



BALLYORAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Intimate Care Policy

Reviewed January 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff and applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children in Ballyoran Primary School. Our vision states that we aim to provide a happy, caring and safe learning environment. This policy will help to fulfil this vision. It has been drafted in conjunction with the Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children.

In Ballyoran Primary School, we aim to meet the needs of each child in our care through having appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and also through actively seeking to promote each child's welfare. Due to the young age which children begin formal education, children in the Nursery and Foundation Stage usually have a measure of dependence on adults to meet their physical care needs. Children with a disability can be especially vulnerable and may also have physical needs that require the assistance of adults. Staff involved with their intimate care are sensitive to their individual needs.

2.0 DEFINITION

Intimate care can be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with parents and the child. Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of the intimate care needs of their child and school staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Changing nappies
- Oral care
- Menstrual care
- Feeding
- Treatment such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

3.0 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 on their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express his/her 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 as consistent as possible.

4.0 SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal to ensure that:

- All staff have undergone appropriate vetting and have had child protection training.
- All staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the principles of intimate care.
- Intimate care arrangements/procedures have been agreed by the parents/carers.
- The school makes provisions for emergencies, i.e. a staff member on sick leave.
- All staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines.
- Consent forms signed by the parents/carers.
- Intimate care arrangements are recorded on a Class Record.
- Staff will not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents/carers.
- Intimate care arrangements are reviewed regularly.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they will report this to the Designated Teacher.
- The procedures outlined in this policy are adhered to.

5.0 GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

All staff involved in providing or assisting with intimate care need to be sensitive to each child's individual needs and also be aware that some care tasks or treatments could be open to misinterpretation.

Adhering to these good practice guidelines should safeguard both children and staff.

The practice of providing one-to-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort/safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

It is our policy at Ballyoran Primary School that, where possible and appropriate, the adult involved in intimate care can be seen by another adult. This may be through a doorway or window.

Involve the child in their intimate care

The school will try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent we will talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible. Staff will check their practice by asking the child/parent any likes/dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent.

Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.

A lot of care is carried out by one staff member alone with one child. The practice of providing one to one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort/safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

As a child can have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents/carers/agencies ensures practice is consistent.

Be aware of own limitations

Staff will only carry out care activities they understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt ASK.

Some procedures will only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs 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 relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

If you have any concern you must report them

If you observe any unusual marking, discolourations or swelling, report immediately to your Designated Teacher. If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them or he/she misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to your Designated Teacher.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.

A written record of concerns will be made by the Designated Teacher and kept with the school's Child Protection Records.

Parent/carers will be informed about all concerns.

If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care will stop immediately. Staff will try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance and report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record.

6.0 WORKING WITH PARENTS

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any school and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents. Prior permission must be obtained from parents before

intimate care procedures are carried out. The parents of all Nursery and Foundation Stage pupils are asked to sign a consent form at the start of every school year giving staff permission to change their child if necessary.

The parents/guardians of children who may have specific intimate care needs are requested to inform the school at the earliest opportunity so arrangements can be put in place to meet these needs.

Parents will be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met.

An 'Intimate Care Notification to Parent/Guardian' (see Appendix 2) will be completed and sent home with the child on the same day that the intimate care took place. Copies of these blank forms are made available in each classroom.

7.0 INTIMATE CARE PLANS

Where planned intimate care is required on a regular basis for example with pupils with Special Educational Needs/Physical disabilities, an Intimate Care Plan must be agreed in discussion with parents and school staff. The Plan should be signed by all who contribute on an agreed basis.

8.0 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.

Children communicate using different methods, eg words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing.

To ensure effective communication:

- Ascertain how the child communicates, e.g. consult with child, parent/carer and, if appropriate, communication needs must be recorded. If further information is required, please consult with the child's Speech and Language Therapist.
- Make eye contact at the child's level.
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary.

- Wait for a 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.

9.0 NURSERY

We realise in Ballyoran Nursery that some of our children may need changing during their time in school. Members of staff involved with intimate care are sensitive to each child's individual needs.

In the event of a toileting/other accident:

- The child will be directed to the toilet by a member of staff.
- The child will be encouraged to clean him/herself independently, under direction but will be given help by a member of staff if necessary.
- At no time will the child be left in full view of other children.
- Members of staff will remain in full view of others whilst changing the child.
- Students will not be involved in intimate care.
- Wet or soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag and given to the adult who is collecting the child at the end of the day.

Informing Parents

- Parents will be informed of this policy at induction and at the commencement of each school year.
- Parents will be asked to sign annually to confirm that they have been made aware of the policy and that they agree to staff cleaning/changing their child if necessary (see Appendix 1).
- This policy will be available on the school website.
- Following an incident which has required intimate care, a note to the parent/guardian will be completed and sent home on the same day as the intimate care took place (see Appendix 2).
- Any parent who is not in agreement with this policy will be contacted and must make themselves available to clean or change their child when necessary.
- There may be occasions when parents will be contacted to come and help with changing, depending on the circumstances or care needed.

10.0 HYGIENE

All staff will be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection and will ensure the use of appropriate equipment when necessary eg. disposable gloves and aprons. Any waste eg. nappies will be disposed of appropriately and appropriate hand washing employed.

11.0 RECORD KEEPING

When a pupil receives intimate care, a Record will be kept that indicates the following:

- Child's name
- Date
- Time
- Reason for intimate care
- Location
- The adult that carried out the intimate care
- Other adults present
- Parent Notification Form Completed
- Teacher Signature

12.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This Intimate Care Policy is part of a suite of Pastoral Care, Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

13.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

Appendix 1

Ballyoran Primary School

Parental Consent

Dear Parent

In general, we will always contact you, the parent/guardian, to come to school to change your child if your child needs his/her underclothes changed - for example, through toileting accidents - if your child is not able to clean & change him/herself.

In order to safeguard your child and the staff in our school, we need your permission if we are to help change your child in an emergency. All contact with children will follow the school's Intimate Care Policy.

Yours sincerely

R Woolsey

Principal

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Should it be necessary, I give permission for _____ to receive intimate care (eg help with changing or following toileting).

I agree to a member of staff cleaning or changing my child if necessary

I understand that staff will endeavor to encourage my child to be independent

I understand that I will be informed in writing should the occasion arise

Signed: _____ Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Appendix 2

Confidential

Ballyoran Primary School

Intimate Care Notification to Parent/Guardian

Name of child: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Reason for child needing intimate care (please tick):

- Toileting accident
- Wet/dirty play during play inside
- Play outside
- Other: _____

Changed independently

Assisted by adult

Name of adult who assisted: _____

Any other relevant information:

Signature _____ (Class Teacher)

Confidential

Ballyoran Primary School

Intimate Care Plan

Child's Name	
DOB	
Class	
Start Date of Plan	
Duration of Plan	
Name of Teacher	
Name of Assistant	
Area of need	
Equipment required	
Location for Intimate Care to be given	
Support required	
Frequency of Intimate Care	

Signed:

Parent/Guardian: _____

Class Teacher: _____

Assistant: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____