



# **Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit**

## **Intimate Care Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

At Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit we believe that every child matters. We believe that children learn best in a caring, encouraging and stimulating environment. We want to give our pupils the opportunity to achieve and to fulfil their potential, developing a love of learning that will last a lifetime. We want our pupils to know that they are valued and to learn to respect and care for others in their school, the local community and the wider world.

### **INTROUCTION**

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

In Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit, we aim to meet the needs of each child in our care through having appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and also through actively seeking to promote each child's welfare. Due to the young age which children begin Nursery and the Foundation Stage, children in these phases of education usually have a measure of dependence on adults to meet their physical care needs. Children with disability may also have physical needs that require the assistance of adults.

Each year, the Parent / Guardian of children in the Nursery Unit and Foundation Stage are asked to complete a consent form (see Appendix 1 and 2) regarding the changing of their child. These forms are kept by the Nursery teacher and Foundation Stage teachers. It is expected that children in Years 3 – 7 (not those with physical disability) are able to change independently unless a parent / guardian has written to request otherwise.

**DEFINITION**

Intimate care can be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with parents and the child. Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of the particular care needs of their child.

Intimate care can include: -

- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Oral care
- Menstrual care
- Feeding
- Treatment such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

## **PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE**

### *UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD*

*Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment.*

#### *Article 19*

- Every child has the right to be safe (UNCRC 19)
- Every child has the right to personal privacy (UNCRC 16)
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual (UNCRC 12)
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care of the best of their abilities (UNCRC 12)
- Every child has the right to express his/her views on their intimate care and to have such views taken into account (UNCRC 12)

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal to ensure that:

- all staff have undergone appropriate vetting and have had child protection training;
- all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the principles of intimate care;
- intimate care procedures have been agreed by the parents /carers and child (if appropriate); and
- the procedures outlined in this policy are adhered to.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE**

All staff involved in providing or assisting with intimate care need to be sensitive to each child's individual needs and also be aware that some care tasks or treatments could be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these good practice guidelines should safeguard both 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.

In the Nursery Unit and Foundation Stage, clean/dry items of clothing will be given to the child and the child encouraged to change independently (this will usually be in a toilet cubicle to ensure privacy). It may be necessary for an adult to look over the toilet cubicle door in order to talk the child through the process. If the child has difficulty changing independently, an adult will provide aid, either in the cubicle or in the main toilet area. The child's privacy will be ensured.

If a child has a toileting accident that leaves him/her soiled, staff will encourage him/her to clean and change themselves. If the child is distressed or unable to carry this task out independently, paid staff will help with the intimate care procedure if parents have given written permission. If a parent/carer has not given permission, he/she will be contacted immediately. The child will be monitored by an adult to ensure s/he does not become distressed.

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

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.

It is our policy at Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit that the adult involved in intimate care can be seen by another adult. This may be through a doorway or window. Following an incident involving intimate care, a 'Record of Intimate Care' form (see Appendix) must be completed and given to the Designated teacher for Child Protection (Mrs. Ritchie). These forms are kept by Mrs Ritchie. A 'Note to Parent / Guardian' (see Appendix) must also be completed and sent home with the child on the same day that the intimate care took place.

Both the Nursery School teacher and the Foundation Stage teachers have a supply of all forms relating to intimate care. In addition, copies of these blank forms are kept in a folder pinned to the notice board of the staff room in the Primary School.

In the case of a child that requires daily or frequent intimate care, a record should be kept in a notebook that indicates the following:

- the adult that carried out the intimate care
- the adult that observed and
- the date / time.

At any time, the parent / guardian may visit school and request to see this record.

### **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 and assessed e.g., enteral feeding.

### *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 important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

### **Menstrual Well-being and Period Dignity**

Menstrual wellbeing fits into the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Area of Learning at Key Stage 2 under Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change. This includes:

- knowing how the body grows and develops;
- being aware of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty;  
and
- knowing how babies are conceived, grow and are born.

It's important that boys have knowledge of and understand what girls experience before and during menstruation, and how their mood might change as they go through the menstrual cycle each month.

All of these issues are covered by a visit from Love For Life.

**Period Dignity** refers to the accessibility and availability of essential care needed to support a period, in conjunction with the breaking of stigma and taboo around periods.

In Ballinderry PS, the girls are told about and have access to a period disposal bin in Year 6/7 toilets. All girls are informed that if they need period products, they are available from Mrs Ritchie or any member of staff and will be provided discreetly (supplies kept in First Aid store)

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

If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling, including the genital area, report immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs Ritchie). If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt him/her, 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 the Designated Teacher (Mrs Ritchie) / Principal (Mrs Galbraith)

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice s/he must report this to the Designated teachers (/Mrs Cook / Mrs. Ritchie) for Child Protection or Principal (Mrs. Galbraith).

All records regarding intimate care are kept in a locked cupboard in Mrs Ritchie's room.

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

A written record of concerns must be made and given to the Designated teachers for Child Protection or the principal (Mrs. Ritchie and Mrs. Cook/ Mrs Galbraith).

This policy is reviewed annually as part of the Child Protection Policy.

M. Ritchie

May 2024

## Ballinderry Primary School

Dear Parent,

In order to safeguard your child and the staff in our school, we need your permission if we are to help change your child. Your child may need his/her clothing changed for a number of reasons, for example, through toileting accidents, through play or through illness.

Alternatively, we can contact you, the parent/guardian, to come to school to change your child.

All contact with children follows the school Intimate Care Policy.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs Ritchie

Vice Principal, Designated teacher for Child Protection.

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Please circle and sign your preferred option

(a) I give permission for teachers, or classroom assistants to help change my child in school, if necessary.

..... Signed Parent/ Guardian Date .....

\*(b) I wish to be contacted if my child needs changing.

..... Signed Parent/ Guardian Date:

Please ensure the school has 3 emergency contact numbers

**Ballinderry Primary School**

**Note to Parent / Guardian**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for child needing assistance (please circle):

- Toileting accident
- Other – please specify:

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Name of adult that assisted:

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Signature

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Ballinderry Primary School

**Child Protection record of Intimate care**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for child needing assistance (please circle):

- Toileting accident
- Other – please specify:

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Name of adult that assisted:

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Name of second adult:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN TO DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILD PROTECTION**