

INTIMATE CARE POLICY



**ST PATRICK'S P.S.
GLENARIFF**

February 2022

Our Mission Statement

St Patrick's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Every child's right to privacy will be respected.

Rationale

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out procedures, that safeguard pupils and staff by providing a consistent approach within a framework, that recognises the rights and responsibilities of all those involved in providing intimate care for children.

We believe that all pupils should be able to participate in all aspects of community life and therefore intimate care procedures may be carried out in various settings. It is therefore important that appropriate facilities and equipment are available wherever possible.

AIMS

- Safeguard the rights and well-being of pupils with regard to dignity, privacy, choice and safety.
- Assure parents/carers that all staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that individual concerns are taken into account and when necessary are acted upon.
- Parents/carers to be involved in any decision about the Intimate Care of their children.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff.
- To ensure that parents/carers are actively involved in the development of agreed Intimate Care protocols.
- Provide staff with information and appropriate training in Intimate Care.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is any assistance that involves touching a child while carrying out a procedure that most children are able to do for themselves, but some are unable to manage without help. This may involve help with eating, drinking, dressing, and matters of personal hygiene such as washing and toileting. In some instances more specialised intimate assistance may be needed for children with physical or medical difficulties. (Guidance on the provision of intimate care to children and young people at school, EA 2018)

Supporting Dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child dressing or undressing (particularly in Early Years) due to an accident, soiling themselves or due to a medical condition. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child. Staff will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that it is not possible to do so. An intimate care permission slip signed by parents will give permission to foundation and support staff to help change children if the need arises.

Providing Comfort or Support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child. If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child requires physical comfort from a member of staff, this should always be in the presence of another member of staff or adult.

Soiling

Staff will use common sense when tending to a child who has soiled themselves during the school day.

Parents of Primary 1 pupils will be asked to complete an intimate care permission form (**See Appendix 1**) at the start of the school year. This will allow foundation and support staff to clean and change children in this age bracket if necessary. Extra clothing is kept in the school in case such incidents occur so that children can be changed quickly and easily.

If an older child's underwear needs changed due to a soiling incident the child will be asked to change their underwear in private and carry out the act themselves. If a child is distressed and asks for his/her parents, then they will be contacted immediately. Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- protective gloves are worn;
- the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process;
- the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible;
- physical contact is kept to a minimum when the child is being helped to carry out the necessary cleaning;
- privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation;
- any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet;
- soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves. These are stored with changes of clothes in the two separate school buildings.

Safeguarding - Covid-19

In the event of a child displaying symptoms of Covid-19 in school, the following procedures will be followed:

- A responsible/designated adult wearing appropriate PPE (especially if social distancing guidelines cannot be maintained) must take the child to the designated safe place, away from adults and other children - the lower classroom in the old school building.
- Ideally a window should be opened for ventilation
- If the child needs to go to the bathroom, while waiting to be collected, they will use the block of toilets outside the lower classroom in the old building. This toilet will then be closed until appropriate cleaning can take place and the area disinfected. The entire lower area will be closed off during this time to reduce the possible spread of infection.
- The member of staff assisting this child must then wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds and the waiting area must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to others.

Medical Care

Pupils requiring short term and long term medical care involving intimate care, will receive this care in line with the child's 'Care Plan'. The content of any 'Care Plan' will be discussed and agreed with the relevant medical body. Parents as a first option will be asked to provide medical procedures that involve intimate care. If this is not possible, the school will seek the necessary advice from the EA and/or the school nurse. If it is possible for the staff of the school to provide the level of medical care required, the staff member/s will receive the appropriate training. Written permission must be received from the person with parental responsibility before a medical procedure can be carried out.

The Intimate Care Plan

This plan (**Appendix 2**) will have the child's safety, privacy, and dignity as paramount and includes

- o Clear information regarding the assistance to be provided;
- o The named person/s with responsibility to assist the child;
- o The timetable, if possible, when assistance will be provided;
- o Arrangements for school events and activities;
- o The means by which the arrangement will be monitored;
- o The maintenance of a record of assistance (**Appendix 3**).

The plan will be agreed and signed by parents, staff, and the child if appropriate.

Menstruation

As a staff we are aware that some of the girls in P.6 & P.7 may be developing and may need assistance to deal with this in school. Parents are informed of measures we have put in place to support girls around menstruation.

- Girls are informed by their parents to talk to a member of staff if they feel unwell or need access to sanitary products.
- Spare sanitary products are kept in school – each female member of staff keeps them in their classroom.
- Pedal bins are placed in the girls' toilet areas in KS2, so that sanitary items can be disposed of easily.
- If a child requires pain relief, medication is sent into school, together with a parental consent form, and is administered or observed by a member of staff.

Protection for staff

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary;
- be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

See Good Practice guidelines for Staff (Appendix 4)

Safeguards for Children

All staff and volunteers in St. Patrick's Primary School must gain Access NI clearance before working in the school. Children's rights to privacy will always be respected when dealing with intimate care issues.

Monitoring and Reviewing of Policy

The Intimate Care Policy will be monitored and reviewed at least every three years. The governors, staff and parents will be involved in the review of the policy to ensure that the procedures remain appropriate and in line with Education Authority guidance.

APPENDIX 1

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLENARIFF

Tel (028) 217 71619
Principal: Mr Mark Dinsmore



244 Garron Road
Glenariff
Co. Antrim
BT44 ORB

PERMISSION FOR SCHOOL STAFF TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

Child's Last Name	
Child's First Name	
Male/Female	
Date of Birth	
Parent/Carer's Name	
Address	

I understand that:

I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate support to my child to eg. change soiled clothing, washing and toileting.

I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate physical care.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

APPENDIX 2

INTIMATE CARE PLAN ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY, GLENARIFF

Pupil:		DOB:
Diagnosis:		
Assistance:		
Timetable		
Person/s assisting:		
Alternative Arrangements:		
Location/equipment:		

Designated	Signed	Date
Parent		
Pupil		
Assistant/s		
Principal		

APPENDIX 3

INTIMATE CARE RECORD
ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY, GLENARIFF

[illegible]

APPENDIX 4

Intimate Care **Good Practice Checklist for Staff**

Such care might be necessary with;

A child who has wet or soiled themselves

A child who has been hurt and treatment requires removal of clothing

- Let another member of staff know who requires care and what you intend to do
- Ensure the child's dignity at all times; they should be appropriately covered, door closed.
- Reassure the child and tell them what you plan to do
- Listen to the child's wishes
- If they are distressed or protest, stop the care immediately and seek advice or assistance from another member of staff
- Report the duty of intimate care to a senior member of staff following the event
- Ensure the parent is informed about the care that was administered: Parent phoned or spoken to in school when child collected.