

St Paul's Community College



Intimate Care Policy

St. Paul's Community College is a state school run by the Education Training Board of Ireland (ETBI). Our school is run under the ethos of the ETB and the core values underpinning its characteristic spirit. St Paul's is a state, co-educational, multid denominational school underpinned by the core values of the Ethos of excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on:
17th December 2024

Introduction and Rationale

This policy was developed in October 2024, following staff consultation regarding the need for clear direction in relation to their interventions with students with intimate care needs who attend our school.

Intimate care is a key area of a person's self-image and respect, and as such it is vital that it is practised in a sensitive manner. It is essential that the needs and rights of students and staff are protected and that the highest standards of best practice are ensured at all times in the area of intimate personal assistance.

The level of assistance required will reflect the needs of each individual student at any given time.

This policy gives direction to staff with regard to supporting students in their intimate care needs, in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also protecting the integrity of the staff involved.

As per Child Safeguarding policy, if assisting children in changing their clothes, two adults should be present, and parents informed at the start of the year.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a student, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body.

Direct contact involves physical contact between the student and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts.

Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the student to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care includes; dressing and undressing (underwear), support with using the toilet, changing of continence pads, washing intimate body parts, showering (if required) and menstrual care.

Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all staff involved in supporting students attending St Paul's Ccommunity College regard to their intimate care needs. It does not apply to personal care i.e. tasks associated with outer appearance which are by nature less intrusive such as skin care, hair care, washing face, hands and teeth.

Relationship to School Ethos

This policy supports the ethos of the school, in providing appropriately to meet each child's individual needs. In keeping with the ethos of St Paul's Community College, students will be supported to become as independent as possible in managing their own intimate care needs.

Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- To give direction to staff with regard to supporting students who have specific intimate care needs, in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also protecting the integrity of the staff member.
- To promote best practice throughout the school within the framework of the current policy.

Procedures for providing Intimate Care for pupils with Additional Needs

1) Delivering Intimate Care

- An intimate care plan will be drawn up for students who have significant support needs with regards to intimate care. The Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) and the ASD coordinator will be the coordinators of development of this plan.
- The intimate care plan will be drawn up by a team of people including the student (where appropriate), the staff working with the student and parents/carers. This plan will be circulated to the relevant staff prior to implementation.

The plan will identify:

- Intimate Care tasks required by the pupil
- Support needs to carry out each task
- Resources required to carry out each task
- Risk management in relation to each task

In drawing up the plan, consideration will be given to the wishes of the individual concerned and, where relevant, the preferences of their parents/carers as well as staff.

Support needs should include the staff requirements to carry out each intimate care task. Staffing levels should be reviewed with the relevant staff and parents as the need arises during the course of the school year.

- In a situation where a staff member is obliged to undertake intimate care assistance on his/her own, that staff member will notify another staff member in so far as possible before assisting the student that their assistance may be required. If this is not possible, a detailed report will be written as soon as possible following for the school principal and parents (See Appendix 2) Parents and relevant staff will be required to sign the document. A hard copy will be kept in the child's file and a soft copy uploaded to VSWare.
- In case of a student requiring manual handling as part of meeting their intimate care needs, the manual handling procedure should be defined in the pupil's file. The intimate care plan should indicate that the student's manual handling guidelines be followed with regard to the specific lift/transfer.
- The intimate care plan will detail procedures which maximise the dignity and privacy of the student. If a child were to be in distress, and refuse help with intimate care, their parents will be consulted.
- The plan should ensure that the student is involved to the greatest possible extent in preparation for and carrying out of the task.
- The intimate care plan should be reviewed as required.

2) Maintaining the dignity and privacy of a student

- Relevant staff members should be familiar with the student's particular needs and preferences as outlined in their intimate care plan.
- Intimate care should be undertaken in an environment where the student's privacy can be maintained; i.e. only those who are involved in helping with the care task should be present in the room.
- Persons on placement and personnel from outside agencies should NOT be involved in supporting pupils intimate care needs.
- The pupils intimate care needs should only be discussed in a private setting where confidentiality can be maintained.
- Before commencing an intimate care task, the relevant staff member should explain to the pupil, using an appropriate method of communication, what they are about to do and how they will do it.
- Physical contact during intimate care assistance should be affirmative and supportive.
- Staff will check in advance that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on outings.

3) Ensuring the safety of the student and staff members

- The environment should support the implementation of the pupil's Intimate Care Plan in a safe and dignified way.
- Staff members should ensure that they are fully trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual.
- Staff members should use protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks.

4) Maintaining the integrity of the staff

- Staff members who are required to provide intimate care support to pupils attending St Paul's Community College should ensure they are familiar with, and comply with, this policy.
- Staff members who are required to provide intimate care should ensure they seek the appropriate advice/training prior to supporting a pupil in relation to intimate care needs.
- Staff members who are required to provide intimate care should ensure they fully understand the delicacy of the situation and the potential for misinterpretation.
- Staff members who are required to provide intimate care should ensure they seek the opportunity to advance their skills and expertise in the area.
- In a situation where lack of resources results in intimate care being delivered in a way which contravenes a pupil's intimate care plan, the staff member concerned should inform the class teacher or SENCO at the first opportunity, and keep a written record of same on the child's Aladdin profile.
- As a reasonable precaution and in keeping with best practice, a staff member will, where possible, make their intention and purpose known to another staff member, before commencing an intimate care task. If this is not possible, the correct recording procedure must be followed (See Section 1 and Appendix 2)
- In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member should report this concern immediately to the

teacher and the Principal. A written record of same must be kept on the student's file.

5) Reporting

If during the provision of intimate care assistance the pupil; seems unusually sore, tender or bruised, seems to misinterpret what is said or done, or has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause, the staff member involved in the intimate care assistance should immediately report such incident to the Designated Liaison Person. The Children First Guidelines will be followed at all times (ref: St Paul's Community College Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment).

A written record of all intimate care provision must be kept by those providing it.

Implementation and Review

- a. Roles and Responsibilities: The Principal, Care team and SNA's are responsible for overseeing and supporting the implementation of this Intimate Care Policy.

All staff have a responsibility to follow through on the guidelines within the policy.

- b. Timeframe: This whole-school policy will be implemented from _____.

- c. Review: This policy will be reviewed in _____. The policy will be reviewed before then, should a need arise.

Ratification and Communication

The attention of all newly appointed staff will be drawn to this whole-school plan upon their appointment to the school by the NQT mentor/SENCO.

This policy will be published on the school website and a copy of this policy will be made available to all school community stakeholder. Hard copies of this, and all school policies, are available at the school upon request.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 17 December 2024.

Signature of Chairperson:

Signature of Principal:

Date:

Date of next review:

Appendix 1: Template for Individual Intimate Care Plan

Intimate Care Plan

Date of Implementation: _____

Personal Details:

Child's Name:	
Details of assistance required:	

Facilities and Equipment:

Requirements:	Personnel responsible:

Staffing:

Staff Member:	Roles/Responsibilities:

Intimate Care Plan:

Provide details of the intimate care that will be provided, as decided in consultation with all relevant personnel (including arrangements for trips/transport):

Signed: _____ (Parent) _____ (Parent)

_____ (Staff) _____ (Staff)

_____ (Staff) _____ (Principal)

Appendix 2: Template for recording Intimate Care provided without a witness

Record of Intimate Care provided without a Witness

Date: _____

Personal Details of Child:

Child's Name:	
Reason assistance was required:	

Staffing:

Key person who administered the intimate care:	
Staff members who key person sought assistance from:	

Detailed report:

Provide details of the intimate care administered

Signed: _____ (Parent) _____ (Parent)

_____ (Staff) _____ (Principal)