



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

2023-2024

Approved by: *Governors*

Date: 10/2023

Last reviewed on:

**Next review due
by:**

Introduction

At St Mary's school we recognise that there may be occasions when pupils require the assistance of staff with intimate and personal care procedures. Our intimate care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. Such activities can include:

- changing clothes eg for PE or swimming
- toileting
- first aid and medical assistance
- supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.
- feeding
- oral care
- washing

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.

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 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;
- all children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- all children have the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account; and
- every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

School Responsibilities

All staff working with children are DBS checked. This includes students on work placement and volunteers.

Only those members of staff who are familiar with the intimate care policy and other pastoral care policies of the school are involved in the intimate care of children.

here anticipated, intimate care arrangements are agreed between the school and parents and, if appropriate, by the child. Consent forms are signed by the parent and stored in the child's file. Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by parents and school. Parents would then be contacted immediately.

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 - Mrs Baron (Headteacher)

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.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly 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 forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

1. Involve the child in the intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible.

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

It is not appropriate for a member of staff to initiate intimate care procedures with a child without first alerting a second member of staff to the fact, the location and the details of the care to be provided. Each time intimate care is administered the details (date, place, members of staff involved, reason) must be recorded in the intimate care book located at the office.

3. Be aware of your own limitations

Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed. Plastic gloves must be worn and disposed of appropriately.

4. 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 both efficient and relaxed.

6. If you have any concerns you must report them.

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling report it immediately to the designated teacher for child protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during the intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher.

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.