / guardian is required for children. It is not a requirement for adults; however, best practice should involve consultation with them. They may have invaluable advice and guidance regarding the personal / intimate care needs.
- Prior to undertaking any medical procedure, consent or agreed informed consent must be obtained from the parents/carers.
- Under normal circumstances, intimate care should be planned so as not to coincide with time spent in a bus or car.
- It is sometimes necessary to use equipment while supporting an individual with intimate care needs. All personnel/volunteers should be trained and competent in using the identified equipment.
- In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the personnel/volunteer should report this concern immediately to the activity leader or person in charge.

## **8.0 Reporting Concerns**

- If you observe any unusual markings, dis-colourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the activity leader.
- If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the activity leader.
- All concerns must be reported in line with the Diocesan Safeguarding of Children Policy.

## **9.0 Record Keeping**

- Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.
- A written record of all concerns must be made and kept.
- It is important to follow the Diocesan reporting and recording procedures.
- Parents/carers must be informed about all concerns.