



POLICY FOR INTIMATE CARE OF CHILDREN

1.0 RATIONALE

The preschools under the Genius management are dedicated to develop independence in each child. However, Genius recognises that there will be times when help/support is required. The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard the interest of child and staff.

2.0 SCOPE

The policy, principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 All children have the right to be safe, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Young children and children with Special Educational Needs can be vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.
- 3.2 Male staff members at no point in time are permitted to be involved in the intimate care of a child.
- 3.3 The Genius Preschools management strictly forbids the physical demonstration of affection by/to any staff, child or parent.
- 3.4 It is important to bear in mind some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation and staff will attempt to:
 - 3.4.1 **Involve the child in the intimate care**
Attendants must encourage children's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, the attendant must

talk about what is going to be done and where possible, give choices to put them at ease.

3.4.2 Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.

Care should be taken by a member of staff working alone with a child.

3.4.3 Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that the practice is consistent.

3.4.4 Be aware of the limitations of staff

Management must be aware of the limitations of some and must only permit competent staff to perform the procedures.

3.4.5 Promote positive self-esteem and body image

Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take with intimate care can convey appropriate messages to a child about their body's worth. The attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

3.4.6 Report any concerns

Staff members caring for a child must report any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling to the Branch-Head. If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident to the Branch-Head.

3.4.7 Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection and should ensure the use of appropriate protective equipment when necessary, for example, protective, disposable latex/vinyl gloves and masks.

4.0 ACTIVITIES REGARDED AS INTIMATE CARE

4.1 Children are generally more vulnerable than adults. Therefore, staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs. Intimate care may be regarded as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities may include:

- A. Toileting
- B. Feeding
- C. Washing
- D. Changing clothes
- E. First aid and medical assistance

F. Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

4.2 The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which the policy guidelines are based. Every child has the right to:

- A. Be safe
- B. Be assured of personal privacy
- C. Be valued and respected as an individual
- D. Be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- E. Be able to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views
- F. Be assured of intimate care that is appropriate and consistent
- G. Be treated with dignity and respect

5.0 COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN

It is the responsibility of staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of their method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, children may communicate using different methods – words, signs, gestures, body movements etc. To ensure effective communication:

- A. Make eye contact at the child's level
- B. Use simple language and repeat, if necessary
- C. Wait for response
- D. Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response
- E. Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect and without abusing the child

6.0 GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING INTIMATE CARE

6.1 When intimate care is being carried out, children have the right to dignity and privacy, i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screen/curtains put in place.

6.2 If the child appears to be distressed or uncomfortable when intimate care tasks are being carried out, the carer should stop immediately. Try to ascertain the reason for the child's distress and provide reassurance.

6.3 Report any concerns to the Branch-Head.

6.4 Parents must be informed by the Front Office about any concerns the child encounters

7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 MANAGEMENT

- 7.1.2 Ensure that staff working with children have the basic training.
- 7.1.3 Ensure that only staff familiar with the intimate care policy of the preschool is involved in the intimate care of children.
- 7.1.4 Intimate care arrangements which are required on a regular basis are agreed between the preschool and parents, and when appropriate and possible, by the child. In such cases consent forms are signed and stored in the child's record file.
- 7.1.5 Intimate care arrangements for any child who requires this support on a regular basis should be reviewed at least every six months. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform any changes in the arrangements of intimate care. Any amendments to arrangements should be recorded for all parties involved.
- 7.1.6 Parents of children starting reception and pre-KG are advised to give approval to management for staff to attend to the intimate care of their child (with particular reference to toilet accidents or illness) should the need arise.
- 7.1.7 If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report it to the Branch-Head.

7.2 PARENTS

Parents have the responsibility to advise the Institution of any known intimate care needs relating to his/her child, and must provide the preschool with their consent on the 'Approval for Intimate Care Form' as part of the registration process.

1. Child Protection Policy
2. Operating Procedures for Intimate Care
3. Guidelines for Managing Grievances from Parents
4. Code of Conduct