



# **St Clare's Abbey Nursery Unit**



## **Intimate Care Policy**

**Reviewed September 2025**

## **Rationale**

In St. Clare's Abbey Primary School we seek to promote independence in each child re: self-care. However, we recognise that there will be times when help is required in this area particular in our nursery unit. Our Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It forms part of the whole school overall Pastoral Care Portfolio of policies. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children and focuses on being sensitive to children's individual needs.

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.

Such activities may include assisting with:

□ toileting/nappy changing (in the instance of pupils with medical or SEN reasons for needing to wear a nappy.)

□ feeding;

□ oral care;

□ washing;

□ changing clothes;

□ first aid;

□ supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based. Every child has the right to:

- assistance that respects his/her dignity, and to feel safe when being moved or handled
- feel comfortable with the adults assisting him/her, and to make it known if this level of comfort is disturbed.
- be encouraged to engage in the care procedure, to know what is happening and give permission at each stage
- be encouraged to work towards independence and helped to do so as much as possible for him/herself.

### Parental responsibility

- To advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child at their earliest possible opportunity.
- To ensure that their child is toilet trained unless there is a medical reason for this not being the case.
- To share medical advice and needs with the class teacher.

### School Responsibilities:

Whilst all members of staff working with our children are vetted appropriately, including students and volunteers, **only employed** members of staff will be involved in the intimate care of our children. It is important to note that in addition to the information in the Intimate Care Policy, reference should also be made to the Child Protection and Pastoral Care Policies. All nursery staff receive Child Protection training annually by our Designated Teacher, Mrs Donnelly. Mrs Gallagher, nursery teacher, (Mrs Davey & Mrs Mc Goldrick- acting Nursery teachers for 25/26 school year) is part of the school safeguarding team.

- At the start of each academic year parents of pupils in Nursery classes are asked to give permission for staff to carry out intimate care for their child (with particular reference to toileting accidents.) At times, staff are required to assist children in getting on to and off the toilet. Additionally, when dealing with such young children, staff are required to support children in redressing after using the toilet. These consent forms will be sent via SEESAW and parents will note their consent.
- Known intimate care arrangements for our nursery children which will be required on a **regular** basis will be agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate, by the child. All needs and arrangements will be shared with the classroom assistants. This arrangement will be noted separately during this meeting and written consent given \* see appendix
- The school principal and Nursery teacher will liaise with Health Professionals/ appropriate external partners to support any parent who has a child still wearing nappies (unless as stated previously that there is a medical or SEN reason for this.)
- Intimate care arrangements for any child who requires this support on a regular basis will be reviewed mid- year and when moving to Primary 1. The views of all relevant parties will be sought and considered to inform

any future arrangements and any amendments will be recorded and copied to all parties.

- When staff are administering intimate care, they will implement the following **Good Practice Guidelines**, striving to:

**1. Involve the child in his/her intimate care**

Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, the adult will talk about what is going to be done and where possible, give choices.

**2. Treat the child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.**

Care should never be carried out behind a closed door by a member of staff alone with a child. The door should be kept ajar and another adult should be told that intimate care is being provided to ensure that additional help will be available if needed.

If a child has an appropriate degree of independence, the adult will assume a role of supervision and will straddle the doorway providing verbal assistance whilst affording as much privacy as possible. The child will be told that 'hands on' help will be available if needed.

**3. Communicate well with Child throughout the process**

To ensure effective communication and support:

- 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.

**4. 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 will ensure that the practice is consistent.

**5. Be aware of their own limitations**

Only carry out activities they understand and feel competent and comfortable with. If in doubt, they must ask.

**6. Promote positive self-esteem and body image among our children**

Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach we take with intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Our attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be both efficient and relaxed.

#### **7. Promote good quality hygiene practice.**

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection e.g. where the child has suffered cut/broken skin - and must ensure the use of appropriate protective equipment when necessary, for example, protective, disposable latex/vinyl gloves. Pupils will be shown how to wash their hands thoroughly following participation in their own intimate care.

NB if the child has had a toileting accident that has involved bowel movements (and no prior arrangement has been made with parents re: changing nappies/pull ups) and the soiling has been significant, contact will be made with home so that the child can be brought home to have a shower and be washed properly. All interim steps will be taken until parent arrives to clean child to the highest and most hygienic standard possible using baby wipes and toilet roll. However, in our effort to promote good hygiene it would be very important that this is followed up with a shower/bath at home.

#### **8. Work with children of the opposite sex in a manner that leaves pupils and adults comfortable and safe**

The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex unless the staff member, child or parent has requested otherwise.

#### **9. Report any concerns that may arise**

If staff observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling report it immediately to the Designated Teacher, Mrs Donnelly, or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Gallagher.

If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident to the DT or DDT. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

NB if the child appears to be 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 reassurance;

□ report any concerns to the DT or DDT and make a written record;

□ parents must be informed about any concerns.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report it to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Donnelly or the Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs Gallagher.

#### **Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing policy:**

***This Policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed at the start of each new SDP cycle or when an incident arises or when new relevant guidance is issued.***

## Parental permission for Intimate Care (Issued at start of year)

Dear Parents

We require parental consent for various day-to-day activities your children may be involved with throughout their time in the school.

As we are an Eco School and want to encourage as much environmental awareness as possible in our children, we have uploaded all our Policies on the School website. Please take the time to read through the policies as they affect everyday life in St Clare's Abbey.

**Intimate Care:** I confirm that I have read the Intimate Care Policy on the website. A change of clothes for the younger children must be provided in a plastic bag with their name clearly written.  
I authorise staff to change my child if they have a toileting accident.  
If your child soils him/herself, we will ask you to come to school to change them.  
If my child requires help to sit on/get off the toilet, I authorise staff to support them in getting on/off the toilet.  
If my child requires help with their clothes before or after using the toilet, I authorise staff to help my child with this.

**This year, we are continuing with sending these forms via the Seesaw 'App'. Please read through the consents required below and confirm your acceptance to the Class Teacher via the Seesaw 'App' by Monday.**

Yours in Partnership

*Mrs M Monaghan*

**ST CLARE'S ABBEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## Appendix

### Appendix B



## Intimate Care Record

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