

*St. Francis' Primary School*  
*Drummaroad*



*Intimate Care Policy*  
*Spring 2021*

<b>Date Ratified</b>	
<b>Signature:</b> <b>Chairperson of the Board of</b> <b>Governors</b>	
<b>Signature:</b> <b>Principal</b>	

# **St. Francis' Primary School, Drumaroad**

## **Intimate Care Policy**

**The purpose of this policy is:**

- To safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children.
- To ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one
- To safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations.
- To raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care.
- To inform parents/carers in how intimate care is administered.
- To ensure parents/carers are consulted in the intimate care of their children.

### **Principles**

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and sensitively as possible. As far as possible, a child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body. It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self-esteem.

Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the child's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

### **Definition**

Intimate care is one of the following:

- Supporting a child with dressing/undressing **if they are unable to do so independently**.
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil.
- Assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided.
- Cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited **if they are unable to do so independently** or supporting a pupil who feels unwell.

## **Supporting dressing/undressing**

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed particularly in our school setting.

Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. In the event of a child needing assistance, two members of staff will be present to ensure procedures are carried out appropriately and also for the protection of both the child and staff members involved.

## **Providing comfort and support**

Children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable for 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.

## **Medical procedures**

If it's necessary for a child to receive medication during the school session, parents must fill out an "Administering Medicine Form" from the office and discuss their child's needs with a member of staff before the school agrees to administer medicines or medical care.

It must be made clear to parents that staff administration of medicines is voluntarily.

Any member of staff giving medicine to a pupil should check:

- The pupil's name
- Written instructions provided by parents or doctor
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry date

Staff administering medication **MUST** be assisted by another member of staff who will check the above also. Particular attention should be paid to the safe storage (a specified bag kept in staff room in a safe location), handling and disposal of medicines whilst wearing PPE. The principal has prime responsibility for the safe management of medicines kept at school and knows the location of the safe storage of medication in the staff room.

## **Soiling**

Intimate care for soiling should only be given after the parents have given permission for staff to clean and change the child. Parents sign a permission form so that the staff can clean and change their child in the event of the child soiling themselves.

If a parent does not give consent, the school will contact the parents or other emergency contact, giving specified details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If the parent/carers or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives. Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them giving comfort and reassurance.

The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed.

If a parent/carers or emergency contact cannot attend, the school seeks to gain verbal consent from parents/carers for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him/herself.

If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the principal will look at the situation and where the child is at risk staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

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/ PPE 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 the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning.
- Privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation.
- All spills of vomit, blood or excrement are wiped up and 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 PPE and disposable gloves.

## **Protection for staff**

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

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary and ensuring that another member of staff is in full view of what is happening as to protect all parties.
- Allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her care and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable.
- Allow the child to a choice in the sequence of care.
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

***This policy was signed and agreed by the Committee, details below...***

**Signed:**\_\_\_\_\_ **(Designated Teacher)** **Dated:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**\_\_\_\_\_ **(Principal)** **Dated:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**\_\_\_\_\_ **(Chairperson)** **Dated:**\_\_\_\_\_