

**St. Canice Primary School
and
Nursery Unit
Dungiven**



Intimate Care Policy

Reviewed November 2019

Due for review June 2021

Signed by Chair of BOG Mr T Nelis

Date November 2019

Introduction

This Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children, has been developed to safeguard all children and staff of St Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

We recognize that disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

This Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Area Child Protection Committee's Regional Policy and Procedures (April 2005).

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents/Guardians, 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.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Photographs
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

Principles Of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which this Policy and Guidelines for St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Agency Responsibilities

For the purpose of definition, the Agency referred to in this policy is, St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit Dungiven.

- All staff working with children must be vetted; this includes students on work placement and volunteers. Vetting includes:
 - Access NI checks
 - Pre-employment checks
 - Two independent references
- Only staff identified by the school should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The Principal/Designated Teacher for Child Protection must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines, together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.
- All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out, and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines for St Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit within the context of their work.
- All forms of intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / guardians and child (if appropriate) - refer to section 5.0 Personal Care & Toileting Accidents.

- Intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents/ guardians and child (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents / guardians and child (if appropriate).
- Additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks in the event of a staff member being absent or on sick leave.
- Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), will be sought and considered, to help inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Personal Care & Toileting Accidents

In St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit, children are encouraged to become completely independent in their personal care and toileting needs. Children are free to use toilets at any time during the day.

However, occasions may arise when a child may need support with their personal care as a consequence of having had a 'toileting accident'. On such occasions, designated members of staff will be available to arrange for the child to get an appropriate change of clothing.

A simple 'Personal Care Consent Form' (see Appendix 1) will be made available to parents to sign, advising them of the level of support available from designated staff when a 'toileting accident' occurs, and outlining the procedure staff in the school will follow in responding to such an incident.

This 'Personal Care Consent Form' is essential, and is an important medium in ensuring that the school and parents are mutually aware, from the outset, of the issues surrounding the task of dealing appropriately with a 'toileting accident' in St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit.

Given that there is a wide range of pupils at the school, of differing abilities and needs, and of differing levels of maturity and independence, the level of support offered and assistance required will vary accordingly.

Appropriate changing facilities for any child who has had the misfortune of having had a 'toileting accident' within the toilet area of the Nursery Unit.

A logbook will be kept to record the basic details of the incident, and of the level of personal care offered, and of the support given in assisting the child with a change of clothing.

The dignity and privacy of the child will be of paramount concern at all times.

Guidelines For Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard the children and staff of St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

- **Involve the child in their intimate care.**

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

Check your practice by asking the child / parent any likes / dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent.

- **Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.**

A lot of care is carried out by one staff member / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort /safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

- **Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.**

As a child can have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers and the school ensures practice is consistent.

- **Be aware of own limitations.**

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. IF IN DOUBT ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed e.g. enteral feeding, rectal diazepam.

- **Promote positive self-esteem and body image.**

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

- **If you have any concerns, you must report them.**

If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to your Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to your designated teacher.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.

A written record of concerns - 'Incident Alert Form' - must be made, and kept in a secure location by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. (see Appendix 2)

The standard reporting and recording procedures for all incidents relating to issues of Child Protection in St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit will be followed at all times, and parents/ guardians will be kept informed about concerns the school may have.

In adhering to the appropriate procedures for reporting and recording, the school will comply with advice and guidance available from:-

- DENI Child Protection & Pastoral Care Guidance (1999)
- Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures (April 2005)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order (2007).

Working With Children Of The Opposite Sex

The intimate care of boys / girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- (a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by St Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit Code of Conduct, in conjunction with the school's policy and procedures.
- (b) Staff who are not governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within their agency, and direction and agreement must be provided by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection / Principal.
- (c) When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place.
- (d) If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- (e) All staff should report any concerns they may have to the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record.
- (f) Parents / guardians must be informed about any concerns the school may have.

Communication With Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication.

Children communicate using different methods e.g. words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing.

To ensure effective communication:-

- Ascertain how the child communicates e.g. consult with child, parent/guardian and, if appropriate, communication needs must be recorded using the 'Communication Pro-forma for Intimate Care - How I Communicate' (see Appendix 3). If further information is required, consult with the child's Speech and Language Therapist.
- Make eye contact at the child's level.
- Use simple language, and repeat if necessary.
- Wait for response.
- Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response.
- Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

Practical Guidelines

Refer to Appendix 4

Policy Development and Review

The development of the school's Intimate Care Policy is continually ongoing and opportunities to attend professional development courses regarding issues connected with the policy will be afforded to all relevant staff.

The review of this policy document is continuous in light of guidance and advice from statutory bodies and legal requirements.

The Principal will advise on necessary updates/amendments to be effected to the policy; the views of all staff, parents, pupils and Board of Governors will also be sought from time to time, as part of the ongoing review process.

Personal Care Consent Form

In St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit, children are encouraged to become completely independent in their personal care and toileting needs. Children are free to use toilets, which are unisex at any time during the day.

Occasions do arise however when your child may need intimate care, due to a toileting accident or becoming wet during the course of play.

On such an occasion, the teacher or nursery assistant will help your child to change. Volunteers or students **will not** be permitted to offer such care.

If your child has a 'toileting accident' only the teacher, nursery assistant or special needs assistant are permitted to change a child where a parent has signed the consent slip.

Staff involved with follow this procedure:

- if assisting with a toileting accident a second member of nursery staff will be informed and be in close proximity to the changing area
- Console the child and provide him/her with a change of clothes from the nursery supply.
- Escort the child to a changing area, and if required, assist in cleaning the child and/or changing his/her clothes, however the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- Protective gloves are worn
- The Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation - Although staff will try to give the child a sense of privacy, if a child has to be taken aside for a toileting accident, the door must be left ajar.
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- The bag of soiled clothing is to be collected by parent / carer, and washed at home.
- The child's parent/guardian will be informed of the 'toileting accident' as soon as possible.
- If a child resists the care being offered by a designated member of staff, the parent/guardian will be contacted and no further action taken until their arrival.
- If a child is having 'toileting accidents' frequently, the teacher will meet the parent to discuss and plan appropriate action.
- Toileting accidents/intimate care must be recorded in the log book housed in the toilet area.

- Staff will not do something of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves. This includes bottom cleaning or any other activity which could be misconstrued.

If you are prepared to accept the protocol outlined above, please sign the consent form to enable the Nursery staff to take appropriate action.

Please Note

- ***If permission is not given, the parent / carer will be contacted to provide the necessary personal care, as and when required.***
- ***When contact cannot be established with the parent / carer, the school reserves the right to use its own discretion.***

X-----

Personal Care Consent Form - Reply Slip

Name of child: _____ **D.O.B.** _____

I understand the procedures followed by St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit Staff with regard to the personal care and toileting needs of my child. *Please tick as appropriate*

I hereby **consent** to the action being taken as outlined in the protocol above

I hereby **do not consent** to the action being taken as outlined in the protocol above

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date: _____

Incident Alert Log

St. Canice Primary School and Nursery Unit, Dungiven

Date: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Person reporting: _____

Relationship to school: _____

Class: _____

Details of Incident: _____

Referred to: _____ on: _____

Action taken: _____

Person completing report: _____ Signature: _____

Person witnessing report: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix 3

Communication Proforma for Intimate Care
- How I Communicate

Name: _____

Date: _____

I communicate using words / signs / communication book / communication aid / body movements.

I indicate my likes / preferences by _____

I indicate my dislikes by _____

I show I am happy by _____ and

unhappy by _____

If appropriate please complete the following

When I need to go to the toilet I _____

When I need changed I _____

Additional information _____

Speech and Language Therapist _____ Occupational Therapist _____

Key worker/s _____ Contact Number/s _____

Parent's / Carer's Signature _____

Practical Guidelines

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- Protective gloves are worn
- The Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation - Although staff will try to give the child a sense of privacy, if a child has to be taken aside for a toileting accident, the door must be left ajar.
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- The bag of soiled clothing is to be collected by parent / guardian, and washed at home.
- The child's parent/guardian will be informed of the 'toileting accident' as soon as possible.
- If a child resists the care being offered by a designated member of staff, the parent/guardian will be contacted and no further action taken until their arrival.
- If a child is having 'toileting accidents' frequently, the teacher will meet the parent to discuss and plan appropriate action.
- Toileting accidents/intimate care must be recorded in the log book housed in the toilet area.
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