

Intimate Care & Toileting Policy

Intimate care and toileting is an important part of daily school routine in all classes. At all times, in addressing intimate care needs, the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be paramount.

The specific care needs of each pupil will be discussed with parents prior to the child's admission to school and will be reviewed regularly by all relevant stakeholders. Parents will communicate with the school staff if anything has changed regarding their intimate care at home and school staff will report any changes they make to routines in school.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is the support provided by staff to students while involved in personal care routines such as dressing and undressing, toileting, showering/bathing and attending to menstrual needs.

Staff guidelines

Levels of staffing for the provision of intimate care assistance will be organised based on the individual needs of the students in each classroom. This will be agreed at the beginning of the school year between the principal, staff involved with the students and parents.

Personnel involved in the intimate care of the pupils will primarily be the Special Needs Assistants but teachers and nurses may also be involved as required. With the exception of nursing students all other students and visitors will not be involved in the intimate care or toileting of pupils. Short term substitute staff will not be involved in intimate care needs unless accompanied by a permanent member of staff. Long term regular substitute staff may be involved in dealing with pupils' intimate care needs. Any change of personnel will be explained to the pupil.

Every effort will be made to ensure that two staff is involved in intimate care needs and toileting. Two staff will always be available in situations where a hoist is required. In situations where it is appropriate for one member of staff to undertake intimate care assistance on her own, that staff member will notify another staff member before assisting the student. The second member of staff will stand outside the door of the bathroom or if appropriate go into the bathroom with the pupil and other staff member. In cases where a member of staff stands outside the door, the door will be left slightly ajar, to maintaining the dignity of the pupil and also ensuring that the staff involved in the pupil's intimate care, can be heard if they request the assistance of the other staff member.

Only staff that have completed a manual handling course should assist in the physical transfer of students during intimate care assistance. Staff should at all times follow best practice in relation to Manual Handling.

Staff should at all times also follow best practice in relation to infection control.

Where facilities are shared timetables will be drawn up and adhered to, except in the event of an emergency.

Staff should ensure supplies of toiletries, towels and fresh clothes are to hand so that the student is not left unattended while items are found. If supplies run out while a staff member is using bathroom facilities then the staff member should replace the toiletries with supplies from stores.

Staff should be discreet in the use of intimate care items and these should not be visible outside of designated areas.

Apart from unavoidable exceptional circumstances, intimate care assistance will take place in the designated area. In the case of an exceptional circumstance, the student's dignity and privacy will be maintained at all times.

Student Welfare

Every student should be treated with dignity and have their privacy respected at all times.

Physical care during intimate care assistance should be affirmative and supportive.

Before commencing to assist the student, staff will explain what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way and will involve each student as far as possible in their own intimate care programme while being sensitive to their reactions and responsive to their communication (both verbal and non verbal). Visuals may be required to support some students so please also consult their individual communication profiles.

Discreet observation will be used to check if a student needs changing.

Intimate care must not be undertaken if a student is presenting with challenging behaviours. Staff should follow individual behaviour management strategies/programmes in this instance. Some students will have a specific toileting plan which requires the careful following of procedures and staff will be made aware of this at the start of the school year. Individual strategies will be put in place where students become sexually aroused during intimate care assistance.

Staff will check in advance that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on outings and risk assess accordingly.

Toileting procedures should be reviewed on an annual basis or as the need arises. An Intimate Care Plan will be completed for every pupil and reviewed annually with the parents.

The school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Safeguarding Risk Assessment should be referred to in conjunction with this policy. Each student will also have their own individual risk assessment that will be discussed and revised bi-annually and at class team meetings.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in December 2025.

Signed: Aislinn Molloy
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date: 3rd of December 2025

Signed: 3.12.25
(Principal)

A. O'Sullivan Perito

