



Intimate Care Policy

St Mary's Primary School
Aughnacloy



Date Ratified By Board of Governors: 16/10/24

Introduction

St Mary's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Please note: The term parent/s is used to refer to parents, carers and legal guardians.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Intimate care may involve washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself), that most children can carry out for themselves, but with which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Help may also be needed with changing colostomy bags and other such equipment. It may also require the administration of an insulin injection, EpiPen (risk assessment in place for children suffering from an allergic reaction indicating a personal emergency care plan in place for each child who suffers from allergies) or rectal medication.

In most cases intimate care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of equipment associated with the process. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent will undertake the procedure. Any additional training will be provided by the school. Parents 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.

Aims

The aims of this document and associated guidance are:

- To provide reassurance to staff and parent/s
- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children

- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into account

Principles

This document embraces the principles of The Children (N.I.) Order 1995, Cooperating to Safeguard Children 2003 and The Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures 2005.

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual
- Every child has the right to remain healthy
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs ability, race, culture or beliefs
- Every child has the right to information and support that will enable him or her to make informed and appropriate choices
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender,
- Every child (and parent) has the right to information and procedures for any complaint or queries he or she may have regarding intimate care

Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account their developmental stage. The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one trained adult, unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's intimate care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

At St. Mary's Primary School we aim to foster a high level of independence in our pupils with regard to personal hygiene practices. Children are encouraged to go to the toilet before morning break and before lunch/dinner time. At other times during the school day they have independent use of toilet facilities and are encouraged to indicate if they wish to use the toilet. They will be encouraged to undertake basic hygiene practices such as cleaning themselves and washing their hands after using the toilet. They will be encouraged to wash their hands if they are dirty and before eating food. Children will also be encouraged to change/dress independently for PE.

On entry to Year 1 most children are toilet trained and can carry out tasks relating to their own personal care independently, even in the event of toiletry accidents or wetness due to water play or sickness. We

do recognise however, that there may be exceptions to this, where specific medical, developmental or special educational needs are identified. In such cases intimate care procedures will be discussed and agreed with parents prior to the child starting school and an Individual Care Plan drawn up.

In the event of an incident requiring intimate care taking place the parents/carers or other designated adult will be contacted immediately and asked to come to the school to clean/change the child.

If however, a parent or designated adult is unable or unlikely to arrive at the school within 10 minutes, the child will be provided with wipes and alternative clothing and encouraged to carry out the cleaning and /or changing process independently. If the child is unable to carry out his/her own personal care independently, he/she will be assisted in the cleaning/changing process. This will ensure the comfort and best interests of the child. Children will be treated in a caring and sensitive manner at all times.

Spare changes of underwear and clothes are kept in a cupboard located in the foundation stage classroom. If however, a child appears to be having continual 'accidents', a strategy may need to be agreed between the parent and the school and a change of clothes left in school.

The staff at St. Mary's understand that children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. All staff involved in intimate care are sensitive to the needs of the child and are aware that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

- All staff working in our school have received child protection training and are vetted in accordance with Child Protection Guidelines. They fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Procedures.
- In the case of a very specific type of intimate care being required, staff will receive specific training to enable them to do so.
- Parents will be informed immediately if an incident requiring intimate care takes place.
- Staff will always involve the child in their intimate care and will try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her own intimate care.
- Staff should not assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the designated teacher for child protection.

Procedures to be followed by staff undertaking the intimate care of a child

In the case of toiletry accidents/sickness/wetness through water play, where a child needs to be cleaned/clothes need to be changed and parent/designated adult does not arrive within 10 minutes, the following procedures will be put into place:

- If a child is fairly independent the child will be involved in their own intimate care. Staff will provide the child with the necessary equipment e.g. wipes, change of underwear /clothes. The child will be encouraged to carry out the cleaning and changing process independently in the toilet with the door closed. The adult will wait outside and periodically reassure the child.

- We recognise that circumstances may arise when a child who is usually independent is unable to clean /change him/herself. In these circumstances, in order to preserve the comfort and dignity of the child, a member of staff will assist the child, including directly cleaning if necessary. Following good practice guidelines another staff member will be in the vicinity.
- Where a child has special/additional needs and is unable to carry out personal tasks independently, intimate care procedures will be discussed and agreed with parents and an Individual Care Plan drawn up.
- The parent/designated adult will be discreetly informed of any such incident.
- Soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag, sealed and discreetly given to parent/designated adult at end of the day.

Supervisory Arrangements

The following procedures will be followed by staff undertaking the intimate care of a child.

- Staff in the classroom will be made aware that an 'intimate care' incident has arisen.
- Acknowledge and reassure the child and receive the child's consent for changing.
- One member of staff will accompany the child to the toilet and assist or carry out any necessary cleaning and changing tasks
- A second member of staff will stand with the door ajar where the first member of staff can see them but that they can't see the child.
- The third staff member will supervise the other children in the classroom and as far as possible will prevent other children from going out to the toilet until the intimate care procedures have been completed.
- When a child requires assistance with personal care, the cleaning and changing of children will be carried out in the open area of the toilets and not behind a closed cubicle door, discreetly in view of staff member 2. The staff member involved in the intimate care must be mindful of the child's right to privacy and dignity at all times.
- Staff will endeavour to ensure that the child's privacy and dignity are respected at all times and will comfort and reassure them throughout.
- 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. Report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record. Parents/carers must be informed about concerns.

Health and Safety Precautions

- Non-allergenic baby wipes will be used to clean children unless they have a known allergy. Parents should inform the class teacher of any such allergy and discuss alternatives.

- Any staff member involved will wear disposable gloves to ensure the health and safety of the children and themselves and prevent the spread of infection.
- All used wipes and gloves will be disposed of in a sealed plastic bag.
- After these procedures staff and child should use an antibacterial hand wash for health and safety reasons.

Environmental

Where children have a long - term incontinence or a disability requiring regular intimate care, the school may require specially adapted facilities. Specialist advice from medical or therapy staff will be sought when considering space, heating, ventilation and lighting. Additional considerations we have in place include:

- Facilities with hot & cold running water
- Waste for incineration
- Protective clothing including disposable protective gloves - provided by the school
- Labelled bins for the disposal of wet & soiled nappies/pads
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials; anti-bacterial spray, sterilising fluid, deodorisers, anti-bacterial hand wash
- Supplies of appropriate clean clothing, nappies, disposal bags and wipes
- Changing mat or changing bench
- Free period products are available; parents should inform the school if their child may require period products during the school day (see poster in Appendix 5 – shared with parents).
- An effective system to alert staff for help in an emergency.

Voice of the Child

St Mary's Primary School will agree the appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents/carers are usually in the best position to act as advocates. It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing. To ensure effective communication with the child, staff will ascertain the agreed method of communication and identify this in the agreed Intimate Care Plan.

The Protection of Children

St Mary's Primary School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to. If a member of staff has any concerns about changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Further advice will be

sought from outside agencies if necessary. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Relevant Policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other School policies:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying policy

Appendices

- 1 Record of Agencies involved
- 2 Record of Intimate Care Intervention
- 3 Intimate Care Management Plan
- 4 Permission for Schools to Provide Intimate Care

Revised October 2024

Signed Chairperson B.O.G.: *Olivia Penner*

Principal: *B Mc Caughey*

Date: *16, oct 2024*





RECORD OF AGENCIES INVOLVED



Appendix 1

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

GP: _____

School Nurse/ Health visitor: _____

Continence Advisor: _____

Physiotherapist: Occupational Therapist: _____

Others: _____

Hospital Consultant: _____

Physical/Sensory Service: _____

Social Worker: _____



Intimate Care Management Plan



Appendix 2

Child's Name:

DOB:

Class:

Name of staff involved:

Alternative arrangements:

Date of record:

Review Date:

Area of Need/Diagnosis:

Assistance/support required:

Location of suitable facilities/equipment:

Frequency of support:

Working towards Independence

School will	Parents will	Child will try to	Target achieved (date)

Signed:.....Parents/Guardians

Signed:.....Member of Staff



PERMISSION FOR St Mary's Primary SCHOOL
TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE



APPENDIX 3

I understand that:

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing, toileting, administering medication.
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Child's Name: _____

Male/Female: _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Number(s): _____

DO YOU NEED FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS?

If you've started your period and you don't have any period products:



TALK TO

TO GET YOURS

At **phs**, we believe everyone should have access to the period products they need. Schools, colleges, universities, business and the public sector have a vital role to play in ending Period Poverty in the UK. **phs** Group are here to support with an extensive range of period products, guidance and learning materials to ensure no-one misses out because of their period.

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