



Edmund Rice College
generosity Compassion Faith Courage

Intimate Care Policy of Edmund Rice College Phoenix Park

School Details

Address: Phoenix Park Racecourse,
Navan Road,
Castleknock,
Dublin 15.

Roll Number: 68306h

School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust

Ratification and Review

Date of ratification: 18/03/2026

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Principal

Signed: _____

Date of next review: 18/03/2027



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís
Edmund Rice Schools Trust

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Mission statement

Our mission at Edmund Rice College is to foster a culture of **generosity** and acceptance where each person has both the **faith** and **courage** to speak and act with **compassion**. We are committed to the holistic development of each child and will support them through their spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical development, while honouring their diverse learning styles. To recognise and develop each person's sense of self worth which, will foster a genuine interest and concern for others in the wider community and in the world in which we live. We recognise and respect the role of parents as primary care givers and in our capacity as educational professionals, we will work together to guide and support students to become responsible, accountable and caring citizens.

Vision statement

At Edmund Rice College we strive to further develop a community that welcomes and nourishes our gospel based values, that prepares our children for life long learning and is a place where friendships are formed.

To achieve our vision at Edmund Rice College we aim:

- To nourish Christian values as a Catholic Community. To plan, organise and celebrate as a Eucharistic community.
- To challenge and encourage our students to achieve their personal best in all endeavours.
- To provide a stimulating, happy and secure environment where each child, teacher and adult is valued.
- To welcome, respect and value people in all faiths and cultures.
- To provide a caring community where little things matter.

Definition

Intimate care is defined as “care tasks associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the intimate parts of the body”. In addition to this, parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with students and parents/carers. Examples of intimate care can include:

- Oral care
- Feeding
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting/Menstrual Care
- Cleaning up a child after wetting/soiling/vomiting accident

Key Principles of Intimate Care in our School

It is essential that every student that requires intimate care is treated as an individual. It should be provided as gently and sensitively as possible, while respecting their privacy and dignity at all times.

The following are the principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- All students receiving intimate care should be respected and valued as students. Students should be listened to and their views taken into account. They should be treated courteously at all times and know who is looking after them.
- Students have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and a professional approach from staff when meeting their needs.
- Students have the right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices.
- All students have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.

Rationale

The school's policy on intimate care procedures are guided by the various legislative requirements enshrined within the following:

The Child Protection Act (2018)

Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (amended)

Children First Act (2015)

The Education for persons with special Educational Needs Act (2004).

The Freedom of Information Act (1997,2003)

Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools 2022

Guidelines for Good Practice:

While we at Edmund Rice may not have prescribed guidelines for all intimate care situations, we will endeavour to update our guidelines accordingly as we meet new students with needs not already catered for under this policy. This will be achieved by consultation with stakeholders and our policy will be updated accordingly at our review point).

While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all Intimate Care situations, it is important that the following elements of good practice are adhered to:

- In the case that a student has an Intimate Care Plan, teachers and SNAs should ensure that they are completely familiar with the plan.

Oral Care

- Collaborate with parents/guardians, and healthcare provider to outline the student's oral care requirements, including frequency, specific procedures, and any necessary accommodations.
- Train designated school staff on the student's oral care routine, including the use of tools (e.g., toothbrushes, floss, adaptive devices) and awareness of potential health concerns such as choking or allergic reactions to oral care products. Training can be provided by the parents/carers.
- Provide a clean and safe oral Care area designate a private, sanitary space where oral care can be performed, ensuring access to running water, proper disposal facilities, and hygiene supplies like gloves and sanitisers.
- Maintain a log of the care provided, noting any issues (e.g., bleeding gums, discomfort) and communicating with parents/guardians if problems arise.
- Prepare for emergencies by keeping a first aid kit, clear procedures for addressing oral health crises (e.g., dislodged braces, mouth injuries), and contact information for healthcare providers readily available.

Dressing/Undressing

- Ensure the area is safe, private, and free of distractions. Lay out clothing items in the correct order (e.g., undergarments, top, bottoms, socks, shoes).
- Encourage the student to perform as much as possible independently. Provide verbal cues or step-by-step instructions, such as "Put your arm through the sleeve."
- If necessary, gently assist with challenging tasks like buttoning, zipping, or managing tight clothing. Always explain what you're doing to make the student feel comfortable.
- Use adaptive tools if needed (e.g., button hooks, Velcro closures) and teach strategies to help the student gain confidence in dressing over time.
- Check that clothing is properly fitted, tags are not causing irritation, and shoes are securely fastened before concluding. Offer positive reinforcement for their efforts.

Toileting (including Menstrual care)

- There should be a minimum of two staff members present at all times.
- Address the student by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity.
- Verbalise actions to the student in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.
- Use visual cues for students with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in a care plan.
- Respect the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use PPE provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided. Period products must be disposed of in the appropriate way.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the student in a dignified and respectful way and allows the student the maximum level of privacy.
- The student's independence will be encouraged at all times.

Cleaning up a child after wetting/soiling/vomiting accident

There should be a minimum of two staff members present at all times.

- Address the student by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity.
- Verbalise actions to the student in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.
- Use visual cues for students with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in a care plan.
 - Student may be offered a shower depending on the incident and if the student is comfortable to take one. Staff are recommended to phone home and seek permission if it is not mentioned in the student's care plan.
 - Procedures for dressing and undressing to be followed after showering.
- Respect the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use PPE provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided. Period products must be disposed of in the appropriate way. Soiled clothes to be returned home in a plastic bag.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the student in a dignified and respectful way and allows the student the maximum level of privacy.
- The student's independence will be encouraged at all times.

Feeding

- All stakeholders should meet to discuss and agree a personal feeding plan for the student.
- Wash hands thoroughly and ensure all feeding utensils and surfaces are clean. Gather any necessary equipment, such as adaptive feeding tools if required, or specialised seating, and confirm the food meets dietary restrictions or medical needs.
- Position the student safely and comfortably, ensuring they are sitting upright to minimise the risk of choking or aspiration. Use appropriate supports if needed to maintain stability.
- Engage with the student by explaining the process and encouraging their participation, even if they cannot fully feed themselves. Pay attention to nonverbal cues to assess their comfort and readiness to eat.
- Offer food in small, manageable portions at a pace suitable for the student, using adaptive tools if necessary. Monitor for any signs of difficulty, such as coughing, choking, or refusal, and adjust accordingly.
- Clean the student's face and hands, ensure they remain upright for a short period to aid digestion, and document the feeding process, including the amount consumed and any issues observed.

All staff members who are involved in feeding support must have the appropriate training completed especially in the event that feeding is considered a medical intervention e.g. peg feeding.

General Care & Reporting:

If during the intimate care of a student, reporting must take place if

- A staff member accidentally hurts/injures the student or vice versa.
- The staff member observes something which raises child protection concerns
- The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause

The incident must be reported to the DLP or Deputy DLP in his/her absence.

Where necessary, incident should be reported using the Incident Report Form.

Responsibilities:

School should:

- In the event that intimate care needs have been identified for a student, an Intimate Care/Toileting Plan will be developed as part of the student's SSP in partnership with the relevant stakeholders.
- If a student is not toilet trained, and wears nappies/pull ups to school, toileting will be scheduled during the school day. If a student soils himself/herself, the student will be changed as soon as possible.
- 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.
- In the event of a student who requires intimate care who would typically not require assistance in this regard, this should be communicated with home.

Students should:

- A student's role in their intimate care needs is to communicate their preferences, comfort levels, and any assistance required to the best of their ability. For those who are EAL students, students with selective mutism, or limited verbally; alternate forms of communication, such as visual aids, gestures, or communication devices should be provided to ensure their needs are clearly understood. Empowering the student to participate in decision-making fosters dignity and independence.

Parents should:

- Parents/Guardians should identify any toileting or intimate care needs as soon as placement is given.
- Parents/guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the management/SEN coordinator/class teacher/SET/SNA (any one of but not all) to discuss the specific care needs of their child and how the school can meet them.
- Where possible, Parents/guardians should provide the school with professional reports (O.T., nurse, Early Intervention Team. Enable Ireland 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 report may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the child at all times.
- 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 - Wipes
 - Nappy Sacks
 - Spare underwear
 - Spare Clothes
 - Creams (if necessary and as detailed in Intimate Care Plan)
 - Other personal cares items e.g. soap, toothpaste etc.

