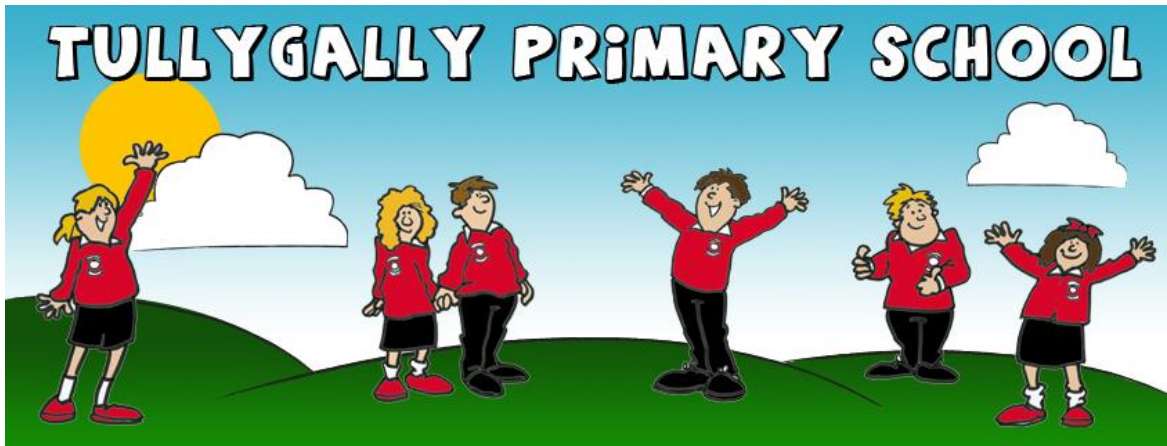


Tullygally Primary School & Nursery Unit

INTIMATE CARE POLICY



'Soaring to excellence with children at the heart'

Introduction

This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff and applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children in Tullygally Primary School. In line with our school ethos, we aim to provide a happy, caring and safe learning environment. It has been drafted in conjunction with the Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children.

In Tullygally Primary School, we aim to meet the needs of each child in our care through having appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and also through actively seeking to promote each child's welfare. Due to the young age which children begin formal education, children in the nursery and Foundation Stage usually have a measure of dependence on adults to meet their physical care needs. Children with a disability can be especially vulnerable and may also have physical needs that require the assistance of adults. Staff involved with their intimate care are sensitive to individual needs.

Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. 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 children and parents.

Intimate care can include:

- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care
- Changing nappies
- Menstrual care

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe (UNCRC 19)
- Every child has the right to personal privacy (UNCRC 16)
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual (UNCRC 12)
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities (UNCRC 12)

- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account (UNRCR 12)
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Responsibilities of the Principal / Board of Governors

- All staff working with children must be vetted by the school. This includes students on work placement and volunteers. Vetting includes Access NI checks and Pre-employment checks.
- The Principal / Board of Governors must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines as well as the Child Protection Policy.
- Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate). The parents / carers will be asked for written consent for staff to change their child in the event of a toileting accident (Nursery-P1) and for staff to supervise their child changing (P2). This will be recorded in the child's file. Children from P3 upwards are expected to be completely independent when changing.
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- If a parent / carer does not agree to the above procedure they will be contacted by the school in the event of a toileting accident and asked to change the child's clothes / take them home as appropriate. If for some reason the parent / carer cannot be contacted staff will fulfil their duty of care and change the child.
- Intimate care arrangements / policy should be reviewed once a year. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should be sought and considered.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the Designated Teacher Mrs Devlin in her absence Principal Mrs Andrews or in her absence the Vice Principal Mr Guy must be informed.
- The procedures outlined in this policy are adhered to.

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. Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs. It is important to bear in

mind that some care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

- Involve the child in their intimate care-Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible. Where the child is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation. A lot of care is carried out by one staff member / carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort /safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.
- It is our policy at Tullygally Primary School and Nursery Unit that the adult involved in intimate care can be seen by another adult.

Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

As a child can have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers / and the school ensures practice is consistent. Wherever possible a rota of carers will be used when providing intimate care. This will ensure as far as possible that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

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 relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

Reporting Concerns- Staff

If you have any concerns you must report them. If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the designated teacher for Child Protection Mrs Devlin (Primary School) or Mrs Haughian (Nursery). If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your

actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher for Child Protection. Report and record any unusual emotional, verbal or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made using an incident report form (available on the computer system or from Mrs Devlin) and kept in the child's personal file. Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Working with Children of the Opposite Sex

- There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children.
- Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care.
- The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

Communication with the Child

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Children communicate using different methods e.g. words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing.

To ensure effective communication:

- Ascertain how the child communicates e.g. consult with child, parent / carer and, if appropriate, communication needs must be recorded.

Working with Parents

Partnership with parents is important principle in any school and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents. Prior permission must be obtained from the parents before intimate care procedures are carried out. To this end the parents of all Nursery and foundation Stage pupils are asked to sign a consent form at the start of every school year giving permission to change their child if necessary.

The parents/guardians of children who may have specific intimate care needs are requested to inform the school at the earliest opportunity so arrangements can be put in place to meet these needs.

Parents will be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met.

Changing Procedure to be used by Members of Staff in the Nursery Primary School

All children should be toilet trained by their starting date. However, we do accept that children may have the occasional accident, be sick or get wet in the course of the school day. In the event of this happening we will:

- Encourage children to come to an adult if they need changed
- Inform another adult what we are doing
- Provide reassurance and encouragement at all times
- Encourage the child to get their change of clothes from their bag
- Ensure the child has privacy e.g. in toilet cubicle / screened area as appropriate
- Provide child with a plastic bag and encourage them to put their wet / soiled clothes in
- If necessary talk the child through the process of changing clothes, encouraging them to be as independent as possible. If a child is able to change and clean themselves then they should be encouraged to do so.
- Provide a higher level of support if required (Nursery-P1 appropriate to age / stage of development), and at the same time make sure another adult is informed of what is going on. Where a child is unable to cope with changing, the adult will step in to help clean / change the child provided written consent from parent / carer has been provided. If a child has soiled then a parent / carer may be contacted by the school if appropriate- e.g. if they have a messy accident or if they do not have a change of clothes.
- Where consent for a parent / carer for staff to change their child has been refused then the parent / carer will be contacted to come and change / collect their child as appropriate.
- If a child becomes distressed and does not wish to be changed by a member of staff, we will reassure the child, contact the parent / carer and leave the child unchanged. Staff will apply duty of care if parent / carer cannot be contacted and will change the child. Keep appropriate written records.
- All actions must be recorded, kept in the child's file and a copy given to parents.
- These records may be shared with other agencies as appropriate.

TULLYGALLY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT
INTIMATE CARE- PARENTAL INFORMATION SLIP

Child's Name			
Was changed today	Date:	Time:	
Reason for change (Circle as appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soiled / Wetting accident • Clothes wet / dirty through play • Sickness • Other- Please specify <hr/>		
Did Parent / Carer need to be contacted?	Yes / No If yes, give reason <hr/>		
Level of care required (Circle as appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to change / clean themselves <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Clean themselves ➢ Remove wet / soiled pants, trousers, skirt, dress, shoes, socks, tights, t-shirt ➢ Put on clean pants, trousers, skirt dress, shoes, socks, tights, t-shirt. <p>Other _____</p> <hr/>		
Change of clothes needed? Please list	Yes / No		
Changed by: Signature Key Worker		Supervised by: Signature	