



ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Principal: Rachel Harper

Deputy Principal: Hannah O'Connor

Board of Management – Chairperson: Canon David Mungavin

Intimate Care Needs

2025

Introduction

St. Patrick's NS aims to ensure that students who require assistance with intimate care receive appropriate and adequate support at school. We appreciate that students may feel especially vulnerable when being helped with intimate care and the staff involved shall be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance. This policy has been developed to safeguard both students and staff and should be read in conjunction with the School's Child Safeguarding Guide.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that students who require assistance with intimate care receive appropriate and adequate support while at school
- To protect these students
- To protect the staff charged with their care

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of a student. 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 students and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/Undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a student involved in intimate self-care

Principles of Intimate Care

In accordance with the fundamental Principles of Intimate Care, every student has the right to:

- Be safe
- Have privacy
- Feel valued as an individual
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Be consulted on their own intimate care
- Have levels of intimate care which are as consistent as possible.

School Responsibilities

St. Patrick's NS is committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students who require assistance with intimate care. All staff working in the School are vetted in line with the School's Child Safeguarding Policy.

The SEN teacher will agree an Intimate Care Plan with the parents/guardians and child and other health professionals (if appropriate). This plan will be signed by a parent/guardian and reviewed at the end of each academic year to inform future arrangements. The staff involved will receive relevant training in the specific types of intimate care they carry out and only the named staff identified in the student's Intimate Care Plan should undertake the intimate care of that student. Staff should NOT undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed in the Intimate Care Plan.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

The School may be unable to offer the choice of a same-sex carer to children who require assistance with intimate care. The intimate care of these children may therefore be carried out by a designated member of staff of the opposite sex as identified in the student's Intimate Care Plan.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All students have the right to be safe and feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Students with disabilities can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved in their intimate care need to be alert to their individual needs and sensitivities. The following guidelines apply to all staff involved in the intimate care of these children:

1. Involve the student in their intimate care. Try to encourage the student's independence as far as possible when it comes to their intimate care. When the student is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them a choice where possible. Check your practice by asking the student and/or parent for any likes and dislikes while intimate care is being undertaken.
2. Treat the student with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the student's age and situation.
3. Make sure the intimate care provided is consistent and only carried out by the named staff identified in the student's Intimate Care Plan.
4. Sensitive information about a child's intimate care is confidential.
5. 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.
6. Promote self-esteem and positive body image. Confident, self-assured children who feel that their body belongs to them are less vulnerable. 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.
7. If you observe any unusual marks, bruises or swelling, report it immediately to the DLP under the terms of the School's Child Safeguarding Policy.
8. If during the intimate care of a student you accidentally hurt them or the child misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the DLP.

David Mungavin

Signed: _____

Canon D Mungavin

Chairperson
Board of Management

Date: 10th March 2025

Rachel Harper

Signed: _____

R Harper

Principal

Date: 10th March 2025

Appendix 1

Intimate Care Plan

Please complete and sign this form so that the school may agree the designated staff to assist with your child's intimate care needs.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Student Name | Form |
| Date of Birth | Medical Diagnosis |
| Plan Prepared by | Designation |
| Date | Review Date |

| Contact 1 Details | | Contact 2 Details | |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Name | | Name | |
| Relationship to Student | | Relationship to Student | |
| Mobile Phone Number | | Mobile Phone Number | |
| Work Number | | Work Number | |
| Email Address | | Email Address | |

| GP Details | | Hospital/Agency Contact Details (if relevant) | |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| GP Name | | Hospital/Agency | |
| Surgery Name | | Named Contact | |
| Email Address | | Email Address | |
| Mobile Phone Number | | Phone Number | |
| Surgery Phone Number | | | |

Please consult your child before completing the table below.

1. Please give details of your child's condition.

2. Please outline their specific intimate care needs.

3. Please outline any likes or dislikes when your child is help with intimate care.

4. Are there any other issues the School needs to know about?

5. The School will name three designated members of staff to assist with your child's intimate care needs. If your child knows the staff, have they any preferences?

For School Use Only

Designated Staff Responsible for the intimate care needs of this child:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I agree that the information contained in this form may be shared with the designated members of staff who assist in the intimate care of my child

Signature of Parent/Guardian (or Student if over the age of 18)