

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of individual children.

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.

Adults should not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake by themselves.

This policy is designed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Parental permission

As a general principle, staff are advised that it is good practice to avoid unnecessary physical contact with pupils. It is however acknowledged that it is unrealistic and unnecessary to suggest that employees should touch pupils only in emergencies.

When children enroll in Fivemiletown Primary School parents are asked to indicate their agreement to staff assisting their children in a range of ways. They are provided with a form on which to give permission for the following:

- Comfort your child
- Deal with toilet accidents sensitively
- Help to change clothing when required
- Apply plasters
- Teaching and ancillary staff supervise the changing of my child's clothes for PE etc

Toileting / Toilet Accidents / Changing a child's clothing (for a child not on an intimate care plan):

If a child requests assistance when going to the toilet the child will be encouraged to develop the necessary skills themselves with staff intervening only when deemed necessary. Staff will deal sensitively with the child, continually talking and reassuring the child. Staff will always stay in sight of other people and within earshot. If deemed necessary parents/carers will be notified by phone, text or when collecting their child. If deemed necessary a meeting will be arranged with the parents/carers to discuss how the child can be encouraged to be more independent and to ascertain if an individual 'Intimate Care Plan' needs to be drawn up.

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. The child will be asked if they need to change. When it has been determined that an accident has occurred resulting in a child wetting or soiling, staff will provide facilities for the child to change themselves. Parents will be notified by phone, text or when collecting their child.

In the case of a child requiring direct assistance to change, the child will be assisted by a member of staff in the presence of a colleague. Staff will be careful to ensure the dignity of the child is maintained at all times. At all times, another adult member of staff must be informed and the toilet door left open.

If a child refuses assistance or wants a parent / carer, the following procedure will be adopted:-

- ◆ The member of staff will inform the Principal or another member of Safeguarding Team.
- ◆ The parent / carer will be contacted and their advice taken or they can come to the school to collect or change their child.

Intimate Care Plans

Intimate Care Plans may be necessary for some children who are disabled or have specific medical needs (long or short term). Plans will be drawn up and agreed by the Principal, relevant staff members, parents and the child (if appropriate). Intimate Care arrangements will be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if age appropriate). These plans will include the names of designated staff members who will assist with the care arrangements. A record will be kept of every time assistance is given.

The school follows the guidance given in ‘Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children’ which is attached as an appendix to this policy.

When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy. If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care will stop immediately and reasons for the distress ascertained and reassurance given. Concerns will be reported to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and recorded. Parents / carers will be informed.

Staff are aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse children and that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to this policy should safeguard children and staff. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague’s intimate care practice they will report this to their designated teacher. All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

