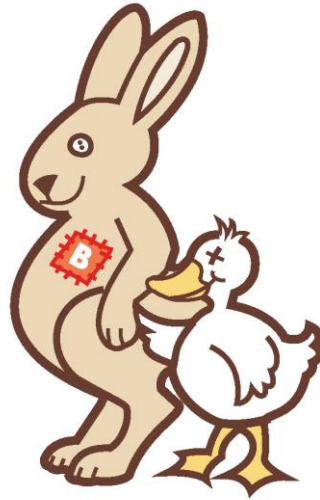


Intimate Care Policy



**BALLYMONEY NURSERY
SCHOOL**

INTRODUCTION

Children at school can often require support in personal care. Children in the early years of school, and those with physical disabilities, and learning difficulties may require assistance in managing their personal needs. Other pupils, because of accident or illness, may also at some time require such assistance. Many pupils have support staff to assist them in all aspects of school life including personal care, while others may rely on the help and goodwill of staff. This policy is based on the Education Authority's 'Guidance on the provision of intimate care to children and young people in school'.

DEFINITION

Intimate care is any assistance that involves touching a child while carrying out a procedure that most children are able to do for themselves but some/are unable to manage without help. This may involve help with eating, drinking, dressing and matters of personal hygiene such as washing and toileting. In some instances more specialised intimate assistance may be needed for children with physical or medical difficulties.

This policy aims to:-

- Safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children;
- Provide guidance, support and protection to staff; and
- Reassure parents that their children are cared for and protected

The Child:-

- The child has the right to assistance that respects his/her dignity, and to feel safe when moved or handled
- The child has the right to feel comfortable with the adult's assisting him/her, and to make it known if this level of comfort is disturbed.
- The child should be encouraged to engage in the care procedure, to know what is happening, and give permission at each stage.
- The child should be encouraged to work towards independence, and helped to do so as much as possible for him/herself.

The Parents

- Parents have the right to information regarding school policy and procedures designed to meet the needs of their child. The school should work closely with parents to ensure all aspects of the care procedure are shared and understood.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that all relevant information is provided to help the school assist their child in an appropriate way. Parents should meet the adult/s who will provide intimate care to the child, and be informed of the school's arrangements in the event of this person/s being absent.
- Parents should consider alternative arrangements to all the child to participate in activities outwith the school e.g. trips, transport.
- The school will gain written permission from parents for the care provided. This will be undertaken during the induction process.

Confidentiality

- Information regarding agreed procedures must be treated confidentially and recorded/held only in the child's school file. Information should not be disclosed or discussed with any adults other than those with responsibility for the child's personal care, and should not be referred to in the presence of other children.
- Care should be provided at agreed times, at the child's request or in response to an agreed signal. Staff should make themselves familiar with the child's manner of communication, whether verbal, sign or eye contact.
- Appropriate terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions should be clarified between the child, parents and his/her assistant/s.

The school

- We are committed to ensuring that staff undertaking these responsibilities are supported by policy, training and monitoring, all school staff receive child protection training, undertake to help children do as much as possible for themselves and develop each child's ability to achieve independence.
- Staff receive appropriate specialised training and are provided with facilities and equipment to ensure safety, privacy and dignity.

- An intimate care plan is drawn up for each child requiring assistance, and is carefully planned and agreed in consultation with parents and child.
- Provision is monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that policy and procedure is adhered to, and that children and staff remain comfortable with the school's arrangements.
- Students on work placement and volunteers will not be involved in a child's intimate care.
- School will provide resources to ensure that procedures are carried out hygienically. This will include disposable aprons, gloves, face shields, wipes and medicated hand washing products.
- Other members of staff are discretely verbally made aware that a child is being assisted at toileting or being changed.
- The door between the classroom and the bathroom is left open unless another member of staff is present in the changing area.
- A record of the changing incident is made in the changing book in the bathroom, signed by the changer and the other adult.
- The parent is informed discretely at the end of the session of the incident.

Communication with children

- Staff will communicate with the children at all times. 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 / carer. If further information is required please 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.

If a staff member has any concerns

- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the designated teacher.
- If a staff member has any concerns about a child when carrying out intimate care tasks they must report these to the designated teacher:-
 - (such as unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area)
 - 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
 - Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's personal file.
- Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Monitoring and Evaluation

For the purposes of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of this policy, it is presented annually or as required in light of experience or any new national/local initiatives to the Board of Governors for review.



Chairperson

Date 11/11/2021



Principal

Date 11/11/2021