

St. Anthony's Intimate Care Policy



2024

Responsibility: SMT

Agreed:

Approved by Board of Governors:

Date for Review: April 2027

Intimate Care Policy

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- ❖ Feeding
- ❖ Oral care
- ❖ Washing
- ❖ Dressing/undressing
- ❖ Toileting
- ❖ Menstrual care
- ❖ Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care
- ❖ Cleaning up a child after wetting/soiling accident.

The principles of Intimate Care

Every child has a right to:

- Be safe.
- Personal privacy.
- Be valued as an individual.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Be involved and consulted in their intimate care and to have their views taken into account.
- Have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Within the Nursery the teacher and the nursery assistants are available to undertake the intimate care of the child.

The following procedure takes place:

- A bank of clothes is available within the class.
- Some children have a personal change of clothes – these are used for that particular child as required.
- If a child needs changing due to a toileting accident or as a daily requirement, this takes place in the toilets within the classroom.
- The assistant or teacher notifies the other staff members that she is changing a child so that the other children are properly taken care of.
- The child needing changed should be encouraged, as far as possible, to help to change himself / herself, with help and support from staff.
- The toilet door shall always remain unlocked when a staff member is assisting a child to change.
- If a child requires changing due to water play etc. (e.g. sweatshirt / t-shirt) this should be done in the classroom/kitchen area with the door opened.

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If a staff member

A. Notices marks on a child which give cause for concern

OR

B. Is anxious about something a child may have said to her

She should immediately report this to the Designated Teacher in school.
The classroom assistant may also report concerns to the designated teacher.

On admission to the Nursery parents are asked to sign and return an intimate care form (Appendix 1)

School Responsibilities

- All staff working with children must be vetted by the EA.
- Vetting includes Access NI checks.
- Only vetted staff identified by school should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The principal must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and
- Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable
- Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.
- All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the School, parents /carers and child (if appropriate).
- The school needs to make provisions for emergencies i.e. a child wets or soils themselves
- Intimate care arrangements that have been specially agreed with a parent should be reviewed at least annually. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the designated Child Protection officer.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff.

They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. 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. It is important to bear in mind that some care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

Involve the child in their intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

Check your practice by asking the child / parent any likes / dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent.

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

Care can be carried out by one staff member / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-to-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort /safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

A child with special needs can have multiple carers so a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers /agencies / school ensures practice is consistent.

Be aware of own limitations

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK.

Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained.

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

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convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important.

If you have any concerns, you must report them

If you observe any unusual markings, discolorations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to your designated Child Protection teacher.

If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to your designated Child Protection teacher.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.

A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's medical notes / personal file.

Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Please refer to:

- ❖ Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures – April 2005
- ❖ DENI Child Protection & Pastoral Care Guidance 1999
- ❖ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

Working with children of the opposite sex

Principles:

- There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children.
- Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care.
- The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.
- The practical guidelines set out below, are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.

General Care

Male and female staff can be involved with children of either sex in:

- (a) Key working and liaising with families.
- (b) Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child's review.
- (c) Meeting the developmental, emotional and recreational needs of the children.

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Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

It may be possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of their reactions to the intimate care they receive. Do not assume that a child cannot make a choice.

The intimate care of boys / girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- (a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with school policy and procedures.
- (b) Staff who are not governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within their agency and direction and agreement must be provided by the Principal.
- (b) When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place.
- (d) If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- (e) Report concerns to your Designated Teacher and make a written record.
- (f) Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Emergency 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

- ◆ Inform the parent about the care that was administered:

Phone/Talk to the parent about the incident

- ◆ Male staff should not perform duties of intimate care with a female child

- ◆ If you have any concerns regarding the child report them immediately to the designated child protection teacher – Mrs H. Hamill

Appendix 1



Intimate Care Policy

The Principles of Intimate Care

Every Child has a right to:

- ✓ Be Safe
- ✓ Personal Privacy
- ✓ Be valued as an individual
- ✓ Be treated with dignity and respect
- ✓ Be involved and consulted in their intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- ✓ Have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Within St. Anthony's, the teacher and the trained Classroom Assistants are available to undertake the intimate care of the child.

The following procedure takes place:

- A bank of clothes is available within the class
- Some children have a personal change of clothes - these are used for that particular child as required.
- If a child needs changing due to a toileting accident or as a daily requirement, this takes place in the toilets within the classroom.
- The assistant or teacher notifies the other staff members that she is changing a child so that the other children are properly taken care of.
- The child needing changed should be encouraged, as far as possible, to help change him/herself, with help and support from staff.
- The toilet door shall always remain unlocked when a staff member is assisting a child to change.
- If a child requires changing due to water play etc. (e.g. sweatshirt/ T shirt) this should be done in the classroom/kitchen area with the door opened.

If a staff member:

- a) Notices marks on a child which gives cause for concern OR
- b) Is anxious about something a child may have said to her

She should immediately report this to the designated teacher in school. The classroom assistant may also report concerns to the designated teacher. On admission to the Nursery, parents are asked to signed and return the attached consent form.



Intimate Care Consent Form

Dear Parents/Guardian

During the school day, there may be an occasion where your child may require extra care and support from an adult. Therefore, I would like you to consider the following:

- It may be necessary to change a child due to a toilet accident
- It may be necessary to change a child due to "messy play" or water spillages
- It may be necessary to change a child due to him/her feeling sick

Our staff are trained and when changing children follow a common procedure which is outlined in our **Intimate Care Policy**. I would be grateful if you would read the policy and sign the section below and return it to your class teacher. If you have any concerns regarding this issue please make them known to a member of staff.

I have read the above statements and understand and agree with them

Signed: _____

PRINT NAME: _____

Child's Name: _____

DATE: _____



Intimate Care Policy for the Application of cream to the skin

The Principles of Intimate Care

Every Child has a right to:

- ✓ Be Safe
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- ✓ Be involved and consulted in their intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- ✓ Have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Within St Anthony's PS, Teachers and Trained Assistants are available to undertake the intimate care of a child.

The following procedure takes place:

- The child needing care will be encouraged, as far as possible, to help loosen, pull down or up, or remove clothing, as needed with help and support from the designated member(s) of staff.
- The room door shall always remain unlocked when a staff member is assisting a child.

If a staff member:

- c) Notices marks on a child which gives cause for concern OR
- d) Is anxious about something a child may have said to her

that member of staff should immediately report this to the designated teacher in school. The staff member may also report any other concerns to the designated teacher.



Intimate Care Consent Form for the Application of cream onto skin

Dear Parents/Guardian

Your child has a medical condition that requires him/her to have cream applied to his/her arms and/or legs at times stated by your GP, during the school day.

Therefore:

- It may be necessary to remove the child's jumper/push up sleeves.
- It may be necessary to pull down/remove the child's shoes/trousers/tights/socks.

Our staff are trained and when assisting children follow a common procedure which is outlined in our **Intimate Care Policy**. I would be grateful if you would read the policy and sign the section below and return it to the child's class teacher. If you have any concerns regarding this, please make them known to a member of staff.

I have read the above statements and understand and agree with them

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Parent/Guardian Signed:

PRINT NAME:

DATE: _____



TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Name of support staff involved:

(or a member of the Safe Guarding Team)

Area of need/Medical Condition:

Equipment required: _____

Location of suitable toilet facilities:

Support required: _____

Frequency of support(approximately): _____

In the event that your child requires changing, a second adult may be present. This is to ensure that the Safeguarding Policy and procedures of St. Anthony's are adhered to for the benefit of the child and adult.

Signed:

Parent/Carer: _____

SENCO: _____



Agreement between child and the Personal Assistant

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Personal Assistant's Name: _____

Date of Agreement: _____

Personal Assistant

As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- When I am the identified person I will stop what I am doing to help you
- I will avoid all unnecessary delays
- I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times
- I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing
- I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally
- If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you
- I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan.

Child

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me
- I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times
- I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet.
- I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed
- I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change

We will review this agreement on: _____

Child (if appropriate): _____

Parent/Carer: _____