



Breakaway

Cross gender care policy

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Policy Summary:

Regulations 34, 31, 12, 11,10, 7, 6 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015

Policy Aim:

To ensure that staff are sensitive to gender issues when providing personal care to children of the opposite sex at Breakaway:

- Cross-gender care is defined as care provided by males to females and care provided by females to males.
- Personal care refers to intimate or physical care provided to children by staff or carers, such as bathing, dressing, undressing, and assistance with using the toilet.

Relevant Breakaway Documents

- Breakaway Risk Assessments
- Child's Individual Care Plan ('This is Me')
- Child's Individual Risk Assessments
- Bathing Children Policy

Policy

Breakaway operates a Cross-Gender Care Policy, allowing male carers to provide personal care for female children and female carers to provide personal care for male children.

Staff are required to respect and uphold the dignity and privacy of each child, promote their independence while safeguarding them from harm, and establish and maintain trust and confidence with every child.

Procedure

During the induction of a new child to Breakaway, the nominated keyworker will explain the Cross-Gender Care Policy to both the child and their parents/carers. If the child or parents/carers express objections to this policy, the keyworker will discuss the matter with the management team. Management will make every effort to accommodate the needs of the child, wherever possible.

Certain criteria need to be taken into account before a decision is made to provide personal cross gender care. Staff must consider:

- The wishes of the child.
- What is practically possible on each individual shift taking into account staffing, children and their gender.
- The child's individual needs, taking into account their culture, religion and values. (Refer to the child's care plan and risk assessments).

All Breakaway staff must ensure they:

- Only carry out a child's personal care if it is necessary as stated in their care plan.
- Enable a child to do as much for themselves as they possibly can so as to promote their independence.

If Breakaway staff have any concerns regarding the health and safety of a child or themselves in relation to cross-gender care, they must promptly inform the management team to ensure that the concern is addressed and resolved as quickly as possible.