



# **Intimate Care Policy**

## **and**

### **Guidelines Regarding Toileting Children**

**Safeguarding & Pastoral Care**

## **Aim**

Islandmagee Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children and young people will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

## **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
- Menstrual care
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

### **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

## **Responsibilities of Staff involved with intimate care:**

- All staff working with children must be vetted. This includes students on work placement and volunteers.
- Only named identified staff should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The Principal/Designated teacher for child protection must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.
- 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 school, parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).
- Intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents/guardian and child (if appropriate).
- Additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks in the event of a staff member being on sick leave.
- Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), will be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they must report this to their designated teacher.

## **Guidelines for Good Practice:**

### ***Mission Statement***

**All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.**

These guidelines 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. Involve the child in their intimate care.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent. As a child can have multiple carers and a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents/outside agencies ensures practice is consistent.
- 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 message to a child about their body worth.

- In order to help the children to become aware of their bodily needs and respond to them in time, **those who wish to go to the toilet are always allowed to go**, although they are encouraged as they progress through the school to use the toilet during break times.
- The school undertakes to attempt any support any training programme requested by a child's GP and/or the school doctor or parent.
- Permission is to be sought each year children and slips are kept on record. All staff are informed of those children where no permission is given.
- Where a child has continuing incontinence problems parents are expected to continue to provide a complete set of spare clothes and 'baby-wipes'. The school also keeps a stock of spare clothes in various sizes.
- Concerns need to be reported - If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the designated teacher. If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, 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 must be made and kept in the child's personal file. It is important to follow the school's reporting and recording procedures.
- We are a Period Dignity School
- Parents/guardians **must be informed** about concerns.

**Please refer to:**

- Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures April 2005.
- DENI Child Protection & Pastoral Care guidance 1999/10.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.
- Child Protection Support Service for Schools – Governor's handbook –January 2007.
- Circular 03/13 Guidance for schools on the Welfare and Protection of Pupils – Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.
- Circular 06/06 Guidance on safer recruitment practices for education authorities (Access NI).
- Circular 06/07 Guidance for schools on the employment of substitute teachers (NISTR).
- Circular 06/08 Strand 3 Guidance for schools on the requirement for child protection training in relation to interviewing and selection panels.
- Circular 06/09 Guidance on the vetting of paid and unpaid staff (Access NI).
- Circular 06/25 Guidance on the requirement for vetting of school governors (Access NI).
- Period Dignity DENI/EA Policy guidance

### **Working with children of the opposite sex:**

The intimate care of boys/girls can be carried out by a designated member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by Islandmagee P.S.'s professional Code of Conduct in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding policy and procedures and in agreement with the Designated teacher for Child Protection/Principal.
- 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 put in place.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- Report concerns to the Designated teacher and make a written record.
- Parents/guardians must be informed about concerns.

### **Changing after an Accident:**

From time to time in school young children may need assistance with intimate care, i.e. help with changing of clothes and cleaning after a wetting, soiling or vomiting incident. It may be that they need general help or that they have had an accident and may need to change. In the situation where a child needs some assistance with intimate care, a member of staff will help but toilet doors should be left unlocked. Another member of staff must be informed so that there is openness and shared information about what help is given. Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary is important. Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer.

It should be noted that by the time a child starts school they will normally be expected to be independent in terms of their use of toilet facilities. Should children wet themselves, school staff will help by providing spare clothing if available. If the child is able, they will be encouraged to change their clothing, however if they need help and are willing to receive it the staff will assist. Again, this assistance must not be given without another member of staff being made aware of it. If this situation does occur the parent will be informed that day. If a child soils their clothes in school, the parent or other appropriate contact person will be contacted to either take the child home or to bring a change of clothes and change the child in school if they wish. Should they not be available to help or we are unable to contact them,

then the child's clothes will be changed for their own comfort. A log of clothing items is to be signed in and out with an accompanying note asking to wash and replace loaned items. The same set of guidelines as mentioned previously will apply. When helping children with intimate care, we will aim to provide them with the appropriate level of caring support whilst minimising as far as possible the level of physical contact with the child in intimate body regions.

Girls, of menstruating age are told who they can go to for assistance, which will be given in a discreet and sensitive way. Sanitary wear is kept in school should it be needed and supplied in a sensitive and discreet way.

These procedures may seem very business-like, but they are designed to protect both pupils and staff. We need to make sure that we operate a system which is open and yet caring. We have every intention of maintaining our level of care and support for the children. However, in light of recent developments and legislation in our province we need to clarify our procedures. Should any member of staff have concerns about a child or a situation they should report these to a Designated Teacher, the Principal or another member of the safeguarding team. If a parent or carer has concerns about a child or questions about a situation in school, they should contact the Principal. We believe that the positive working relationship between home and school is a major factor in providing care and security for the children. This working relationship thrives upon openness, effort and trust. We will do all in our power to promote this in our dealings with children, parents and the wider community.

### **Safeguarding Team**

Designated Teachers: Mrs Alice Wolfe

Deputy Designated Teachers: Mrs Julie Lowry

Principal: Mrs Arlene Cambridge

Designated Governors: Mrs Kelly Magill and Rev. Peter Bovill

Chairperson for Board of Governors: Mr William Kane

## APPENDIX

### PERMISSION FOR ISLANDMAGEE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

I understand that:

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing clothing, washing and toileting.
- I will advise the Principal in writing of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.
- This permission remains in place throughout my child's time at Islandmagee Primary and it is my responsibility to inform the school in writing of any change to permissions.
- The school may contact me to attend to my child's needs if deemed necessary.

Name..... Print (Parent/ Guardian)

Signature.....

Relationship to child.....

Date of agreement.....

Child's name ..... Print

Child's Date of Birth: .....

Please sign and return this page to the school office for our records.

<b>Document Date</b>	<b>Submitted to Board of Governors and Ratified</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
November 2016	January 2017	May 2018	
June 2021			Updated Safeguarding Team details
September 2021		2022	Safeguarding team details updated Layout adjusted for clarity
September 2022		2024	Updated Safeguarding Team details
June 2023	June 2023 Submitted to Governors to ratify updates	2024	Updated Appendix permissions Addition of Period Dignity Reference
May 2025	May 2025 Submitted to Governors to ratify updates	2027	Updated Safeguarding Team details