

Community Paediatric Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Service

Considering PRIVACY AND DIGNITY **when working with children and young people**

This advice sheet was put together to provide pointers for new and old staff working with children and young people, but particularly for staff working with those who are vulnerable.

Children and young people should be respected as individuals. We must ensure that we safeguard their wellbeing and promote dignity and privacy at all times, but especially when supporting personal care.



This advice sheet is written with the expectation that if you are working in schools, you have already had basic safeguarding training, and the content of this handout is merely adding to that information. It is essential that you are aware of your legal obligations in Safeguarding Children.

SAFEGUARDING DISABLED CHILDREN

There is clear evidence that disabled children and young people have an increased vulnerability to being abused, and that the presence of multiple impairment further increases their vulnerability. There are many reasons for this and it is important that all those who work with disabled children and young people have some understanding of these reasons, and ensure that they offer appropriate support to any child or young person who discloses abuse.

GOOD PRACTICE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- ❑ Staff should adhere to the Safeguarding Children policy at all times
- ❑ Treat every child and young person with respect
- ❑ Respect the right of young people to personal privacy

Children should always do as much as they can first.

Staff should discuss and ask what help is required if appropriate.

Permission should be informally sought on each occasion that personal care is required and ensure that you have consent to provide this level of care.

Parental cooperation and advice should be sought for children who are unable to verbalise these issues for themselves.

There may be school policy about privacy and personal care. Staff should be familiar with this.

Considering PRIVACY AND DIGNITY (continued)

Policies are likely to include issues such as:

Toilet doors should not be locked.

Privacy should be maintained by a curtain or similar to ensure that the child's dignity is maintained.

Staff should request permission to enter the toilet area.

Issues about dignity may include discretion around asking about need, reminders, carrying pads ready for use etc

- Activities which involve a worker being alone with a child or young person should be limited. If a worker is alone with a child or young person, they should always ensure that doors are open, and others know where they are and who they are with.
- Staff should be vigilant about physical condition of the child, and be aware of any sore patches, bruising or marks which may have been the result of ill fitting equipment, or some other reason. Action should be taken, and these reports noted by school and parents.
- Be aware of how important physical and dress appearance can be within a school environment. Take all reasonable action to promote good appearance, including clothing being straight, or clean, dry and fragrant.