



Intimate Care Policy

St. John's Primary School, Coleraine

Principal: Mrs H. McDonnell

SENCO & Designated Teacher for Child Protection Teacher: Miss A.McNicholl

Deputy Designated Teachers: Mrs H. McDonnell & Mrs K. McGinley

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr L. McQuillan

Child Protection Governor: Mr B. Shiels

June 2025

Reaching New Heights





June 2025

Our School Vision

St. John's Primary School will be committed to 'Reaching New Heights' in all that we do.

Our School Aims

To ensure all pupils achieve the highest educational standards through modern, active and dynamic learning experiences. We will foster a love of learning by deepening knowledge and understanding through hands-on and playful approaches.

To value each child's contribution to their learning journey by helping them to develop holistically and grow in self-confidence and self-esteem.

To foster meaningful and impactful relationships with everyone connected to our children's lives. This includes nurturing strong relationships amongst our staff, learners, parents, parish, and the broader St. John's community, underpinned by mutual respect, tolerance, understanding and unity of purpose.

To live through the ethos of our Catholic faith to enrich the lives of our children socially, morally and spiritually, defining our place within our common home to which we all belong. We actively welcome diversity and promote inclusion in all aspects of school life.

To develop children's health, well-being and safety within our nurturing and stimulating environment, utilising well-considered strategies to support emotional literacy, resilience, and independence.

St. John's P.S. Pupil Voice

In St. John's P.S. we seek and value the voice of our pupils about their vision for themselves and our school. Our pupils' voice has been gained from our School Council in November 2024 and is contained below.

'We the pupils of St. John's want to feel happy and safe in our school. We want happy classrooms where everyone feels valued and able to learn throughout the school day with friendly staff and pupils. We want to reach new heights in all that we do.

We would like our opinions and ideas to be listened to, discussed, and considered. If our ideas are not used, then we want to know why. We want to be treated equally with everyone being given the same opportunities to learn, follow their interests, develop their talents, and learn new skills. Our school is a place where we can develop our talents and share them with others whilst we help each other to find and develop theirs.

We know that our trusted adults will make the right choices for us to grow as learners and that our experiences will be in a positive and stimulating environment. We want to trust that our classmates will let us learn every day. We enjoy being given responsibilities in our classroom and school so that we can take ownership in these areas.

We are all different and unique and we like the way that our differences are celebrated, and we want this to continue.'

School Council – November 2024

Rationale

Our Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard our children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our suite of Pastoral Care policies. The principles and procedures outlined in this policy apply to everyone involved in providing intimate care of children.

Aim of this Intimate Care Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of all children in St. John's regarding their intimate care needs.
- reassure parents/persons with parental responsibility that their child(ren) is cared for, and their intimate care needs are met in accordance with Educational and Medical guidance.
- provide guidance and support to all staff involved in providing intimate care.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate Care is any assistance that involves touching a child while carrying out a procedure that most children can do for themselves; but some are unable to do so independently thus requiring help. In some instances, more specialised intimate assistance may be needed for a small number of children in mainstream education.

Some children in the early years of school, those with physical disabilities, medical needs and special educational needs may require assistance in managing their personal needs. Other children, because of accident or illness, may also at some time require such assistance. Some pupils may have assigned additional adult support to assist them in this aspect of school life, whilst others may rely on the help and goodwill of staff.

Intimate care activities can include:

- eating
- drinking
- changing wet clothes
- toileting including intimate care
- menstrual care
- first aid and medical assistance
- vomiting
- supervision of a child involved in their personal intimate self-care.

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based.

A child requiring intimate care:

- has a right to feel safe and receive assistance that respects their dignity and personal privacy.
- has a right to be valued as an individual.
- has the right to use their voice and have their views taken into account before, during and after receiving intimate care.
- receives intimate care that is consistent from an adult they are comfortable with.
- should be encouraged to assist (if appropriate) in their own intimate care and work towards independence in meeting their own needs.
- should know what is happening and give consent at each stage of the intimate care.

Parent(s) or person(s) with parental responsibility (PWPR):

- have a responsibility to meet and share all relevant information with school staff who assist their child(ren) in supporting their intimate care needs including Designated Teacher (DT), Principal and/or DDT.
- provide written permission to school for intimate care to be provided (Appendix 1). If written permission is not granted by parents or PWPR, it is their responsibility to be able to provide intimate care to their child(ren) as soon as it is required.
- can request information regarding St. John's Intimate Care Policy and procedure designed to meet the needs of their child(ren).

St. John's P.S.:

- recognises children are generally more vulnerable than adults, and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.
- completes Access NI checks on all members of staff (paid and unpaid) and it is only 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.
- is committed to helping children to become independent in all aspects of their lives including those children with Special Educational Needs, Medical Needs (when appropriate) and those with English as an additional language.
- uses age-appropriate language and scenarios to educate and empower all our children to recognise and challenge inappropriate behaviour directed towards them (in-person and online) and provide them with support and strategies to seek help to reduce the impact of such behaviour on their lives.
- is committed to ensuring that all staff who undertake their responsibilities involving intimate care do so to protect and uphold the rights, dignity, welfare, privacy and confidentiality of each child receiving intimate care.
- staff are supported by policy, training and monitoring including annual Safeguarding and Child Protection training to all staff and to new members of staff who join school during the school year.
- will undertake to help children to do as much as possible for themselves to develop each child's ability to achieve independence including intimate care.

- will seek guidance/advice from the child's parent/PWPR and/or the child themselves when providing Intimate Care Needs of an Individual Child
- when necessary will seek support, guidance, specialist training and equipment from Outside Agencies, e.g., Health & Social Care Trust in helping to support child(ren)'s intimate care needs arising from medical needs), Education Authority's Child Protection Support Services (CPSS), Social Services, Operations and Estates Directorate of the EA and the District Council (controlled waste bins).
- will provide facilities to support the provision of intimate care to ensure safety, privacy and dignity to everyone involved.
- will provide resources if not already supplied by parents/Health Trust (e.g., disposable aprons, gloves, wipes and medicated hand washing products) to ensure intimate care is carried out hygienically.
- will work in collaboration to plan and agree an Intimate Care plan for each child requiring such assistance with the child, parents, relevant school staff, outside agencies and professionals.
- monitor provision and regularly review the procedure outlined in this policy to ensure it is followed by all members of school staff involved in providing intimate care!
- will check with children and staff involved in intimate care are comfortable with the school's arrangements.
- only named member(s) of staff involved in providing daily intimate care will provide intimate care for the child. In the absence of named assistants, contact with the child's parents will be made by the DT/Principal and alternative arrangements made.
- will provide updates to parents/PWPR and Health Trusts when requested regarding a child's continence needs.

Meeting the Intimate Care Needs of a Child during a one-off incident

Should a one-off incident occur due to a child wetting themselves or being physically sick, staff will offer and provide the necessary intimate care if permission is granted by the parent/PWPR (Appendix 1 – permission sought prior to a child starting St. John's in Year 1 and those who join in older year groups) and verbally by the child following the incident.

School staff whom the child is familiar with, i.e., class teacher, classroom assistant or assigned additional adult will begin to provide the necessary intimate care in a space spacious enough to accommodate helping the child to change their clothing and to ensure their privacy having gained the verbal permission of the child. They will encourage the child to be as independent as possible when removing wet garments and dressing in clean and dry clothing. If their child is prone to wetting accidents, parents are asked to provide and send to school a change of clothing in a plastic bag to be hung on their child's cloakroom peg. Contact will be made with the child's parents/PWPR to explain the accident with wet clothes sent home with the child. If a change of clothing has been provided by school to the child, parents are asked to wash and dry the school's clothes and return to the child's Class Teacher as soon as possible as clothing supplies are limited in school.

In the event of a severe one-off incident occurring (soiling) the child's parents will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school to provide the necessary care for their child, i.e., the parent can take their child home to be cleaned and changed. The child can return to school should the parent and child wish to do so. Staff will stay with the child until their parent arrives. If the child's parents cannot be contacted by telephone, staff will contact the next person on the child's

Data Collection Form (DCF). Adults will be contacted in the order of persons recorded on the DCF until someone is able to come to school to collect the child.

Agreed Staff Procedure involved with providing Intimate Care

If a child requires intimate care, staff will make sure that:

- verbal permission is sought and granted from the child during a one-off incident. In the event of a child not granting verbal permission, contact will be made with the child's parents requesting them to come to school to change their child.
- a spacious space is identified to facilitate the intimate care procedure whilst ensuring the child's privacy is upheld
- protective gloves are worn.
- the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process.
- the child is encouraged to care for themselves if appropriate, with the assisting adult taking age and stage of the development into account.
- all spills on school's equipment are wiped clean.
- wet clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed and sent home with the child.
- the child's Class Teacher (and in their absence DT/Principal/Senior Teacher) communicates factual information regarding the incident with the child's parent verbally (telephone call during the school day if the child is emotionally dysregulated or conversation at Home Time) or written using Seesaw private messaging.
- Pastoral Care Note sent to DT & Principal using school's proforma.
- confidentiality is always maintained.

Meeting the Intimate Care Needs of an Individual Child

In collaboration with the child (if appropriate), parents/PWPR, outside agency professionals and school staff (DT, Principal, Additional Adult(s)) an 'Intimate Care Plan' will be created and agreed using 'Appendix 2' outlining the level and type of assistance required with all stakeholders signing and receiving a copy. Written consent (Appendix 3) will also be sought from Parents/PWPR and will be stored in the child's file. Using 'Appendix 4' an 'Intimate Care Record' will be completed outlining the date and time along with the member of staff who provided the Intimate Care will be maintained and stored in the Child's File. Records will be kept in accordance with GDPR.

Only in an emergency to uphold the dignity of the child would staff named in the plan undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents, e.g., providing sanitary products (towels) during menstruation. The child's parents will then be contacted as soon as is possible via telephone by DT/DDT/Principal to discuss the situation and action taken by staff. Intimate care arrangements for any child who requires this support on a regular basis will be reviewed annually or following an emergency.

Whilst it is recommended to have two members of staff assisting the child, there will be times when this level of resourcing will not be available. All staff involved with providing intimate care have been vetted and are familiar with the practice and procedure outlined in this policy.

Reporting a Safeguarding or Child Protection Concern/Disclosure

All stakeholders: children, staff and parents involved with providing intimate care will follow the agreed practice and procedure as outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in relation

to receiving and reporting a disclosure or concern using St. John's Note of Concern proforma. The staff member(s) receiving the disclosure or reporting a concern, will inform the DT/DDT/Principal in a timely manner with unnecessary delay. Upon receiving a concern/disclosure, St. John's Safeguarding Team will follow the procedure in dealing with it in a timely manner.

Period Dignity and Menstrual Wellbeing

Period dignity refers to the accessibility and availability of essential care needed to support a period, in conjunction with the removal/breaking the stigma/taboo surrounding periods. Education is a key factor in breaking the stigma around periods and promoting respect, understanding and open discussions about what girls experience when menstruating.

At St. John's P.S., we aim to improve awareness of menstrual wellbeing and remove the stigma and taboo around periods. We aim to do this through educating staff and pupils, inviting guest speakers and specialist organisations into school to deliver age-appropriate talks aimed at promoting respect and understanding and facilitating open discussions about what girls may experience when menstruating.

We will provide essential period products (sanitary towels) when necessary and support families to access other relevant products and information when requested to do so.

Access to Free Period Products

Girls requiring sanitary towels can request these items from:

Miss M. O'Neill (Year 7 Class Teacher) and Miss A. McNicholl (DT, SENCO & Y1 Class Teacher)

Disposing of used sanitary towels can be done using the bins provided in the Girls' Toilet beside Year 7 (Miss O'Neill's Classroom) or the Ladies' Toilet in the Main Corridor.

We encourage girls who have started to menstruate or feel they will be due to start menstruating during their primary school years to carry a change of underwear and clothing in their school bag. Parents of girls who have started to menstruate may share this information with their child's Class Teacher/Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Miss A. McNicholl) or Mrs. McDonnell (Principal) if they feel it is appropriate. This information will be shared in confidence with relevant staff should they need to know in accordance with each girl's right for privacy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Team and approved every two years by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils and staff. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and periodically by the School's Safeguarding Team.

Date Policy Reviewed – June 2025

Next Date of Review – June 2026

Date Policy issued to parents: June 2025

Links to other policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Administration of Medicines in School
- First Aid
- Health & Safety
- Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Special Education Needs Disability

Appendix 1



INTIMATE CARE CONSENT

TOILET ACCIDENTS

Each year in school there is a very small number of toileting accidents. For the comfort and wellbeing of the children, the following procedures will be applied to toileting accidents:

- ✚ If a child in Year 1 (Y1) has a toilet accident (wetting) they will be helped to change their clothes, providing a person with parental responsibility has signed and returned the Intimate Care Consent Form. This form gives permission for Y1 staff members to assist the child to change their clothes and make them comfortable. Parents who do not sign this form will be contacted immediately and asked to come to the school immediately to collect the child and take them home to be changed. If any parent cannot be contacted, the people named on the contact list on the Data Collection Form will be telephoned in the order that their names appear on the list.
- ✚ Children from Year 2-7 will be given a change of clean clothes so that they can make themselves comfortable.
- ✚ Should any child from Y1-Y7 be soiled, parents will be contacted to come to school to collect their child.
- ✚ There may be occasions when substitute teachers are employed in the Y1 classroom. They will be fully informed of our Child Protection Policy and of the Codes of Conduct.

Written permission must be given by the person/s with parental responsibility before a member staff can be involved in changing of children's clothes.

Please complete and return the attached slip below. Please make sure the school has more than one priority contact and that all contact numbers are up to date.

*This policy is reviewed by the Safeguarding Team, in line with latest guidance.
Reviewed June 2025*

*Principal: H. McDonnell, Designated Teacher for Child Protection: A. McNicholl, Governor: B. Shiels
Chair: L. McQuillan*

INTIMATE CARE CONSENT

CHILD'S NAME _____ **CLASS** _____

I/We give permission for a member of staff to be involved (if necessary) in changing my/our child's clothes in the event of a toileting accident.

I/We also agree that someone will come and collect my/our child if they have soiled themselves.

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date _____

School will contact the priority contact names and numbers that we have on school record in the order they have been provided in.

Appendix 2



School: St. John's Primary School Coleraine		
Intimate Care Plan (a copy to be kept in Child's File)		
Pupil:	DOB:	
Diagnosis/ Additional Need/s		
Intimate Care Assistance Required:		
Timetable:		
Persons Assisting:		
Alternative arrangements:		
Location/equipment:		

Designation	Signed	Date
Parent		
Pupil		
Assistant/s		
Principal		

Appendix 3



School: St. John's Primary School Coleraine

Permission for Intimate Care (a copy to be kept in Child's File)

Child:	
DOB:	
Address:	
Parent/Guardian	
I/we give permission for the assistance detailed in Appendix 2 to be provided to my/our child, and will advise the school of any change that may affect this provision.	
Signed:	
Date:	
I, the child, give permission for the assistance detailed in Appendix 2 to be provided to me (if appropriate).	
Signed:	
Date:	

