

Intimate Care Policy



DRUMHILLERY PRIMARY **SCHOOL**

INTIMATE CARE POLICY **RATIONALE**

In Drumhillery Primary School we are concerned to fulfil our “Duty of Care” by meeting the needs of children in our care and safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

Children in Foundation Stage are beginning their school experience at an earlier stage in their development with resultant increased dependence on adults to meet their physical care needs. Furthermore, consistent with our policy on inclusion, some children with disability require their care needs to be met.

PURPOSES

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Very young children and children with disabilities can be especially vulnerable to abuse. 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 and that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation.

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 particular care needs of their child.

Intimate care can include: -

- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Oral care
- Menstrual care
- Feeding
- Other treatments

GUIDELINES

- 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.
- Permission for changing (see appendix 1) is signed by parents of children in Years 1 – 3.

Guidelines for Good Practice

- **Treat every child with dignity and respect ensuring privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.**
Privacy is extremely necessary. Much intimate care is carried out by one staff member alone with a child. This practice is supported unless the activity requires two persons to be involved for the greater comfort or safety of the child (eg use of equipment) or if the child or parent requires two persons to be present.
- **Involve the child in his/her intimate care.**
Every member of staff should encourage a child's independence as far as is possible. Where a child is dependant on an adult to meet their needs the adult should talk to the child about what is going to be done, giving choices wherever possible and obtaining the child's consent.
- **Be responsive to the child's reactions.**
Staff should ascertain from the parent or the child if they have any particular routines, likes/dislikes or fears associated with any aspect of their care. Similarly any adverse reaction or untoward incident should be recorded and reported by staff. Such observations/incidents of concern should be responded to by the Designated Teacher consistent with maintaining effective partnership with parents and the paramount needs of the child within child protection procedures.
- **Make sure intimate care practice is consistent.**
A consistent approach to care provision is essential and reassuring to the child and their parents. Effective communication between parent and the school is essential. It is desirable that the Principal introduces the named member of staff who will provide care to the child's parent. This is conducive to developing an individualised assessment of the child's needs, promoting communication, trust and partnership between the school and the parent. The nature of the intimate care that needs to be provided for, should be clearly recorded and understood.

- **Be aware of one's own limitations.**

Staff should only carry out activities they understand and feel confident and competent to undertake. Some procedures must only be conducted by staff who have been formally trained and assessed as competent. All staff undertaking intimate care within schools should be familiar with and fully understand this intimate care guidance within the context of their own school's policy and code of conduct.

- **Promote positive self esteem and body image.**

Confident self assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to abuse. The approach staff adopt when providing intimate care can convey messages to a child about their body worth, personal safety and contribute to the prevention of abuse.

- **If staff have any concerns they must report them immediately and record their observations.**

Any unusual marks, discolorations, discharge, swelling, unusual behaviour or statements made by the child must be reported and recorded factually and as soon as possible by the staff member present, for the immediate attention of the school's Designated Teacher and Principal.

If during the provision of intimate care of a child, staff accidentally hurt him/her, or the child appears inappropriately distressed or uncomfortable, reassure the child and ensure his/her safety. Report and record the incident including details of any unusual emotional or behavioural response exhibited by the child.

All staff employed in our school have undergone appropriate vetting and child protection training provided by the Designated Teacher.

This policy was agreed by all staff and will be reviewed annually.

Signed: _____ (chairperson of BOG)

Date _____

Other related policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1

3rd September 2015

Dear Parent

In the interests of Child Protection, we need your permission if we are to help change young children who have accidentally got wet through toileting accidents, through play or through illness.

Alternatively we can contact you, the parent, to come to school to supervise the changing.

All contact with children follows the school Child Protection Policy.

Yours sincerely

.....
K D Campbell
Principal

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Please tick and sign your preferred option.

- (a) I give permission for teachers, or classroom assistants to help change my child in school, if necessary.

.....Signed Parent/ Guardian Date

- (b) I wish to be contacted if my child needs changing.

.....Signed Parent/ Guardian Date