

MULLAVILLY PRIMARY SCHOOL

'Inspiring, Believing Achieving'

Intimate Care Policy



March 2017

Review Date March
2018



Principles

The school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Policy for the Administration of Medicine
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Special Educational Needs policy
- Procedures and policy on use of force and restraint
- Staff code of conduct

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

The school recognises that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity, with respect when intimate care is given. The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

Definition

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

It also includes supervision of children involved in intimate self-care.

Intimate care may involve:

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself
3. Assisting with toileting issues
4. Providing first aid assistance
5. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
6. Supporting a child with menstruation



Best Practice

All children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for his/herself as possible.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding, permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure. Staff who provide intimate care are aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate. Children who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Individual Education Plans (IEP) or care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved. These plans include a full risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and carer. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be noted and taken into account.

Where a care plan or IEP is not in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. had a toileting 'accident' and soiled him/herself). It is advisable, however, for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care. Every child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. The child will be assisted by two adults, if required.

Wherever possible, the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

The religious views and cultural values of families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

All staff should be aware of the school's confidentiality policy. Sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.

If necessary, advice should be taken from the local council regarding disposal of large amounts of waste products.

**Most Likely Scenario: Changing a child who has soiled him/herself**

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves. School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. If a child is not able to complete this task unaided and shows distress, then staff will contact the parents. Always wear protective disposable gloves. Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents.

In the case of the child in Foundation Stage and in order to avoid any unnecessary distress, a member of staff may assist the child, with a colleague in attendance, unless a parent has requested otherwise or if the child is reluctant. Parents will be contacted as soon as it is practical to do so.

Swimming

Our Primary 5-7 classes participate in a swimming programme. Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence.

Child Protection

The Governors and staff recognise that children with special needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. The school's Child Protection Policy will be adhered to. From a child protection perspective, it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a child's body. It may be unrealistic to expect to eliminate these risks completely but in this school best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times. Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a child becomes distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Principal. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, this will be investigated under The School Complaints Policy.



Any members of staff who administers first aid will be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity. All members of staff working with children are vetted by the Education Authority. This includes students on work placement. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Record Keeping

It is good practice for a written record to be kept in an agreed format every time a child has assistance with intimate care, including date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present. These records will be kept in the child's file in the classroom and available to parents/carers on request. Where a child does not have an intimate care plan or IEP the incident will be recorded on the record sheet in the key stage medical room. Report any concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record; parents must be informed about any concerns.

Parental Permission for Intimate Care Mullavilly Primary School

Should it be necessary, I give permission for _____
(child) to receive intimate care (e.g. help with changing or following
toileting). I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to
be independent. I understand that I will be informed discretely should the
occasion arise.

Signed: _____ (Parent/ Guardian)



Intimate Care Record Sheet

Child's Name: _____

Date	Time	Nature of care	Adult's Signature 1	Adult's Signature 2



Adopted and signed on behalf of the Board of Governors	March 2017
Signature of Governor	
Signature of Subject Coordinator / Principal	
Review Date	March 2020