

Donaghmore Primary School Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

The health and safety of both staff and children is of utmost importance. While we strive to promote children's independence there may be times when help is required.

This intimate care policy has been developed to:

- Safeguard children and staff.
- Ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect.
- Provide a clear procedure for intimate care.
- Inform parents in how intimate care is administered.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of an individual child. 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 children and parents.

Such activities can include:

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing.
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil.
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell.

Guidelines for Good Practice

- Each child will be treated respectfully and sensitively.
- Matters involving intimate care will be dealt with confidentially.
- Children will be encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Children will have privacy to change appropriate to their age and situation.
- Children will be consulted in their own intimate care and where possible be given choices in how it is carried out.
- Care will stop immediately if the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when intimate care is being carried out. Staff will try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance. The Designated Teacher (DT) must be informed in this instance.
- If any concerns arise as a result of providing intimate care they must be reported immediately to the DT.

Safeguards for children

- All staff are appropriately vetted.
- Intimate care procedures will not be carried out by work placement students.
- Staff involved in intimate care must be familiar with this policy, the Child Protection Policy and Pastoral Care Policy.

Safeguards for staff

Staff need to be aware they are placing themselves in a vulnerable position when providing intimate care. They can take safeguarding measures including:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary.
- Allow the child to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care.
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

Permission

If emergency intimate care is required, parents will be informed at the earliest possible time. The child will be encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible. A child will never be left wet, soiled or in distress.

Where intimate care is required on a regular basis for pupils, arrangements will be agreed between the school and parents, taking the child's views into account where appropriate. In such cases, consent forms are signed and stored in pupil record folders. Such arrangements will be reviewed each term and any amendments recorded.

Hygiene

- Protective gloves will be worn
- Soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child
- All spills will be wiped up, put in a plastic bag and placed in outside bin

Providing comfort or support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children Foundation Stage). If physical contact is deemed appropriate it must be suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child. Staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated.

This policy should be read alongside the Child Protection Policy and Pastoral Care Policy.