

## Cookstown Nursery School



# Intimate Care Policy

# COOKSTOWN NURSERY SCHOOL

## INTIMATE CARE POLICY

### Aim

It is the intention of Cookstown Nursery School to develop independence in each child. However, there will be occasions when help is required from the staff. Our intimate care policy aims to safeguard both children and staff.

Our policy has been developed with guidance from the following documents:

SBNI Regional Child Protection Policy and Practice.

EA Child Protection Policy

The School's own Child Protection and Pastoral Care Policies

Children (NI) Order 1995

Human Rights Act 1998

### Mission

Young children can be especially vulnerable and staff involved with any aspects of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs. Teachers and Nursery Assistants will come into physical contact with pupils when toileting, and often in cleaning and changing clothes. This policy is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our pastoral care policy. The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based.

- Every child has a 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
- Each 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.

Intimate care can be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one off incident. Such activities can include washing after falling in mud, changing clothes after a toileting incident, first aid and medical assistance.

In accordance with our admissions criteria, it is expected that all children will be toilet trained by the time of admission. Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any difficulties/any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

## Procedures/ Guidelines for Good Practice

1. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. All teaching and non-teaching staff are vetted through the EA. Only permanent/ long-term temporary members of staff who are familiar with the Intimate care policy and other Pastoral care policies of the school are involved in the intimate care of children. Substitute teaching staff or casual/students should **NEVER** be involved in the intimate care of any child within the nursery school.

2. Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents. Consent forms are signed by the parent and held in school. Any parent who does not wish to sign for consent will be contacted to come to school to change their child. However if the parent cannot be contacted within **10 minutes** of the incident, the school reserves the right to go ahead and change the child in the interest of their comfort and to minimise distress to themselves and staff members.

3. All staff must adhere to the following guidelines of good practice, which should safeguard children and staff.

- Involve the child in the intimate care as fully as possible.
- Sometimes children may find physical contact uncomfortable or distressing. Staff should be sensitive to a child's reaction and act appropriately.
- Staff should not touch pupils, however casually, on parts of the body or in circumstances that might be considered indecent.
- In the instance of a child being changed, the member of staff changing the pupil should inform another member of staff so they can be aware this is happening and be witness as much as possible. However, while it is recommended to have two members of staff assisting the child, this level of resourcing may not be available and, while the introduction of a second assistant may be perceived as providing protection against allegations of abuse, it can also further erode the child's privacy.
- On each occasion where a child has been changed, staff will sign a changing record outlining the reason for the change for parent's information. This will be co-signed by another staff member and the record kept in the school.
- In the case of children with additional needs, who are not toilet trained, this will require daily nappy changing. Parents will be shown around our specialised facilities and asked to sign the changing procedures form (see attached form) or multi-disciplinary care plan, which will be agreed with the consent of the parents.
- When a child is affectionate or distressed, staff should be aware of their physical contact with the child remaining at all times public and appropriate.
- Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual marking, discoloration or swelling, report it immediately to the designated teacher for child protection (Mrs Julianne Fleming).

- At times when physical restraint is necessary, staff should never (unless in case of an emergency) act without a witness, always with the child's best interest at heart and make a written record of the incident. Parents should be involved in this process as much as possible and be expected to support staff in prevention of such action being necessary.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Staff of Cookstown Nursery School will update this Policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually. The Board of Governors will also monitor the implementation of this policy in line with the policy review schedule



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