

Intimate Care Policy for Scoil Naomh Pio

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is defined as care tasks associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving direct or indirect contact with or exposure of intimate parts of the body. Intimate care can involve direct or indirect support:

- Direct support involves physical contact between the student and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts.
- Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the student to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care tasks can include:

- assistance with toileting and general hygiene: (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so;
- dressing and undressing (including underwear);
- changing of pads;
- personal hygiene involving intimate body parts;
- menstrual care.

Objective

The objective of this policy is to give direction to staff with regard to supporting students in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also providing clear guidance to the staff involved.

Intimate Care Plan

In all situations where a student needs assistance with toileting /intimate care, a meeting will be convened with a view to drawing up an Intimate Care Plan (Appendix 1).

This Appendix should be seen as a working document and edited to suit the needs of the individual student. This meeting will be attended by the Parents/Guardians and if appropriate the Student, Class teacher, SNA and other relevant staff or professionals involved in the student's care. It is important that all those included in intimate care and the intimate care plan feel comfortable to speak openly and raise concerns. The specific needs of the student and how the school can best meet those needs will be clarified in this meeting. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified. The school ethos, pillars and student voice should remain central to all decisions made during the course of intimate care planning.

During this process:

- As far as possible the student will be involved in the identification of their personal wishes or requirements.
- Additional items of clothing and sanitary wear will be provided by Parents/Guardians as necessary in a timely manner.

- A written copy of what has been agreed will be made, signed by the parties involved and retained in the student support file.
- Where a student requires manual handling (lift/transfer) as part of their intimate care needs, manual handling procedures will be outlined in the intimate care plan. Staff will be trained in the use of lifting/transfer equipment in consultation with the student's care givers, e.g. occupational therapist.
- The student's intimate care plan will be reviewed at the beginning of each academic year or as needs arise during the year.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for keeping the school up to date with any changes to the student's intimate care requirements.

Procedures

- Two members of the ISA team should be present when dealing with intimate care/ toileting needs.
- In the case of a female student – staff members must be female. In the case of a male student – staff members may be male or female. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student and their parents/guardians.
- It will not be necessary for two people to administer intimate care however: in the case of direct intimate care a second member of staff will also be in attendance in the room, with the door locked.
- In the case of indirect intimate care, a second member of staff will remain outside of the room – in this case the door should not be locked.
- Staff members will be trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual student.
- Further professional and certified training will be provided as the needs arise.
- Any change of personnel will be discussed with the parents/guardians and student.
- Provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent.
- Where trained staff members involved in the intimate care needs of a student are absent, a parent/guardian must come to school to support the intimate care needs as appropriate. The school will endeavour to give as much prior notice as possible in this circumstance.
- Appropriate protective gear will be provided by the school (e.g. gloves, aprons etc.)
- Parents/guardians are responsible for maintaining a supply of intimate care items, changes of clothes for the student.
- Student's intimate care needs will be discussed in private where confidentiality can be maintained.
- In order to promote independence, the student will be facilitated in performing as much of their own intimate care needs as they are able to do.
- Before commencing an intimate care task, the staff member will explain to the student, using an appropriate method of communication, what they are about to do, how they will do it and will

check for verbal consent from the student. The second staff member will witness this verbal consent. Obtained and witnessed consent should be logged in appendix 2.

- Trip organisers should carry out a risk assessment for any planned trips. Trip organisers should link in with the anchor for class teacher to establish particular care requirements. Trip organisers should check that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on school outings.
- Parents/Guardians may be required to attend school trips in order to support intimate care needs.
- At all times the dignity and privacy of the student will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs.
- A record of intimate care tasks undertaken should be maintained in a record notebook for the child.

Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Parents/Guardians.

Child Safeguarding

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member will report this concern immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Such issues may include:

- The student seems unusually sore, tender or bruised.
- The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done.
- The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause.
- The student makes an allegation against a staff member. Any concerns will be dealt with by the DLP in accordance with Children First and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools Child Safeguarding Statement and Procedures.

Implementation

The Principal, teachers, and other relevant staff members will be responsible for implementation of this policy.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Protecting students and staff.
- Ensuring all staff are Garda-Vetted and have completed Children First Training.
- Ensuring that any essential training is arranged and completed by appropriate staff.
- Ensuring that any child safeguarding concerns reported by staff members carrying out intimate care duties are addressed appropriately.
- Ensuring that any deficits in terms of resources which may affect the manner in which intimate care is delivered are addressed. • Ensure that indemnity insurance/letter if applicable is received from the Board of Management and parents as appropriate.

- Ensure that appropriate and comprehensive risk assessments have been completed.
- Ensure appropriate facilities are safe and in working order.
- Ensure all paperwork has been signed, filed on site, and is available to view by those involved.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Intimate Care Plans are developed as needed and are reviewed with the student and parents/guardians at the beginning of each academic year.
- Ensuring that the Intimate Care Plan and subsequent reviews are shared with relevant staff.
- Ensuring that any member of staff who is required to provide intimate care support is made aware of this policy and receives appropriate training/advice prior to supporting a student with their intimate care.
- Ensuring that staff members carrying out intimate care fully understand the confidential and sensitive nature of the task.
- Ensuring staff know who to ask for advice if they are unsure or uncomfortable with a particular situation.
- Ensuring that staff members involved in providing intimate care are given the opportunity to advance their skills and expertise in this area.
- Ensuring staff have access to other policies regarding the welfare of the student. Staff members who are required to provide intimate care support to students should:
 - Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with this policy.
 - 9 • Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the individual student's Intimate Care Plan.
- Report any concerns, which may arise when carrying out intimate care duties, immediately to the DLP.
- Use protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks.
- Communicate with home and the Principal when supplies are running low.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 7th October 2024

Signed Chairperson of the Board of Management: _____

Signed Principal: _____