

St Mary's Primary School Derrymore



Intimate Care Policy

The pastoral care of our children is central to the aims, ethos and teaching programmes in St Mary's Primary School and we are committed to developing positive and caring attitudes in our children. Our Intimate Care Policy is part of our collective pastoral care policies. This policy is in line with multi-agency guidance as found in the Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). It is our intention to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

'Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child.' (9.26, ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures).

In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. 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 our children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain and adults and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

1. Assisting a child to **change his/her clothes**
2. **Changing or washing a child** who has soiled him / herself
3. Assisting with **toileting** issues
4. Supervising a child involved in **intimate self-care**
5. Providing **first aid** assistance
6. **Providing comfort** to an upset or distressed child
7. **Feeding** a child
8. Providing **oral care** to a child
9. Assisting a child who requires a specific **medical procedure** and who is not able to carry this out unaided. *

* In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure. Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child

Principles of Intimate Care

- 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.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Assisting a child to change his / her clothes

This is more common in our Foundation Stage. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he / she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his / her clothes etc. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child and informed if the child becomes distressed.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
- School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose.
- If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation.
- If the emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive. This avoids any further distress and preserves dignity.
- If the emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child. If none of the contacts can be reached the Principal is to be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.
- The member of Staff who has assisted a pupil with intimate care should record appropriately.

Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Our Administration of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school.

Parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school.

A small number of children will have significant medical needs and in addition to the arrangements included in our Administration of Medications Policy will have an Individual 'Care Plan'. This Care Plan will be formulated by the relevant medical body. If required, school staff will receive appropriate training.

School Responsibilities

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 anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the office.

Only in emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school. Parents would then be contacted immediately.

The views of all relevant parties should 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 for Child Protection.

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.

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.

Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard both children and staff.

1. **Involve the child in the intimate care.** Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and, where possible, give choices. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. **Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.** Care should not be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child.
3. **Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.** As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.
4. **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.
6. **If you have any concerns you must report them.**

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL DERRYMORE

INTIMATE CARE CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS

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- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Parental Permission for Intimate Care

Name of Child: _____

Should it be necessary, I give permission for my child to receive intimate care (e.g. help with changing or following toileting).

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

I understand that I will be informed discretely should the occasion arise.

Signed: _____