



Toileting and Intimate Care Policy

What is Intimate Care?

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents/Guardians 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. In school, this may occur on a regular basis or as a once off incident.

Intimate care may involve any of the following:

- Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
- Changing or washing a child who has wet/soiled him/herself
- Assisting with toileting issues
- Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care
- Providing First Aid assistance
- Feeding a child
- Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is unable to carry this out unaided

Principles of Intimate Care

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 a right to personal privacy
- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has a right to be treated with dignity and respect
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care needs to the best of their abilities
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have their views considered
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent

Assisting a child to change his/her clothes

On occasion, an individual child may require some assistance in changing if, for example, he/she has had a toileting accident, gets wet in the rain or vomits on his/her clothing etc.

- Staff will encourage the child to attempt undressing/dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required, this will be given.
- Staff will have a colleague in attendance when supporting undressing/dressing and will always give the child the opportunity to dress in private, unless it is not possible.

- Staff will notify parents/guardians if there are any concerns and request that they come to school and assist their child
- Staff will notify parents if the child is distressed

Changing a child who has wet/soiled him/herself

If a child wets/soils him/herself in school, professional judgement has to be made regarding whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or to request the parent/guardian to come to the school. In either circumstance, the child's needs are paramount, and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout.

The following guidelines outline our procedures, taking into consideration the age of the child.

- The child will be given the opportunity to change him/herself by themselves in private
- School will have a supply of wipes and clean underwear/clothes in the infant classes. (Parents of pupils with specific intimate care needs will be asked to send this into the school if required).
- If a child is unable to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the parents/guardian/emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the parent/guardian/emergency contact is able to come to the school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive.
- If the parent/guardian/emergency contact is unable to come to the school within an appropriate time frame, the school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child
- If none of the contacts can be reached, a decision will be taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to the child.
- The member(s) of staff who assist a pupil with intimate care will adhere to Child Protection Guidelines and will ensure that the action taken is necessary and will get verbal agreement to proceed.
- Wet/soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag and given to the person who collects the child. They will be informed of the incident. Parents/Guardians are asked to return the clothes given to their child, washed and folded.

Changing a child who has vomited

- If a child needs to be changed due to vomiting, the above guidelines will be followed.
- If a child vomits in school, parents will be contacted in order to organise for their child to be collected from school.

Providing first aid

Children may need to remove clothing in order for an assessment to be made after a fall and for first aid to be administered. Consent should be sought from the child in this instance. The child should be provided with a covering (e.g. a towel/blanket) to protect their dignity.

Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs

In all situations where a child needs ongoing assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened prior to the child starting school or as soon as the care need is identified. All relevant staff members will attend this meeting. The procedure for attending to the child's care needs will be discussed and noted. Parents will fill out the Parental Permission Form (Appendix A) and the plan will be attached to the child's Aladdin profile.

Provisions for occasions whereby staff are absent will be outlined (i.e. short-term substitute staff will generally not be involved in intimate care needs). Any change of personnel will be discussed with the child, if appropriate.

Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care needs unless otherwise specified by the parent.

Staff will wear protective gloves.

Any changes will be discussed with the parent/guardian and noted in the pupil's file.

At all times the dignity and privacy of the child will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs.

A record of all incidents will be kept.

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children have been Garda vetted.

Only those members of staff who are familiar with the Intimate Care Policy are involved in the intimate care of children.

Where anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Consent forms (Appendix A) where required will be signed by the parent/guardian and stored on the child's file.

A record of such incidents will be put on the child's Aladdin profile.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

- Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
- Care should be supervised by more than one staff member.
- Practice in intimate care should be consistent. There should be effective communication between all parties involved in the intimate care.
- Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask someone familiar with the needs of the child.
- If you have any concerns you must report them to the Designated Liaison Person or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

Communication with Children

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of child's method and level of communication. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, children may communicate using different methods-words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing etc.

To ensure effective communication:

- 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.

Implementation and Review

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10th November 2021 and will be communicated with the staff and school community as appropriate and will subject to review.

Signed: Peter Mc Callig

Date: 10th November 2021

(Chairperson B.O.M.)

Signed: Grace Burke

Date: 10th November 2021

(Principal.)

Appendix A Parental Permission for Intimate Care



I give permission for _____ (child's name) to receive intimate care (e.g. help with toileting/changing), should it be necessary.

I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to be independent.

I understand that I shall be informed discreetly should the occasion arise.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)