Intimate Care Policy

September 2026

An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

CPSMA

This policy is intended to help parents and guardians (all stakeholders) of the school understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is reviewed regularly. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

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1. Introduction

Intimate care is a key area of a person's self-image and respect and as such it is vital that it is practised in a sensitive manner. Intimate care is any caring procedure which involves attending to a pupil when he/she is undress/partially dressed, helping to use the toilet, changing nappies or carrying out a procedure that requires direct or indirect contact with an intimate area of a pupil, or any procedure carried out while the pupil is in a state of whole or partial undress.

The supervision of pupils while they are dressing and undressing will also be considered as intimate care.

The following procedure will apply in cases of

- Wetting incident
- Soiling incident
- Vomiting on clothes
- Ongoing toileting or care needs as outlined in a pupil's individual intimate care plan and referred to in child's support file.
- PEG feeding

This policy and related procedures have been developed bearing in mind that all physical contact between staff and pupil:

- Should be aimed at meeting the needs of the pupil
- Should respect the dignity of each pupil
- Should be consistent with professional integrity of staff members

It is essential that the needs and rights of pupils and staff are protected and that the highest standards of best practice are ensured at all times in the area of intimate personal assistance. The level of assistance required will reflect the needs of each individual pupil at any given time.

2. Rationale

The formulation of this policy is to give direction to staff with regard to supporting pupils in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the pupil while also protecting the integrity of the staff involved.

3. Relationship to the School Ethos

All pupils and staff members have the right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect.

4. Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a pupil, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body.

Direct contact involves physical contact between the pupil 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 pupil to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care includes; dressing and undressing (underwear), support with using the toilet, changing of continence pads and menstrual care and feeding/medicating through tube.

5. Aims

The aim of this policy is

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- To give direction to staff with regard to supporting pupils in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the pupil while also protecting the integrity of the staff member.
- To promote best practice throughout the school within the framework of the current policy.

6. Procedures to deal with Intimate Care Needs

As a staff we act in "loco parentis" and can deal with a toileting or vomiting accident in school. It is best practice to only provide help that is required by the pupil. The staff member should encourage the pupil to do as much for themselves as possible.

Staff are required to wear protective gloves when assisting and changing a child. A teacher must always be cognisant of his/her duty of care regarding effective supervision of all pupils in the class when assisting a pupil with toileting. In the event of an accident, the following procedures are to be followed:

6.1 Wetting/ Toileting Accidents:

- wipes, track-suit bottoms etc. will be available in the school.
- In the first instance, the pupil will be offered fresh clothing to clean and change themselves.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary – this decision will be taken based on loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.

- Incident is recorded by class teacher
- Wet clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
- Parents will be notified of these accidents. They will be asked to wash and return the items of clothing given to the child.

6.2 Soiling Incident

- In the event of a soiling incident, parents/guardians will be informed.
- In the event that parents cannot be contacted, the SNA/teacher/designated personnel will do what is possible to make the child comfortable.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will provide the child with wipes.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will provide the child with a change of clothes if available.
- The child will use the clothes provided to change him or herself.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary – this decision will be taken based on loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.
- Parents/guardians are informed of details of the incident upon collection.
- Soiled clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.

6.3 Vomiting incident

- If the child vomits on him/herself, parents/ guardians will be informed.
- In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the SNA/teacher/designated personnel will do what is possible to make the child comfortable.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will provide the child with wipes.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will provide the child if spare clothing available.
- The child will use the said clothes to change him or herself.
- The SNA/teacher/designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary - this decision will be taken based on loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the needs of the child.
- Parents/guardians are informed of details of the incident upon collection.
- Soiled clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.

7. Children with Specific Toileting/Intimate Care Needs

It may be the case that a pupil will have ongoing need for assistance with toileting/intimate care. In all situations the following guidelines and procedures must be followed:

7.1 The roles and responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians should identify any toileting or intimate care needs in their child's enrolment form.
- Parents/guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the principal and SEN co-ordinator/class teacher/SET to discuss the specific care needs of their child and how the school will meet them.
- Where possible, parents/guardians, should provide the school with professional reports (O.T., Early Intervention Team, Enable Ireland, C.D.N.T) and/or relevant contact details. Professional report should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting intimate care needs of the child.
- An Intimate Care Plan will be developed based on parental and professional information and an application for SNA access and if necessary equipment will be completed.
- Parents/guardians supply the school with the resources required to carry out the toileting or other care needs which may include, but not be limited to;
    - Nappies or wipes
    - Disposable gloves
    - Nappy sacks
    - Spare underwear
    - Spare clothes
    - Creams (if necessary and detailed in the Intimate Care Plan).
    - Food/Medicine if PEG in operation

8. Role of the School: Intimate Care or Toileting Plan

In the event that a specific toileting need has been identified for a pupil, an Intimate Care/Toileting Plan will be developed in partnership with the pupil's class teacher, support teacher, designated SNAs, parents/guardians and relevant support services.

A written copy of the agreement will be kept in the pupils file and parents/guardians will be notified of any changed from agreed procedures.

The care plan must include:

- Details of specific care need
- Identification of the staff members involved in this care, including provisions for when a staff member will be absent. (Substitute SNAs will not generally be involved in Intimate Care unless sanctioned by the principal or SEN Co-Ordinator).
- Details of additional equipment required and procedures for using same.

- Child's preferred means of communication to agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions
- Child's current level of ability
- Signature of Class teacher, principal/SEN Co-Ordinator
- Date of Care Plan Implementation and review

Refer to **Appendix B** for Intimate Care Plan Template

Implementation for an Intimate Care Plan should be tracked and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to continually monitor pupils progress and promote the development of independence. Please refer to **Appendix C** for recording template.

9. Good Practice Guidelines

While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all Intimate Care and Toileting situations, it is important that the following elements of good practice are adhered to:

- In the case that a pupil has an Intimate Care Plan, teachers and SNAs should ensure that they are completely familiar with the plan.
- Address the pupil by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity
- Verbalise actions to the pupil in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.
- Use visual cues for the pupil in a reassuring way to prepare them foreach procedure.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in a care plan.
- In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive
- Respect the dignity and privacy of pupils at all times
- Have equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation if checking to see if nappy needs changing.
- Use protective gloves provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the pupil in a dignified and respectful way and allows the pupil the maximum level of privacy.

- The pupil's independence will be encouraged.

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school.

- Parents, Guardians, Principal, Class Teacher, SNA, and if appropriate, the pupil, will attend.
- The specific care needs of the child, and how the school will meet them, will be clarified.
- Personnel involved in this care will be identified.
- Provision for occasions when staff are absent will be outlined. Any change personnel will be discussed with the pupil, if appropriate.
- Parents of children with intimate care needs must sign an indemnity form (appendix A), indemnifying staff members of the school before intimate care needs can be carried out.
- Any changes in the care needs will be discussed with parent/guardian and pupil and noted in writing to the pupil's file.
- As far as possible the pupil will be involved in identification of his/her personal requirements, wishes, changes etc.
- Parents will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.
- At all times the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs.
- Staff will wear protective disposable gloves.
- Parents/Guardians will provide relevant supplies for their child e.g. nappies/pullups, wipes, creams, powders, menstrual pads etc.

10. Reporting

If, during the provision of intimate care assistance:

- The pupil seems unusually sore, tender or bruised
- The pupil seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The pupil has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause
- The staff member involved in the intimate care assistance should immediately report such incident to the Designated Liaison Person. The Children First Guidelines will be followed at all times.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school rests with the Principal. This policy belongs to the Board of Management and it is the responsibility of the Board to delegate and support the Principal in its implementation. All staff have a responsibility to follow through with all the guidelines within the policy. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to oversee the implementation of this policy within individual classes.

12. Success Criteria

The school evaluates the success of the policy through:

1. Participation of staff in the policy
2. Safe and effective care of all pupils in our school
3. Feedback from all staff
4. Feedback from relevant parents/guardians

13. Implementations and Review

This policy will be implemented from the date of ratification and will be reviewed annually. It may be amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

14. Evaluation

The policy will be deemed to have been successful by positive pupil, parent and staff feedback.

15. Ratification of Policy

This policy is subject to review by B.O.M.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

This policy has been made available to school personnel via school email. Parents can request a copy from the office and all policies are on our school website.

Signed: John McCahy
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Damien Compton
Secretary/Principal

Date: 19/10/26

Date: 19/10/26

Date of next review: September 2028 or sooner if required.

Appendix A

Permission form for Intimate Care Provision

Indemnity for staff in Intimate Care situations:

We, the Board of Management of Ardcroney NS, and the parents/guardians of _, agree that school staff may assist _____with personal care needs when necessary, following the school's procedures. The Principal, Board of Management, and parents/guardians agree to indemnify staff from any claims, costs or liabilities related to assisting _____with personal care.

Date & Signature of Parents/Guardians

_____

Date & Signature of Principal

_____

Date & Signature on behalf of Board of Management

_____

Letter of Permission from Parents for Intimate Care

Should it be necessary

I/We give permission for _____to receive intimate care. (e.g. help with changing, toileting)

I/We understand that staff will endeavour to encourage our child to be independent.

I/we understand that we will be informed by the class teacher should an occasion arise in school whereby my child needs assistance with toileting or cleaning of an intimate nature.

I/we understand that the ultimate aim is to enable our child to be more independent.

Signed:_____(Parent 1) Date:_____

Signed: _____(Parent 2) Date _____

Appendix B

Intimate Care/Toileting Plan

Child's Name	
Date of Birth	
Child's Class	
Relevant Staff	

Specific Care Needs	
Nature of Care Needs:	
Child's Current Level of Ability:	
Timeline & skills which need to be taught	
Timeline & procedures for teaching new skills	
Procedures for Care	
Times and frequency each day when care is required.	
Staff to be involved in this care	
Provisions for when named staff members are absent	
Equipment required for this care	
Procedures for using this equipment	
Additional materials / resources needed	
Procedures for storing and disposing of materials Please note parents/guardians are responsible for providing the school with necessary materials	
Language to be used when providing this care	**Naming body parts:** Bottom - **Naming bodily functions**

	Urination - Bowel movement -
Cultural / religious sensitivities	
Date of Intimate Care Meeting	
Date Intimate Care Plan finalised	
Review Date	

Individuals involved in this plan	Name - Printed	Signature
Parent/guardian 1		
Parent/guardian 2		
Class teacher		
SNA 1		
SNA 2		
SET		
Other relevant Personnel		
SENCO/ Deputy Principal		
Therapists		

Appendix C

Individual Record of intimate Care

Name of Child	*Date*	*Time*	*Staff Involved*	*Comments*	*Signature*