



Intimate Care Policy

September 2020

This policy represents the agreed principles for intimate care throughout the school. It has been agreed by all staff and governors within the school.

School aims

Our school community (children, staff, parents and governors) aims to:

- Learn and grow together within a safe, caring and happy environment
- Continually encourage achievement in all aspects of school life
- Motivate all children with a broad and challenging curriculum
- Treat everyone with honesty and respect
- Ensure opportunities for all

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to:

- safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children
- ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations
- raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care
- inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered
- ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate care of their children

Definition

Intimate care is defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. 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.

Intimate care can include:

- Supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Comforting a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell (Parents will be contacted)

Principles

The following are fundamental principles upon which this policy is 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.
- 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 levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. It is important for staff to bear in mind

how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem. Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young person's right to privacy and dignity appropriate to their age is maintained at all times.

Medical procedures (See Policy on Medicines)

If it is necessary for a child to receive medicine during the school day parents must fill out a permission form from the school office and discuss their child's needs with a member of staff before the school agrees to administer medicines or medical care. It must be made clear to parents that staff administration of medicines is voluntary.

Any member of staff giving medicine to a pupil should check:

- The pupil's name
- Written instructions provided by parents or doctor
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry date

Particular attention should be paid to the safe storage, handling and disposal of medicines. The Head Teacher has prime responsibility for the safe management of medicines kept at school. This duty derives from the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). School staff are also responsible for making sure that anyone in school is safe. Medicines should generally be kept in a secure place, not accessible to pupils but arrangements must be in place to ensure that any medication that a pupil might need in an emergency is readily available.

Soiling

The child will be comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives. Children are not left alone whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Head Teacher will be consulted. If put in an impossible situation where the child is at risk, staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- Protective gloves are worn
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact is kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and flushed down the toilet
- Any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet
- Soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child

Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

Supporting dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed, particularly in Early Years. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

Providing comfort or support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When a member of staff is initiating the comforting of a child or giving reassurance, it is preferred that they use a 'sideways' hug.

If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child. If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

Protection for staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions

Safeguards for children

There is an obligation on local authorities to ensure that staff who have substantial, unsupervised access to children undergo police checks. All staff at Donegall Road Primary School are Access NI checked on application and cannot undertake tasks within school until all checks are completed satisfactorily. Our school aim is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society. Personal and professional references are also required and unsuitable candidates are not permitted to work within the school.

All those working with children should be closely supervised throughout a probationary period and should only be allowed unsupervised access to children once this has been completed to their supervisor's satisfaction.

It is not appropriate for volunteers to carry out intimate care procedures. Students should only do so under the supervision of a trained member of staff, following consultation with the student's college supervisors.

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Permission form for the Provision of Care

(To be filled out before starting P1)

If a child wets or soils themselves while they are at Foundation Stage it is important that measures are taken to have them changed (and if necessary cleaned) as quickly as possible. The school will contact you, or your emergency contact, to attend without delay.

Donegall Road Primary has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on request from the office.

Please fill out the permission slip below.

Mrs M Johnston
Principal

Name of Child.....Class.....

I understand that in the event of my child soiling or wetting 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 in the event that 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 the child.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... Date.....