

St Caolan's Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

- Edited August 2021
- Ratified September 2021
- Review September 2022

Rationale

At St Caolan's Primary School it is our intention to develop independence in each child; however there will be occasions when help is required.

Our intimate care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our pastoral care policy. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Children are generally more vulnerable than adults and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities can include:

- toileting;
- feeding;
- oral care;
- washing;
- changing clothes;
- first aid and medical assistance; and
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Principles of Intimate Care

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

- every child has the right to be safe;
- every child has the right to personal privacy;
- every child has the right to be valued as an individual;
- every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- all children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;

- all children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views considered;
- every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate.

School Responsibilities

All members of staff working with children are vetted by Access NI. Students on work placement and volunteers are supervised by the Principal or by the teachers. Vetting includes criminal record checks and two references. Only those 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.

Where intimate care is anticipated, intimate care arrangements will be agreed between the school and the parents and when appropriate and possible by the child.

Exchanging information with parents is essential through personal contact, telephone or correspondence. However, information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in homework books as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and named staff member.

Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. Only in emergency will staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school. Parents will then be contacted immediately.

Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties will be sought and considered to inform future arrangements. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher Mr Sean Mc Veigh or in his absence Mrs Cassidy for Child Protection.

Guidelines for Good Practice

Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be adhered to. All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report

concerns to Mr Mc Veigh or in his absence Mrs Cassidy who are the designated teachers for child protection

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.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Personnel working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. This school policy can help to reassure both staff involved and the parents of vulnerable children. Action will be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal assistant, particularly with reference to time spent alone together. The member of staff in the support role will be changed as quickly as possible, should such a discrepancy occur, and then reviewed on a regular basis. Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in the Child Protection procedures will be followed.

Involve the child in the intimate care

- Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. When a situation occurs where a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and where possible give the child choices.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.
- Be aware of your own limitations.
- Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image.

Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

If you have any concerns, you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swellings report it immediately to Mr Sean Mc Veigh or in his absence Mrs Cassidy the Designated Teacher and Deputy Teacher for Child Protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the child protection designated teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond.

Care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman.

The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- when intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy, ie they should be appropriately covered, the door closed, or screens/curtains put in place;

- if the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
- report any concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record;
- parents must be informed about any concerns.

Communication with Children

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. 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.

CHANGING AND TOILETING POLICY Changing Nappies

No child is excluded from participating in our school who may, for any reason, not yet be toilet trained or who may still be wearing nappies or the equivalent. We make necessary adjustments to our provision to accommodate children who are not, yet toilet trained.

Staff should keep a balance between respecting the child's need for privacy and ensuring their safety when they are required to change children, change nappies or support children with toileting. It is important that there is a trust and confidence between the member of staff, child and family and therefore only adults who are familiar and known to the child should change nappies or support with toileting needs. Adults need to be Access NI checked and students, short-term or volunteers staff will not be asked to carry out these duties.

Staff will always praise and encourage children for appropriate behaviour and use only positive language towards the child. Children should never be told off for having an accident. Children should never be left in soiled or wet clothes or nappies. If children are left in wet or soiled nappies or clothing this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter. We have a 'duty of care' towards children's personal needs.

Changing Nappies

Parents are requested to complete a form with their child's teacher agreeing the changing procedures for their child when they are admitted to Year 1. They are asked to provide their own nappies, nappy sacks and creams if they are required. It is the responsibility of the child's teacher to ensure that the child's nappy is changed as required.

Children should be changed on the changing mat in the disabled toilet area of the school or using appropriate facilities in another area of the school. At all times, due respect needs to be given to the privacy of the child. Staff must wear latex gloves when changing children and baby wipes are available to use unless the parents request otherwise.

After use, changing mats should be cleaned immediately afterwards with antibacterial spray and disposable cloth. All soiled items disposed of in the nappy bin. The cleaner will empty the bin each day.

Toilets

Many young children require support with using toilets independently. They are encouraged to use toilets appropriately and independently without over reliance on an adult. All children need to be taught the importance of hygiene. They are encouraged to use toilet paper, flush the toilet after use and wash and dry their hands in the washbasins and electric hand driers.

Changing children following an accident

Assigned Classroom Assistants should change children who accidentally wet or soil themselves in school. This needs to be done with a calm manner and the minimum of fuss. Staff will wear latex gloves to remove soiled items and provide the child with clean clothes. Soiled clothes need to be placed in a hygiene bag and staff must ensure that they are taken home by the child on that day. The child's teacher needs to ensure that parents/carers are informed of any accidents.

We always encourage an atmosphere where pupils feel they can talk to an adult if they need help or support, but we do understand that older children who have an

accident may be reluctant to tell an adult in school. If such an incident happens and the child is soiled or wet when they come home, we will always work with parents/carers and the pupil to ensure they feel more confident to tell us should such an accident happen again.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding procedures are there to protect both adults and children. Staff should take due care to ensure their own safety and the safety of the child when changing children or supporting with toileting needs. This will mean being within sight of other staff or having a second member of staff with them, although this is not a legal requirement. Staff review practice on a regular basis to ensure appropriate procedures are being followed. Any concerns raised by staff or parents/carers will be followed up using the school's safeguarding and if necessary, complaints procedures.

Further Guidance

- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures.
- Circular 10/95, Protecting Children from Abuse; The Role of the Education Service. DFEE
www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/guidanceonthelaw/10_95summary
- What to Do IF You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused. Summary (2003)
www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm



St Caolan's Primary School

7 Darragh Cross,
Saintfield,
Ballynahinch,
Co Down, BT24 7EQ
Telephone (028) 97 510757
Fax: (028) 97 510757

Principal: Ms M Cassidy *B.Ed Hons. Dip Hons. PQH (N.I.)*

Dear Parent,

At times staff may be required to provide intimate care support to children in Primary One and Two e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing, toileting, supporting a child dressing/undressing, providing comfort or support for a distressed child or assisting a child with medical care.

We have developed a school policy on Intimate Care to outline our procedures in these areas. As these can happen unexpectedly, we would like your consent to enable us to support your child in the event of any of these happening. Please read and complete the permission slip below and return to school.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,
Mrs Cassidy (Principal)

.....
PERMISSION FOR ST CAOLAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE



Please delete as appropriate

*In the event of my child requiring assistance I give consent for my child to be changed and cleaned by a female member of staff if they wet/soil themselves whilst in the care of St Caolan's Primary School.

*I do not give consent for my child to receive assistance in being changed or cleaned if they wet/soil themselves. The school will contact me or my emergency contact and I will organise for my child to be cleaned and changed. I understand that if I (or the emergency contact) cannot be contacted the staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid my child.

- I will advise Mrs Cassidy of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care

Name of child

Signature of parent

Date.....

RECORD OF AGENCIES INVOLVED

Child's Name..... **DOB**.....
Name/Role Address/phone/email.....
Parent/Carer.....
School Nurse/Health visitor.....
Continence Advisor.....
Physiotherapist.....
Occupational Therapist.....
Hospital Consultant.....
Hospital School Service.....
Physical/Sensory Service.....
GP.....
EP.....
Social Worker.....

RECORD OF INTIMATE CARE INTERVENTION

Child's Name..... **DOB**.....
Name of Support Staff Involved.....
Date.....
Time.....
Procedure.....
Staff Signature.....
Second signature.....

WORKING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE RECORD

Child's Name..... **DOB**.....
Name of Support Staff Involved.....
I can already.....
.....
.....
Aim.....
.....
I will try to.....
.....
.....
Review date.....
Parents/Carer.....
Child (if appropriate).....
Personal Assistant.....
Senior Management/SENCo.....
Date.....

TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Child's Name..... DOB.....
Name of Support Staff Involved.....
Area of need.....
Equipment required.....
Location of suitable toilet facilities.....
Support required.....
Frequency of support.....

Working towards Independence

Child will try to
Personal Assistant will do.....
Target Achieved.....
Review Date.....
Parents/Carer.....
Child (if appropriate).....
Personal Assistant.....
Senior Management/SENCo.....
Date.....

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Child's Name..... DOB.....
Personal Assistant's Name.....

Personal Assistant

As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- When I am the identified person, I will stop what I am doing to help you in the toilet, as soon as you ask me
- I will avoid all unnecessary delays
- When you use our agreed emergency signal, I will stop what I am doing and come and help
- I will always treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity
- I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing
- I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally
- If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you
- I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan.

Child

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me
- I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times
- I will only use the agreed emergency signal for real emergencies

- I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet.
- I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed
- I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change

We will review this agreement on.....

Child (if appropriate).....

Personal Assistant.....

Date.....

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.