

Intimate Care & Toileting Policy



Lurga National School
Gort,
Co Galway

Introduction

Intimate care is any caring procedure which involves attending to a pupil when he/she is undressed or partially dressed; helping a pupil with washing (including intimate parts); helping a pupil to use the toilet; 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 e.g. at the swimming pool will also be considered as intimate care.

The procedures outlined in this policy will apply in cases of

- Wetting Incident o Soiling Incident o Vomiting on clothes
- Ongoing toileting or care needs as outlined in a pupil's Individual Intimate Care /Toileting Plan and referred to in child's Individual Educational Plan
- Water/wet play incident or incident whereby child requires a change of clothes

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

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

Rationale

The aim of the policy is to increase knowledge, enhance skills and promote good practice in this sensitive area. All staff will be made aware of the standards expected of them. Intimate care will be carried out only by regular school employees in so far as is possible.

Relationship to School Ethos

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

Aims / Objectives

- To promote the welfare of children
- To ensure that the dignity and privacy of the pupil involved is maintained at all times To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner

Roles & Responsibilities of Staff; Wetting/Soiling/Vomiting Incidents

As a staff, we act "in loco parentis" and can deal with a toileting or vomiting accident without assistance. It is good practice to only provide help that is required by the pupil. The teacher should encourage the pupil to do as much for themselves as possible. A teacher must always be cognisant of his/her duty of care regarding effective supervision of all the pupils in the class when assisting a pupil with toileting.

- The teacher/Special Needs Assistant (SNA)/designated person will provide the pupil with a change of underwear/clothes as necessary which the pupil uses to change his/herself. If necessary, the school will contact parents/guardians to provide a complete change of clothes. The teacher/SNA/designated person will assist the pupil with dressing only if absolutely necessary. If the pupil has soiled him/herself, the parents/guardians may need to be contacted to take the pupil home. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the teacher/SNA/designated person will do all that is possible to make the child comfortable. If a child vomits their parent/guardian may need to be contacted to collect their child. The teacher/SNA/designated person will help the child clean themselves but if they are unwell, they will need to be collected from school.
- If the teacher/SNA/designated person is required to go into a toilet cubicle, it is good practice for a second adult to be present.
Wet/soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag and parents/guardians will be informed of what has happened when they collect their child.
- A record of such incidents will be kept by the class teacher.
- Parents & Guardians will be informed of these procedures in the Junior Infants Induction meeting prior to their child starting school and be asked to complete the Permission Form for Intimate Care Provision (See Appendix 2)
- Changes of underwear and socks are kept in the drawers in the classroom. The Infant teacher also has a change of clothes for each pupil in their classroom. Parents/Guardians should send tracksuit bottoms as a spare change rather than pinafores, tights or leggings.
- Staff are required to wear protective gloves while changing a pupil.
- Sanitary Products; There is an adequate supply of sanitary bins and sanitary towels in the appropriate toilets in the school. These will be kept under review and updated as necessary by school management.

Roles & Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians need to identify any toileting or intimate care needs when they are enrolling their child in the school. They should supply the school with the resources to carry out the toileting or other care needs.
- If an Individual Intimate Care /Toileting Plan (See Appendix 1) is required parents/guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the principal/SEN coordinator/class teacher/SET/SNA to discuss the specific care needs of their child and how the school will meet them.
- Where available, parents/guardians should provide the school with professional reports (O.T. , nurse, Early Intervention Team, Enable Ireland etc) and relevant contact details. The Professional report should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting intimate care needs of the child. Professional report may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the child at all times.

Intimate Care/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 pupil's file and parents/guardians will be notified of any changes from or reviews of agreed procedures.

The Care Plan should include;

- Details of specific care need
- Staff members involved in this care, including provisions for when a staff member may be absent.
- Additional equipment required and procedures for using same
- The pupil's preferred means of communication to include agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions.
- Pupil's current level of ability
- Cultural and/or religious sensitivities
- Signature of Class Teacher
- Signature of Principal / SEN Coordinator
- Date of Care Plan implementation and review

The implementation of an Intimate Care /Toileting Plan should be tracked and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to continually monitor a pupil's progress and promote the development of independence.

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/Toileting Plan, relevant staff should ensure that they are completely familiar with the plan. Ensure that a child is happy with who is changing him/her.
- Be responsive to any distress shown.
- There should be two staff members present in so far as is possible whilst maintaining the dignity and privacy of the pupil.
- Address the pupil by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity.
- Verbalise actions to the pupils in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure. Use of visual cues for pupils with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- Appropriate and professional language will be used.
- Specific language may be detailed in the Care Plan.
- In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive.
- The dignity and privacy of the pupil will be respected at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing. Use discreet observation if checking to see if a pupil needs changing.
- Use protective gloves provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided.
- The pupil's independence will be encouraged.
- Water/Wet Play or other Incident whereby a pupil requires a change of clothes
- If an incident occurs during the school day whereby a pupil is in need of a change of clothes all the above procedures and guidelines will apply and will be followed by the responding teacher/SNA/designated person.

Providing comfort or support to a pupil

There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly in early years). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age and context.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/ her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable. If a child touches a member of staff, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence, with the school's DLP or DDLP.

Working with children of the opposite sex

There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children. Ideally, every pupil should have the choice for intimate care but given the current ratio of female to male staff it means that assistance will more often be given by a woman. The intimate care of boys and girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- When intimate care is being carried out all children have the right to dignity and privacy.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance. Seek support of another staff member if necessary.
- Any concerns should be reported to the DLP or the DDLP and a written record made.
- Parents/guardians should be informed about any concerns.
- Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided
- Policy on Administration of Medication outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school.

Swimming

Currently children in 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th class in Lurga NS participate in swimming lessons in Ennis Swimming Pool.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur.

Staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid any unnecessary physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence.

Reporting

All toileting "accidents" involving pupils with no Care Plan must be reported to the pupils' parents/guardians.

If during the intimate care of a pupil;

- a staff member accidentally hurts/injures the pupil observes something which raises Child Protection concerns the pupil seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- the pupil has an emotional reaction without apparent cause
- the incident must be reported to the Class Teacher/Principal and the DLP or Deputy DLP as appropriate.

Success Criteria

- Participation of all staff in the policy
- Safe and effective care of all pupils in our school
- Feedback from all staff
- Feedback from relevant parents/guardians

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years or as new legislation dictates. All partners will be informed of any amendments necessary after such a review.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Lurga NS on the _____

Signed:

Principal _____

Date: _____

Signed.

Date: _____

Chairperson of BOM

Appendix 1

Intimate Care / Toileting Plan

Name	
Date of Birth	
Class	
Class Teacher	
Other Relevant Staff	
Specific Care Needs	
Nature of Care Needs	
Current Level of Ability	
Timeline & Skills which need to be taught:	Timeline & Procedures for Teaching New Skills
Procedures of Care	
Times and frequency each day when care is required	
Staff 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	

Means of Communication	Naming body parts: e.g. Vulva, Penis, Bottom
Language/Cues to be used when providing this care:	Naming bodily functions: E.g. Urination, Bowel movement
Cultural/Religious Sensitivities (if any)	
Date of Meeting	
Date of Implementation of Care Plan	
Date of Review	

Signed:Parent/Guardian 1

Signed:Parent/Guardian 2

Signed:Class Teacher

Signed:SET

Signed:SNA

Signed:Principal/SEN Coordinator

Appendix 2

Permission form for Intimate Care Provision

Should your child have a toileting accident (soil or wet themselves) or a vomiting accident in school and require changing we are willing, with your permission to clean and change your child as required.

We will follow the procedures outlined in our "Intimate Care & Toileting Policy".

This role will always be undertaken by a member of staff (teacher or SNA or other named designated personnel) and you will be informed that an incident has taken place.

In such an event please indicate below how you would like us to proceed.

- In the event of my child having a toileting accident (soil or wet themselves) or a vomiting accident and needing to be cleaned and changed, I give permission for a member of staff (teacher or SNA or named designated personnel) to clean and change him / her.

Child's name _____

Signed(Parent/Guardian) _____

OR

In the event of my child having a toileting accident (soil or wet themselves) or a vomiting accident and needing to be cleaned, I would like to be contacted so that I can proceed to the school.

I accept that if you are unable to contact myself or someone on the emergency contact list you will proceed to clean and change him / her as based on the procedures outlined in the "Intimate Care & Toileting Policy"

Child's name _____

Signed(Parent/Guardian) _____

