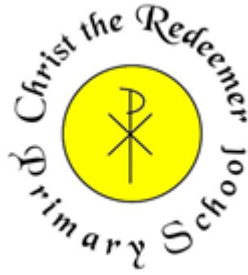




Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines

Our School is a Rights Respecting school and Articles 6, 32 and 36 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) underlines our Intimate Care Policy:

“Every child has the right to Privacy” Article 16



Vision for Christ the Redeemer

In collaboration with our pupils, staff, families, governors, and community, we build an inclusive educational environment where every child feels safe, nurtured and empowered to achieve their full potential.

Care, Teamwork, Respect.

As a Rights Respecting School, our vision is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Pupil Aims

- Instill Catholic values such as care, respect and tolerance.
- All pupils valued and respected unconditionally.
- Develop and enhance the resilience, worth and dignity of every child.
- Inspire a lifelong love of learning.
- Enabled to take responsibility for their learning and be able to express their views in a variety of ways.
- Celebrate all achievements.
- Celebrate and nurture faith and embrace diversity.
- Provide diverse range of learning opportunities, taking account of digital technologies, including an extensive programme of before and after school provision.
- Equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to grow themselves as compassionate and productive members of society.
- Develop a sense of empathy, responsibility and citizenship at a local and global level.

School Aims

- Promote inclusion while nurturing and developing individuality.
- Provide effective leadership and governance to drive the vision of the school forward.
- Promote a highly skilled and committed staff, with a strong emphasis on continuous professional development, in order to realise the vision.
- Welcome, encourage and act upon direct communication with learners.
- Foster strong parental links; provide opportunities for parents to reach their full potential.
- Develop relationships with the parish and wider school community based on mutual respect and the values underpinning the UNCRC.
- Equip the children with the skills necessary to cope with the emotional and social challenges of everyday life through developing their sense of worth, responsibility and independence.

INTRODUCTION

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children in Christ the Redeemer Primary School have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in 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.

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the DENI **Circular 2017/04- “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools- “A Guide for Schools”**. This Circular was further updated in September 2023.

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
- Photographs
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- 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.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff working with children must be vetted by the school. This includes students on work placement. Please see Circular 2024/10 Para 16.1 and volunteers.

Vetting includes:

- Access NI checks
- Pre-employment checks
- Two independent references
- **Only** named staff identified by the school should undertake the intimate care of children.
- Mr Watson, the Principal 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, Replaced with SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2017 , Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007. Staff have also had training following the guidance in **DE Circular 2017/04 – updated Sept 2023**

- 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 / carers and child (if appropriate).
- 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 school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- The school need to make provisions for emergencies i.e. a staff member on sick leave. Additional trained staff should be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks. Do not assume someone else can do the task.
- Intimate care arrangements should be reviewed at least six monthly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should 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 the designated teacher or deputy designated teacher.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

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 / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

Involve the child in their Intimate Care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

Check your 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 / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-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.

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed e.g. enteral feeding, rectal diazepam.

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 concerns you must report them.

If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the designated manager / teacher.

If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or 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 must be made and kept in the child's nursing / medical notes / personal file. It is important to follow the school's reporting and recording procedures.

Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

- Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures – April 2005 replaced with SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2017

- DENI 2017/04 “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools”-updated Sept 2023
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- CCEA Period Dignity advice
- DE Circular 2024/10 Pre-Employment/Access NI Check Requirements and Safer Recruitment Practices for Staff and Volunteers Working in or Providing a Service for Schools/Educational Settings
- <https://www.educationni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Completed%20Screening>

WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Principles:

There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children.

Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care.

The individual child’s safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

The practical guidelines set out below, are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.

General Care

Male and female staff can be involved with children of either sex in:

- (a) Key working and liaising with families.
- (b) Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child’s review.
- (c) Meeting the developmental, emotional and recreational needs of the children.
- (d) Escorting the children between sites, on outings and to clinics unless intimate care is needed.

Intimate Care

Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child’s parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

It may be possible to determine a child’s wishes by observation of their reactions to the intimate care they receive. Do not assume that a child cannot make a choice.

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

(a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with agency policy and procedures.

(b) Staff who are not governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within their agency and direction and agreement must be provided by the Designated Teacher/ Principal.

(c) 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. In our school the Disabled Toilet located at the top of the stairs, is the base location for this type of care.

(d) 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.

(e) Report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record.

(f) Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Procedure for changing children who are wet or soiled in Christ the Redeemer Nursery

If a child has a toilet accident whilst at Christ the Redeemer Nursery, he/she may only be changed by a teacher or permanent member of the non-teaching staff.

In a quiet and sensitive manner, the teacher or permanent member of the non-teaching staff brings the child to the toilet. The adult firstly informs another staff member about the need to change a child and on entering the toilet area ensures that all doors are left ajar.

If the child is upset, he/she is comforted and reassured. Before changing any clothing, the child's permission is always sought. (Parents have already given written permission during home visits). If a child refuses to co-operate, parents/carers are contacted.

Where possible, the child is always encouraged to remove his/her own clothing and is encouraged to clean his/her own body. The child is also encouraged to dress him/herself in the clean clothing provided. Adult assistance will be given if necessary.

The incident is noted in our incident book. It is dated and signed by the person responsible for changing the child.

The class teacher makes parents aware of the incident through the Seesaw app.

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 e.g. 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 (please refer to Appendix 1, Communication Proforma for Intimate Care: How I Communicate). 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 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.

Appendix 1

**Communication Proforma for Intimate Care
How I Communicate**

Name: _____

Date: _____

I communicate using words / signs / communication book / communication aid / body movements.

I indicate my likes / preferences by _____

I indicate my dislikes by _____

I show I am happy by _____ and

unhappy by _____

If appropriate please complete the following

When I need to go to the toilet I _____

When I need changed I _____

Additional information

Speech and Language Therapist: _____

Occupational Therapist: _____

Key Worker(s): _____

Contact Number(s): _____

Parents/ Guardians: _____

Personal Care Record Proforma for Use in School

To be completed by the Classroom Assistant or Teacher each time a child requires changing of nappies, continence pads and / or clothing due to an incident such as vomiting, wetting and / or soiling.

Day and Date	Time	Child's Name and Class	Incident – What, where, etc	Action Taken	Staff Member's Signature who dealt with the Incident

Notes: it is suggested that a coding system be devised to ensure confidentiality of information, eg:

- Use only the initials of the child/ren rather than their full name.
- Use a code for any concerning comments from or physical marks on the child that must be reported to the Principal / Designated Teacher

The Personal Care Records should be maintained in a central resource eg: Principal / Designated Teacher. This should be reviewed frequently to identify if there are frequent situations in relation to a child or frequent incidents in a certain part of the room or with a particular individual or group of children.