



# Intimate Care Policy

Review of Policy	September 2021
Ratification of Policy by the Board of Governors	October 2021
Next Review Date	September 2025

## DEFINITION

Intimate care may be 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:

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

## PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and 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.
- ❖ 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.  
**Only appropriately trained and vetted staff should undertake the intimate care of children.**
- ❖ All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- ❖ Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the Principal parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- ❖ All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- ❖ Intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- ❖ Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the principal, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- ❖ Agencies need to make provisions for emergencies i.e. a staff member on sick leave. These arrangements must be agreed between the principal, parents / carers and child (if appropriate)

If we have reason to believe a child may be wet or soiled the Class Teacher / Classroom Assistant will discreetly check for signs of this. Your child will be asked if they need to change and the adult's actions will be explained to them. When it has been determined that an accident has occurred resulting in a child wetting or soiling, adults will provide facilities for the child to change themselves. Parents will be notified. In the case of a child requiring direct assistance to change and a parent not being readily available, the child will be assisted by a member of staff in the presence of a colleague. Staff should be careful to ensure the dignity of the child is maintained at all times.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to their designated teacher. 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. Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

### **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF UNDERTAKING THE INTIMATE CARE OF A CHILD**

- Only female members of staff will carry out intimate care.
- Each child will be treated respectfully and sensitively.
- Matters involving intimate care will be dealt with confidentially
- Children will be encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible. **Adults should not assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves.**
- When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place. Children will have privacy to change appropriate to their age and situation.
- Children will be consulted in their own intimate care and where possible be given choices in how it is carried out.
- Care will stop immediately if the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when intimate care is being carried out. Staff will try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance. The designated teacher must be informed in this instance.
- If any concerns arise as a result of providing intimate care they must be reported immediately to the Designated Teacher.
- Parents will be informed of the nature of intimate care verbally or via a note home. (Appendix 1)

### **Safeguards for children.**

- All staff are vetted by the SELB.
- Intimate care procedures will not be carried out by volunteers or students.
- Staff involved in intimate care must be familiar with this policy, the Child Protection Policy and Pastoral Care Policy.

### **Safeguards for staff.**

Staff need to be aware they are placing themselves in a vulnerable position when providing intimate care. They can take safeguarding measures including:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary.
- Allow the child to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care.
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.
- Provide reassurance to the child during intimate care.
- Record and report any incidents immediately to the DT.

### **Permission**

Permission to support children with intimate care will be obtained at the beginning of the school year. (Appendix 2)

Appendix 1

St. Mary's Primary School Cabragh



In line with the school's Intimate Care Policy this letter is to inform you that your child received help with intimate care today.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please contact the school if you have any questions: 028 87767356

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 2

St. Mary's Primary School Cabragh



Intimate Care Permission Form.

If a child wets or soils themselves whilst they are in school, it is important that measures are taken to have them changed and cleaned as quickly as possible. Staff undertaking the intimate care of a child will involve the child in their intimate care and try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact the parent/carer to come to school, so it is essential that three emergency contact numbers are given to the school.

St Mary's Primary School has an Intimate Care Policy which is available to view on our website or a copy can be obtained from the school office.

Please complete the reply slip below.

**Reply Slip**

I \_\_\_\_\_ confirm that I have received, read and understood the Intimate Care Policy.  
(Insert parent/carer name)

I will advise the school of any medical issues which impact on the intimate care of my child.

**Please tick as appropriate:**

- I give permission to the school to assist my child with hygienic toileting routines and if necessary a change of clothing.
- I **do not** give permission to the school to assist my child with hygienic toileting routines. 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 my 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.

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Relationship to child: .....

Date: .....