# St. Anne's National School

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School Roll Number: 18059J

# Intimate & Personal Care Policy

| Version | Review | Consultation | Ratified by BoM | Next Review Date |
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| 1 | New Policy Formulation | ISLT, Parents, Whole Staff, Board of Management | Nov 2024 | Nov 2025 |
| 2 | Policy Review | ISLT, SNAs & Parents | Jan 2026 | Jan 2029 |
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*This policy was formulated by St. Anne's National School following a consultation process and in accordance with the relevant acts, policy and legislation as set out by the Department of Education and Youth. It was ratified by the Board of Management.*

St. Anne's N.S.
Scoil Naomh Áine

# Intimate & Personal Care Policy

## 1. Introduction

St. Anne's National School (N.S.) is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, ensuring they are treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity. This Intimate and Personal Care (IPC) Policy has been developed in collaboration with staff and relevant stakeholders to uphold the rights and needs of both students and staff. It ensures that IPC assistance is carried out with the highest standards of best practice at all times.

The Board of Management of St. Anne's N.S. is committed to taking every precaution necessary to protect students and staff from any form of abuse and harm. This policy is in accordance with the ethos and value of our Patron Body, Diocese of Kilmore, and is in accordance with Child Safeguarding Procedures and Department of Education and Youth (DEY) Guidelines.

## 2. Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- To ensure that children are treated with sensitivity, respect and in such a way that their experience of IPC is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for IPC
- To encourage the student towards independence regarding their IPC needs
- To inform parents/guardians in how IPC is administered
- To ensure parents/ guardians are consulted in the IPC of their children

## 3. What is Intimate and Personal Care

Intimate care refers to any assistance required to meet the personal care needs of a child. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have a responsibility to advise the school of the IPC needs of their child. Staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with both the child and parent(s)/guardian(s). Intimate care needs includes, but is not limited to:

- Assisting with toileting and personal hygiene
- Oral care (Brushing teeth)
- Skin care (or applying external medication)
- Hair care
- Dressing and undressing
- Changing or washing after a soiling incident
- Changing of continence products.
- Assistance with self-care during menstruation.
- First aid assistance.
- Assistance for children with medical conditions
- Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.
- Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
- Providing comfort for a distressed pupil

## 4. Principles of Intimate and Personal Care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe

- Every child has the right to dignity, privacy, and independence where possible. • Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Parents/guardians will be involved in planning their child's intimate care and provide written consent.
- Staff will provide IPC with respect, sensitivity, confidentiality and in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Clear guidelines are in place to protect children and staff, ensuring safety at all times.

## 5. Students with specific Intimate and Personal Care Needs

St. Anne's N.S. is cognisant of the increased vulnerability of some of our students due to their additional needs. Recognising these vulnerabilities, St. Anne's N.S. is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment where students receive the care they need while promoting their independence, dignity, and wellbeing at all times.

It may be the case that a pupil will have an ongoing need for assistance with toileting/intimate care. In all such situations the following guidelines and procedures must be followed:

### 5.1. Role of Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians should identify any toileting or intimate care needs in their application form
- Parents/Guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal / Class Teacher / SNA to discuss the specific care needs of their child and how the school will meet them.
- Where possible, Parents/Guardians should provide the school with professional reports (O.T., nurse, Early Intervention Team, CDNT etc) and/or relevant contact details. Professional reports should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting intimate care needs of the child. Professional reports may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the child at all times.
- An Additional Care Support Plan will be developed based on parental and professional information and an application for SNA access and if necessary equipment will be completed.
- Where possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to assist with changing at the Swimming Pool otherwise the school will make arrangements to have two adults assist with changing the child.
- Parents/Guardians supply the school with the resources required to carry out the toileting or other care needs, which may include, but not be limited to;
    - Nappies
    - Swim nappies when needed
    - Wipes
    - Nappy Sacks
    - Spare underwear
    - Spare Clothes
    - Creams (if necessary, outlined by medical prescription, and as detailed in Additional Care Support Plan).

### 5.2. Role of the school

In the event that a specific intimate and personal care need has been identified for a student, an Additional Care Support Plan will be developed (detailed below).

If a child is not toilet trained, and wears nappies/pull ups to school, scheduled changing will occur at least once daily, with additional changes as needed. If a child soils himself/herself, the child will be changed as soon as possible. Both Parents/Guardians and staff should implement the same strategies when the child is being toilet trained. Regular communication should occur between Parents/Guardians and staff when a child toilet training is in progress.

A written copy of the agreement will be kept in the student's file and Parents/Guardians will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.

## 6. Additional Care Support Plan

St. Anne's N.S. is cognisant of the increased vulnerability of some of our students due to their additional needs. Recognising these vulnerabilities, St. Anne's N.S. is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment where students receive the care they need while promoting their independence, dignity, and wellbeing at all times.

An Additional Care Support Plan will be developed for children who require ongoing care assistance. This plan will be devised in partnership with the class teacher, SNA, the student's parents/guardians and/or with the input from other relevant professionals. The Additional Care Support plan is contained within the child's Student Support Plan/File on Aladdin. It includes the following:

- Long term care goal(s)
- Care targets (incorporating voice of student)
- Strategies to help the student achieve the target(s)
- Staff involved
- Parent/Guardian input
- Frequency of support
- Timeline for achievement of targets

### 6.1. Good practice procedures for Intimate and Personal Care

Staffing levels for intimate and personal care assistance will be determined based on each student's individual needs. These arrangements will be agreed upon at the beginning of the school year in collaboration with the Principal/Deputy Principal, relevant staff, parents and, where appropriate, the students themselves. While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all situations, it is important the elements of good practice be followed:

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| Before | • Staff at St. Anne's N.S. are expected to familiarise themselves with the Intimate and Personal Care Policy and adhere to the standards outlined within it. o In the case that a student has an Additional Care Support Plan, ensure complete familiarity with the plan.<br>• The Board of Management is committed to ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training and support in the area of intimate care. If required, hoist training will be provided.<br>• A minimum of two staff members must be present or in the vicinity if at all possible. In an emergency situation, the SNA and/or teacher may have to act alone but must alert another appropriate adult to the situation.<br>• Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.<br>• Be aware of any specific considerations related to intimate care for each student e.g. cultural, religious sensitivities etc. |
| During | • Students will be supported in developing self-care skills to the best of their ability and independence will be encouraged<br>• Get to know each student, recognising their moods, preferences, and both verbal and non-verbal communication<br>• Approach the student from the front, make eye contact, and use their name.<br>• Verbalise your actions to the student in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.<br>• Use visual cues for students with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board e.g. langard.<br>• Use appropriate and professional language. |

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| | • In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, never rough or insensitive.<br>• Respect the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.<br>• Monitor changing needs discreetly – be observant in assessing whether a nappy, sanitary pad, or clothing change is required.<br>• Use visual cues when needed – pointing to prompts, using picture schedules, boards, or other aids can help signal the intention to wash or change. oUse protective gloves provided. |
| After | • Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided. |

### 6.2. Parental Consent and Communication

- Parents must sign a consent form before intimate care procedures are provided (start of the school year).
- Parents will be informed of any accidents requiring intimate care interventions.
- Any changes in the child's intimate care needs must be discussed with parents and documented.

## 7. Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is of the utmost importance to all staff in St. Anne's N.S. Staff undertake regular and up-to-date Child Safeguarding training and are familiar with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and relevant procedures.

Where intimate or personal care is required, it is provided in a manner that protects the child's dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing at all times. Staff follow agreed procedures, use the least intrusive level of support necessary and ensure that any care provided is respectful, appropriate and centred on the individual needs of the child.

### 7.1. Children

All staff at St. Anne's N.S. are Garda vetted. It is not appropriate for students (whether on teaching practice or work experience) or volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures.

### 7.2. Staff

Staff members must take appropriate precautions to safeguard children and protect all who work with our children. For example:

- Gaining agreement (whether verbal or other gesture) from the child or another staff member that the action being taken is necessary.
- Follow the school's Child Safeguarding procedures .
- Giving the child a choice in the sequence of care where possible.
- Being attentive to and responsive to the child's reactions.
- Contacting parents/guardians when deemed appropriate.
- Recording all instances of intimate care related to wetting, soiling, or vomiting – see Appendix B.

## 8. Reporting

If, during the intimate care of a student, any of the following occur, the staff member must report the incident:

- A staff member, whether unintentional or otherwise, hurts or injures the student
- The staff member observes something that raises child protection concerns
- The student appears to misunderstand or misinterpret what is said or done
- The student has a strong emotional reaction without apparent cause.

The staff member(s) involved in the intimate and personal care assistance should immediately report any such incident as soon as possible to the class teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal as appropriate. Parents will be contacted. An Incident Report will be completed as appropriate. Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for Primary Schools and school's Child Safeguarding Statement will be followed at all times. Concerns should be reported to the DLP or the DDLP in the event of the DLP absence.

All toileting incidents involving students who do not have an Additional Care Support Plan must be reported to their parents.

## 9. Communication, Monitoring & Review

This policy will be communicated to staff and the wider school community as appropriate. It will be reviewed initially after one year and then every three years, unless an earlier review is deemed necessary.

## 10. Links to other Policy Areas

*Prevention:* SPHE Whole-School Curriculum Plan (Stay Safe and Personal Care and Hygiene)

*Procedures:* Health & Safety Policy; Bí Cinéalta Policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

*Practice:* Policy on School Tours and Excursions and Administration of Medicine and First Aid

## 12. Ratification & Communication

This policy was adopted and ratified by the BoM on the 26th November 2024 and updated in January 2026.

A copy of the amended Intimate and Personal Care Policy will be made available to staff and the school community on the school website.

Debbie Clarke
Chairperson, Board of Management

Paul Corcoran
Principal

## Appendix A
## Intimate Care Procedures & Practice

Where anticipated, intimate and personal care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored on the child's file on Aladdin. Only in emergency situations would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and the school. Parents would be contacted immediately. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

### Assisting a Child with Changing Clothes

There may be occasions when a child requires assistance with changing clothes, such as after a toileting accident, getting wet outside, or experiencing sickness (e.g. vomiting on their clothes). If a child has intimate care needs, the child's Additional Care Support Plan is implemented. For all other children:

- In all cases, the child's wellbeing is paramount, and they should be comforted and reassured throughout the process.
- Staff must use professional judgment to determine whether it is appropriate to change the child at school or request that a parent or carer collect them for changing.
- Staff will always encourage children to undress and dress themselves independently. Assistance will only be provided if necessary.
- The school will provide wipes, clean underwear, and spare clothing for this purpose. (Parents of pupils with ongoing intimate care needs will be asked to send in a change of clothing.)
- Staff will prioritise the child's privacy and allow them to change in a private area unless the child is in significant distress. No interventions will be made until the child is in a stable and appropriate state. The child's wellbeing is paramount.
- If a staff member has any concerns, parents will be contacted and may be asked to come to the school to assist their child.
- If a child becomes visibly distressed during the changing process, staff will immediately stop, ensure the child is okay, and provide appropriate wellbeing support. The parent/guardian will be informed promptly to ensure the child receives the necessary comfort and care.

If a child requires assistance with self-cleaning, staff will ensure that:

- A second member of staff is present or nearby.
- Protective gloves are worn.
- The process is explained in a friendly and reassuring manner.
- The child is encouraged to care for themselves as much as possible.
    - Physical contact is kept to the minimum necessary for effective cleaning.
    - Privacy is maintained in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and the situation.
    - The child's wishes and feelings are respected.
- Parents/Guardians are informed
- The incident is recorded by the staff member(s) involved (see Appendix B).

### Toileting

As children learn to use the toilet at different stages, the school's approach to toilet training will be parent-led and individual to each student. Parents are expected to provide changes of clothes when a child is being toilet trained and also for any child prone to accidents.

Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible around toileting needs. This may include requesting to use the toilet when required or independently entering the toilet when needed.

At times, it may be necessary to implement a toileting programme for a student (where students are prompted to use the toilet at certain times throughout the day). This will include hygienic practices of washing hands after going to the toilet. As much as possible, the student is given the utmost privacy and is prompted using visual cues to attend to their toileting themselves. .

A staff member will never close over or lock themselves in a cubicle with a student. Where a staff member accompanies a student to the toilet the staff member should make it clear to another member of staff that they are accompanying that student to the toilet. The second staff member should be available if additional assistance is required.

## Hygiene Procedures

- Staff must wear protective disposable gloves.
- Basic hygiene procedures must be followed to prevent infection.
- All spills of vomit, blood, or excrement should be cleaned up and flushed down the toilet.
- Any soiling that can be flushed should be disposed of in the toilet.
- Soiled clothing should be sealed in a plastic bag and returned to parents.

## Providing Comfort or Support

Children may sometimes seek physical comfort from staff. Staff should be mindful of appropriate boundaries while ensuring children feel supported and secure

- Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and always be child initiated.
- If physical contact is deemed necessary, it should be age-appropriate, respectful, and suitable for the specific situation.
- If a child initiates physical contact that makes a staff member uncomfortable, it should be gently but firmly redirected in a way that conveys the inappropriateness of the action without making the child feel rejected or embarrassed.
- Pupils who present with challenging behaviour may, from time to time, require the assistance of two staff members. Intimate care must not be undertaken, no matter how necessary, until the pupil is calm

## Administration of First Aid

Children may require first aid after an injury. Provision of minor first aid will be carried out in accordance with the principles of intimate care as outlined above and in accordance with the Administration of Medicine and First Aid Policy.

## Medical Procedures

If a child requires medication during the school day, parents/guardians must complete a permission form from the school office and discuss their child's medical needs with the Principal before the school agrees to administer any medication or medical care. It should be clearly communicated to parents/guardians that the administration of medicines by school staff is voluntary.

Any staff member responsible for administering medication must ensure that they check the following:

- The pupil's name to confirm correct identification.
- Written instructions provided by the parent/guardian or doctor.
- The prescribed dosage to be administered.
- The expiry date of the medicine.

## Safe Storage, Handling and Disposal of Medicines

Medicines should be stored securely in a designated location that is not accessible to pupils and as stipulated in the Administration of Medicine and First Aid Policy.

- Any medication required in an emergency should be readily accessible.
- The Principal holds the primary responsibility for overseeing the safe management of medicines in accordance with Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations 2001 to 2021
- Staff must follow appropriate procedures for the safe disposal of expired or unused medications.

By ensuring strict adherence to these procedures, the school aims to safeguard both students and staff in the administration of medical care.

## Sensory-based interventions

- Massage/deep pressure may be included as part of a child's sensory schedule or on the guidance of a qualified Occupational Therapist.
- When using massage, staff must recognise the student's vulnerability.
- Approaching a person through touch in this way will be done within a relationship of trust built up gradually with staff who know the student well and who can sensitively interpret and respond to the student's reactions
- Massage must be discontinued at the first indication of the student's wishes to do so

## Appendix B
## Recording Template for Personal & Intimate Care Provision

Child's Name:

Levels of support:

- FPA: Full physical assistance
- FFP: Full physical prompt (hand-over-hand)
- PPP: Partial physical prompt (e.g. hand to elbow)
- Vis. P: Visual prompt (e.g. point to picture)
- Ver. P: Verbal prompt
- I: Independent

| Date | Time | Undress | Wipe after urination | Wipe after bowel movement | Re-dress | Wash & dry hands | Flush | Staff initials | Comment |
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## Appendix C
## Parental Permission for Intimate & Personal Care

I / we give permission for St. Anne's N.S. to provide intimate care to _____ (e.g. help with changing or toileting etc.).

I / we understand that staff will endeavour to encourage our child to be independent.

I / we will advise the school of anything that may affect issues of personal care (e.g. if medication is changed or my child has an infection).

I / we understand:

- The school will follow the procedures outlined in St. Anne's N.S. "Intimate and Personal Care Policy" (available on school website).
- This role will always be undertaken by a member of staff (SNA or teacher).
- We will be informed of any incident that occurs if it is outside a routine care and support outlined in a Additonal Care Support Plan.
- The ultimate aim is to enable my/our child to be more independent.

**In such an event, please indicate below how you would like us to proceed.**

☐ In the event of my child requiring intimate or personal care, I give permission for a member of staff (teacher or SNA) to provide the necessary care.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian 1)

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian 2)

Date: _____

Or

☐ In the event of my child requiring intimate and personal care, I would like to be contacted so that I can proceed to the school.

I accept that if the school is unable to contact myself or someone on the emergency contact list, the school will proceed to clean and change my/our child in accordance with the school's "Intimate and Personal Care Policy"

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian 1)

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian 2)

Date: _____