

# Our Lady's P.S.



## Safeguarding - Intimate Care Policy / Procedures

Signature- Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature - Board of Governors Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Ratified: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Our Lady's Primary School Ethos Statement**

Our Lady's Primary school is a focal point for the community. We want our school to be a caring environment which effectively develops the academic, personal, social and spiritual potential of each child. We are a catholic school and as such we have a distinct ethos, but we welcome children from all faiths and none.

Catholic Education takes place in communities inspired by the spirit of Christ. Christ's commandment to love God and neighbour inspires a caring ethos which is expressed in relationships within and beyond catholic schools.

The education in our school is person centred. It promotes the dignity, self-esteem and full development of each person who is made in God's image and uniquely loved by God.

Catholic Education is inclusive. It is respectful of and engages with people of all beliefs; it encourages the religious development of all in their own faith.

Catholic Education is rooted in the gospel values of respect for life, solidarity, truth and justice; it aims to harmonise faith and culture, build a better society and pursue the common good.

Together we aim to provide high quality rounded education for all our children so that they develop their full uniqueness and potential.

In our school the person and message of Christ find expression in:

- Communities of Faith, Service, Prayer and Worship;
- The development of each person's full potential in a climate of joy, freedom, respect, challenge, co-operation and celebration;
- The enrichment of pupil life-intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral, social and emotional;
- The promotion of a spirit of charity, social justice, global awareness and concern for others leading to practical outreach and partnerships;
- A cultural of tolerance where people of diverse identities are recognised welcomed respected and cherished;
- Listening, mutual understanding, trust, reconciliation, healing and peace;
- The preparation of pupils to lead fulfilling and purposeful lives which will contribute to the common good;
- Promotion of family life.

## INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the approach to Intimate Care in Our Lady's Primary School. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children in our school community.

## 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/carers.

### 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

## PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be 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.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

## SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- All staff working with children must be vetted by the EA or CCMS.

Vetting includes:

- Access NI checks
- Only vetted staff identified 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 has made provisions for emergencies i.e. a child wets or soils themselves. At the start of each school year parents/carers in the Foundation Stage are informed of our provision and procedures in this area and consent is requested and recorded. In the event of consent not being given parents will be contacted to administer the intimate care. Children in P3 – P7 would be encouraged to independently change their clothing and parents/carers would be informed of the incident (**See Appendices One to Five**).
- Intimate care arrangements that have been specially agreed with a parent are reviewed annually. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), are 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 or Deputy Designated Child Protection officers.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE**

All children of Our Lady's 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. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children. If a child is distressed or protests, the intimate car should stop and parents/carers contacted.

Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs and follow agreed care plans.

Staff members 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.

### **1. Involve the child in their intimate care**

Staff should 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.

## **2. 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.

## **3. 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.

## **4. Be aware of own limitations**

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If uncertain ask for advice or assistance from another trained member of staff or Designated/Deputy Designated Officers.

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

## **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 very important.

## **6. If you have any concerns, you must report them**

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to your Designated/Deputy Child Protection teacher(s).

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, stop the intimate care and seek the assistance of a member of the Safeguarding team. Report the incident immediately to your Designated/Deputy Child Protection teacher(s) (Record on a CP incident report sheet).

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by a child to the Designated/Deputy Designated teacher(s). A written record of any concerns must be made, given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher(s) and kept in the child's medical notes / personal file. Parents / carers should be informed about any concerns about a child.

Please refer to:

- Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures – April 2005
- DENI Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – Sept 2019
- 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.

## Intimate Care

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.

**Male members of staff should not perform duties of intimate care with a female child.**

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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Report concerns to your Designated/Deputy Teacher(s) and make a written record.
- Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

## 7. Menstrual Care & Period Dignity

Consent will be sought from parents/carers of Primary 7 girls enabling short presentations and talks encouraging health and wellbeing especially in the event of the onset of menstruation in school. Period Dignity is promoted and facilitated in school with menstrual care products available for KS2 girls. We will continue to work closely with parents/guardians and external agencies regarding these matters.

### Related School Policies

Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy  
Safeguarding - Code of Conduct  
Pastoral Care Policy

Appendix One

**Our Lady's P.S.**



**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*

- Inform another member of staff 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 and contact parents/carers.
- Report the duty of intimate care to another member of staff following the event and record on the agreed table **(Appendix 4 – Intimate Care Class Record Sheet)**.
- Inform the parent/carer about the care that was administered and record that the parent/carer was notified **(Appendix 5 – individual intimate care record sheet)**. Please note: Parent/Carer will be informed if a child has received a bump to the head/head injury. A Staff member will phone/talk to the parent about the incident and the care that was administered.
- 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/Deputy Child Protection Teacher(s)



### **Intimate Care Procedures**

#### **Foundation Stage (Reception, P1 & P2)**

***It is sometimes necessary to change clothing, either through toileting accidents, or spillage.***

***Clothing is removed with the children's approval and they are encouraged to help. This is carried out in the toilet area, in accordance with Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures.***

***Personal hygiene and respect for the children is paramount.***

***If a child is distressed or protests, the intimate care will cease and parents/carers will be contacted.***

***Foundation Stage have a supply of socks, underwear and uniform.***

**OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

12 MILLTOWN ROAD  
BENBURB, DUNGANNON  
CO.TYRONE  
BT71 7NJ

Tel/Fax: 028-37548237

Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee

E-mail: [info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk)

Website: [www.ourladyspstullysaran.com](http://www.ourladyspstullysaran.com)

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**TO PARENT(S)/CARER(S) WITH CHILDREN IN FOUNDATION STAGE**

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Please find below an overview of our Intimate Care procedures for your information. We would be grateful if you would complete the permission slip and return it to your child's class teacher.

In the event of consent not being given parent(s)/carers(s) will be contacted to provide the intimate care required.

Yours sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mr Tomás Mc Kee**  
Principal

**Our Lady's Primary School  
Intimate Care Procedures  
Foundation Stage (P1 & P2)**

*It is often necessary to change clothing in Foundation Stage, either through toileting accidents, or spillage.*

*Clothing is removed with the children's approval and they are encouraged to help. This is carried out in the toilet area, in accordance with Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures.*

*Personal hygiene and respect for the children is paramount. Staff may wear PPE when supervising of assisting children with intimate care.*

*If a child is distressed or protests, the intimate care will cease and parents/carers will be contacted.*

*We have a supply of socks, underwear and uniform.*

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**Intimate Care Permission Slip**

I have read the enclosed Intimate Care procedures and I give consent for my child ..... to  
be changed by a member of staff in P1 & P2.

**Signed:** ----- [Parent(s)/Carer(s)] **Date:** -----



