

POLICY OF SCOIL MHUIRE, MARINO

Document Title:

Intimate Care Policy

Effective Date:

November 2025

Document No: 23

First Edition

No. of pages:10

1. Purpose

Scoil Mhuire, Marino is an Edmund Rice school that strives to ensure equality of access to, and participation in, school life for each of our pupils. In Scoil Mhuire we are committed to helping each pupil achieve their potential. Integral to this commitment is the provision of a quality system of support for pupils with additional care needs.

The purpose of this Intimate Care Policy is to:

- safeguard the dignity, rights, and welfare of Scoil Mhuire pupils requiring intimate care
- ensure that pupils are treated with sensitivity, respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- provide guidance and support to school staff involved in the provision of intimate care
- ensure that families are involved in planning for the intimate care of their child
- encourage pupils to be as independent as possible in their personal care

It is essential that each pupil is treated as an individual and that, where required, intimate care is given as sensitively as possible. Matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively, ensuring and that the pupil's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

2. Scope

This policy seeks to ensure the respectful, sensitive provision of intimate care to Scoil Mhuire pupils where such care is required. Outlined in this policy are procedures for the provision of intimate care to those pupils with ongoing care needs, as well as procedures for dealing with accidents that can arise throughout the course of the year. This policy, therefore, applies to all pupils of Scoil Mhuire.

This policy, an element of our efforts to develop and maintain an inclusive and respectful school community, should be considered in the wider context of our work in Scoil Mhuire and read alongside the school's ANA Policy.

3. Principles

Intimate care is a sensitive matter, requiring respect for each pupil's dignity, privacy, and wellbeing. Scoil Mhuire is committed to safeguarding both pupils and staff by ensuring adherence to best practice at all times. This policy seeks to provide direction to school staff with regard to supporting our pupils in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the pupil while also protecting the integrity of the member(s) of staff involved.

In the provision of intimate care, the level of assistance provided by school staff will reflect the needs of each individual pupil at any given time. In Scoil Mhuire, the provision of intimate care will be underpinned by the following key principles:

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- each pupil has the right to be safe
- each pupil has the right to personal privacy
- each pupil has the right to be valued as an individual
- each pupil has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- each pupil has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care, to the best of their abilities
- each pupil has the right to express their views on their intimate care needs and to have their views taken into account
- each pupil has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible
- pupils, insofar as possible, should give their consent prior to the provision of intimate care
- pupils receiving intimate care have the right to be treated courteously at all times and to know who is looking after them

4. Key Terms

In the context of this Intimate Care Policy these key terms will be defined and understood as follows:

Intimate Care	Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a pupil – whether by direct or indirect contact – which are associated with bodily functions, body products, and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body. Intimate care can also include assistance with dressing and undressing that the pupil cannot undertake independently.
Intimate Care Tasks	Specific tasks associated with the provision of intimate care that can include: assistance with feeding; prompting pupils to use the toilet; dressing and undressing; providing support to the pupil while using the toilet; changing of nappies, waterproof underwear, or incontinence pads; washing intimate body parts; showering; and menstrual care.
Direct Contact	Physical contact between the pupil and a staff member(s). This may involve contact with both intimate and non-intimate body parts.
Indirect Contact	The supervision, observation, and prompting of the pupil while the pupil independently completes intimate care tasks.
Accident	An unexpected occurrence that can include wetting, soiling, or vomiting.

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5. Policy

Where a pupil requires ongoing assistance with intimate care, an individual Intimate Care Plan will be developed. This Intimate Care Plan will:

- outline the pupil's specific needs and level of independence
- identify the staff member(s) responsible for care and arrangements for absences
- record equipment or resources required
- note any cultural, religious, or communication needs
- be signed by the pupil's parents or guardians and school staff
- be reviewed annually, or sooner if the pupil's needs change

INTIMATE CARE PLAN

In all situations where a pupil requires ongoing assistance with intimate care, an Intimate Care Plan will be developed through a consultative process involving the pupil's family, the Class Teacher, ANA staff, and any other relevant professionals or agencies (Appendix A).

The purpose of the Intimate Care Plan is to identify the specific needs of the pupil, and to outline how the school can best meet those needs. Where possible, the pupil themselves will also be involved in the identification of their needs and in decision-making regarding procedures for the provision of intimate care. The Intimate Care Plan will also identify the member(s) of staff involved in the provision of this care.

The Intimate Care Plan will outline the supplies necessary for the provision of intimate care to the pupil, and identify the responsibilities of both the family and the school in respect of such provisions. While the school will provide protective equipment – such as gloves and aprons – for school staff, families will provide items of clothing, nappies, incontinence underwear, and feminine hygiene products as necessary.

The pupil's Intimate Care Plan will be reviewed at the beginning of each academic year, or as needs arise during the year. Families are responsible for keeping the school up to date with any changes to the pupil's intimate care requirement.

A hardcopy of the completed and agreed-upon Intimate Care Plan will be signed by both the pupil's family and school staff, and this will be retained in the Pupil Support File.

Where a pupil requires manual handling as part of their intimate care needs – for example where the pupil needs to be lifted or transferred – manual handling procedures will be outlined in the Intimate Care Plan. The Board of Management will ensure that the relevant member(s) of staff are appropriately trained and prepared to provide such assistance.

PROCEDURES FOR THE PROVISION OF INTIMATE CARE

At all times, the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be prioritised and respected. As such, the pupil's intimate care needs will not be discussed with anybody not involved in the pupil's care. In instances whereby the pupil's care needs are discussed – for example in formulating the Intimate Care Plan or in ensuring that the relevant member(s) of staff are familiar with the procedures outlined therein – this will happen in private.

In order to protect the dignity of pupils who require ongoing assistance with intimate care, one designated member of staff will be involved in the provision of this care. However, in circumstances where it is necessary to protect the safety of the child – where, for example, a

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hoist needs to be used or the pupil requires use of the shower facilities – two staff members may be present.

While the pupil's Intimate Care Plan will outline procedures for the absence of the designated member(s) of staff involved in the provision of intimate care, such procedures will never involve temporary staff or persons in the school on work placements.

In the provision of intimate care, staff will explain to the pupil – using an appropriate method of communication – what actions they will take. In order to promote the development of the pupil's independence, however, the designated member(s) of staff will facilitate the pupil in performing as much of their own intimate care as they are able to do.

Any deviation from the procedures agreed in the pupil's Intimate Care Plan will be recorded, and both the DLP and pupil's parents or guardians will be notified.

Where pupils with ongoing intimate care needs are participating in school events off-site – for example school tours – school staff will check in advance to ensure that suitable facilities exist for the provision of intimate care.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

In the provision of intimate care, Scoil Mhuire staff will:

- address the pupil by name and explain actions to be taken calmly and reassuringly
- seek the pupil's consent (where possible) in advance of providing intimate care
- use agreed terminology for body parts and functions
- use visual cues for pupils with limited communication
- safeguard and maintain the privacy and dignity of the pupil at all times
- ensure that all necessary supplies are available and to-hand before beginning care
- dispose of waste safely and hygienically
- encourage independence and self-esteem in all care interactions

RESPONDING TO ACCIDENTS

Throughout the course of the year accidents can occur, particularly in the junior classes. The school requests that each pupil in Junior Infants and Senior Infants keep a clean pair of underwear stored in a waterproof bag in their school bag. A supply of clean underwear and wipes will be kept in each infant classroom, however for the comfort of our pupils it is preferable that their own underwear is available in instances whereby they will require a change.

Where a pupil has an accident throughout the course of the day, they will be supported by school staff. The pupil's family will be notified that an accident has occurred, and informed about both the nature of the accident and the level of support and assistance provided. In responding to and dealing with accidents, the following procedures will be adhered to.

WETTING:

Where a pupil wets themselves, staff will respond quickly and discretely. If the pupil does not have clean underwear in their school bag, clean underwear will be provided to them by the school. The pupil will be accompanied to the toilet by a member of staff where they will change independently, where possible. Support provided by school staff will consist predominantly of prompting, encouragement, and reassurance. School staff will assist the pupil with direct contact only if absolutely necessary.

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The pupil's parents will be informed of the accident, and the incident will be recorded by the Class Teacher.

SOILING:

Where a pupil soils themselves, their parents or guardians will be contacted to attend to their child. If the pupil's parents or guardians are unavailable, the pupil will be accompanied to the toilet by a member of staff. The pupil will be provided with wipes, clean underwear, and a clean pair of clothes if necessary. While the member of staff will offer comfort, supervision, and direction, the pupil will be assisted with direct contact only if absolutely necessary. The incident will be recorded by the Class Teacher, and soiled items of clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag.

VOMITING:

Where a pupil vomits during the course of the day, their parents or guardians will be contacted to collect them. If necessary, staff will provide the pupil with wipes and clean clothes. Soiled items of clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task – for example unusual soreness or bruising on the pupil, an emotional reaction without apparent cause, a misinterpretation or allegation – the staff member(s) will report this concern immediately to the school's Designated Liaison Person (DLP). If the DLP is not available, concerns must be reported to the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) without delay.

Any such concerns will be dealt with by the DLP or DDL in accordance with *Children First National Guidance* (2017) and the Department of Education's *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* (2023; 2025).

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6. Appendices

APPENDIX A: INTIMATE CARE PLAN TEMPLATE

Name of Pupil:	
Date of Birth:	
Class & Room Number:	
Parents:	

Tasks	Requires support of staff	Pupil can perform this task with supervision, and minimal assistance from staff
Eating		
Identifying their need to use the toilet		
Dressing and undressing (underwear)		
Sitting on and dismounting the toilet		
Using the toilet		
Cleaning intimate body parts after using the toilet		
Changing of nappies / waterproof underwear / incontinence pads		
Menstrual Care		
Hand-washing		

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Facilities & Equipment Required

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Supplies	Family Supplies	School Supplies
Nappies / pads / waterproof underwear		
Wipes		
Spare clothing (underwear trouser/skirt/socks)		
Antiseptic Cleanser		
Cloths / paper towels		
Soap		
Disposable gloves & aprons		
Disposal sacks (nappy bags)		
Sterilising Fluid and equipment		
Toilet Paper		
Other		

Comments

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PERMISSION & CONSENT

I/We give permission for _____ to provide intimate care to my/our child.

I/We will advise the school of anything that may affect issues of personal care (e.g. if medication is changed or my child has an infection)

I//We understand the procedures that will be carried out and will contact the school immediately if there are any concerns.

1. Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

2. Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

Signature of Class Teacher: _____

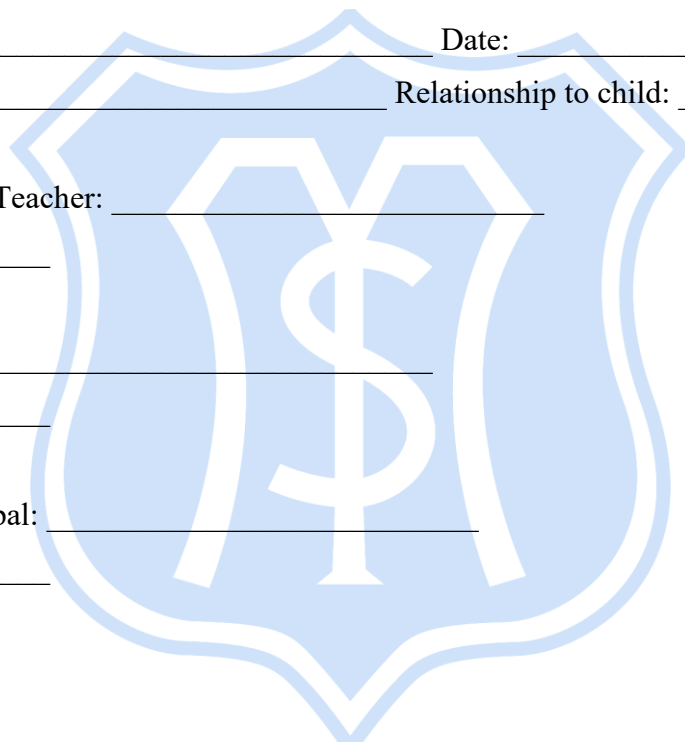
Date: _____

Signature of ANA: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____



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APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

Should your child need to be cleaned and changed in the event of a toileting accident (soil or wet themselves) or a vomiting accident in school, we are willing, with your permission, to clean and change your child as required.

We will follow the procedures outlined in our Intimate Care Policy. This role will always be undertaken by a teacher or ANA known to your child and you will be informed that an incident has taken place.

Please indicate that you give permission for such support to be provided to your child:

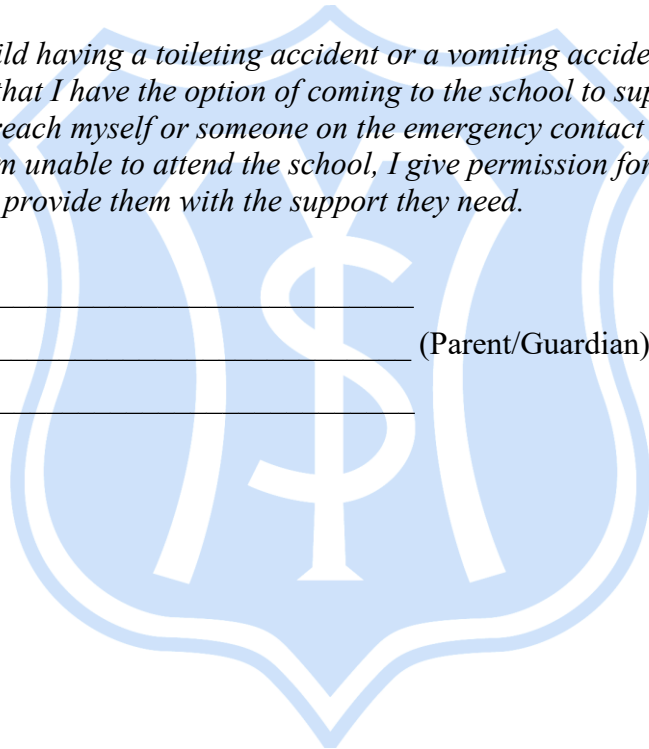
In the event of my child having a toileting accident or a vomiting accident in school, I would like to be contact so that I have the option of coming to the school to support them.

If you are unable to reach myself or someone on the emergency contact list, or if I or an emergency contact am unable to attend the school, I give permission for a teacher or ANA known to my child to provide them with the support they need.

Child's name: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: _____



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7. Approval & Review

This policy was brought to the Board of Management for review and ratification in

Initial Approval

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date

Effective Date

Review Date

