

St Patrick`s Portrush



Intimate Care Policy

Policy No	Signed by Chair BOG	Date Ratified by BOG
19		August 2018
Agreed Date	Review Date	Person Responsible for Review
	September 2024	Mr. Dinsmore/Mrs Turner

All staff please sign and date below in line with the review of this policy

Mission Statement

As a partnership of Children, Parents, Staff, Governors and the wider Community we aim to;

- Promote equality of opportunity for all children and staff.
- Ensure that everyone will experience an inclusive education where tolerance and understanding are promoted.
- Meet children's individual and collective needs.
- Provide a stimulating, secure and nurturing environment.
- Promote an ethos that is highly motivating and encourages all to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Provide an environment where we all feel secure, valued, respected and understood.
- Encourage all to have a positive self-image, high self-esteem and increasing confidence.
- Provide an environment which encourages active learning, investigation, creativity and challenge.
- Value and celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and beliefs in our community.
- Celebrate achievement and progress in all areas of development.
- Display high standards of courtesy at all times.
- Encourage all to have a sense of responsibility for themselves, for each other and for their environment.

Rationale

We aim to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. Our Intimate Care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our overall pastoral care provision at St Patricks P.S. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in administering intimate care.

Children are generally more vulnerable than adults and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to a child's individual needs. Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Changing clothes
- Toileting
- First aid and administering of medicine
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are fundamental principles of intimate care, upon which our policy guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe and feel 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
- All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- All children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views respected
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent

School Responsibilities

All staff in St Patrick's are vetted by the Education Authority through Access NI. Students on work placement and volunteers are supervised at all times and are not permitted to administer Intimate care.

Only Members of staff who complete Annual school CP training, who accept the Intimate Care Policy and other pastoral care policies of the school may be involved in the intimate care of children. (We need to advise you that there may be emergency occasions when substitute teaching staff have to change your child. They will be fully compliant with the 'Intimate Care Policy' and the 'Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy' and the 'Code of Conduct for all staff and Volunteers'.)

All intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents/carers and if appropriate by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parents and stored in the child's file. Only in an emergency e.g. If parents could not be contacted, would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and the school. Parents would then be informed immediately.

Intimate care arrangements are reviewed annually in October by the safeguarding team and all staff, parents and pupils are part of the review process. The views of all relevant parties are actively welcomed and considered to inform future arrangements.

If a member of staff has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the designated teacher for child protection, Mr Dinsmore or Mrs Turner.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children in St Patricks Primary School have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff and assure parents. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children. Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly 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 forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

1. Involve the child in the intimate care. Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in their intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible. Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.
2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation. **Intimate Care should never be carried out by a member of staff working alone with a child.**
3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent. As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent. All intimate care actions must be recorded and retained in the child's file.
4. Be aware of your own limitations. Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If unsure ask. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
5. 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 both efficient and relaxed.
6. If you have a concern, record and report immediately and inform the designated teacher. If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling record on 'the note of concern' and report it immediately to the designated teacher for child protection, as per 'Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy'
7. If a child is accidentally hurt during the intimate care, misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. The Principal and Parents must be informed immediately. A written record of the intimate care provided must be kept in the child's personal file and be available to parents if requested.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally every child should have the choice for intimate care but the current ratio of female to male staff in St Patricks Primary School means that assistance will be most likely given from a female member of staff. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

When intimate care is being carried out all children have the right to dignity and privacy

If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out the care should stop immediately.

Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide assurance

Report any concerns to the designated teacher for child protection and make a written record

Parents must be informed about any concerns

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. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, children many communicate using different methods – words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing etc. To ensure effective communication, make eye contact at the child's level and use simple language and repeat if necessary. Wait for a response and continue to explain what is happening even if there is no response. Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

At St. Patrick's P.S. we have pupils for whom English is not their first language. Asylum seeker and other pupils and their parents/carers will be supported to ensure that intimate care procedures are understood. The Makaton sign for toilet is taught to each child and known to all staff, to provide additional support.

Toilet passes are used in each class and appropriate hygiene procedures are adhered to.

In adherence to Covid 19 guidelines special routines/restrictions may be introduced to protect our school community.