

**Tullygally Nursery Unit**



**Pastoral Care Policy  
June 2019**

## INTRODUCTION

In line with our school ethos, we aim to provide a happy, caring and safe learning environment. Our Intimate Care Policy and guidelines regarding children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

### **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 (UNRCR 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.

Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children will have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff at Tullygally Nursery will work in partnership with parents/guardians to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.

Our Nursery is committed to ensuring that staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional and consistent manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

## OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE

### **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 / guardians and child (if appropriate). The parents / guardians 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 / guardians and child (if appropriate).
- If a parent / guardian 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 / guardian 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.
- 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. 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. In their absence Miss Redpath must be informed.

### **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.

## THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Education Child Protection Procedures and Inter-Agency Child Protection procedures will be accessible to staff and adhered to. Where appropriate, all children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc she/he will immediately report concerns to the designated person for child protection-in nursery this is Miss Redpath (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection Nursery) and in the Primary School Mrs Devlin (Designated Teacher for Child Protection). If they are not available then the concerns should be reported to the Vice Principal Mr Guy or to Mrs Andrews the Principal. A clear record of the concern will be completed using the Child Protection Incident Report form and referred to social care and/or police if necessary. Parents will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made unless doing so is likely to place the child at greater risk or harm.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/guardians will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue is resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed ( see Inter-Agency Protection Procedures for details- available from the School Office).

## SPECIAL NEEDS

Staff who work with young children who have special needs will realize that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.

Children with special needs have the same rights to safety and privacy when receiving intimate care. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty must be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child, those with parental responsibility and the organization should be easily understood and recorded.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of the child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

### Equipment provision

Parents of a child with special needs have a role to play when their child is still wearing nappies. A specific care plan will be discussed and agreed between parents / guardians and the school, and may be adapted and reviewed as the child's needs change. The parent should provide nappies, disposal bags, wipes, changing mat etc. and parents should be made aware of this responsibility. Schools are responsible for providing gloves, plastic aprons, a bin and liners to dispose of any waste.

Regardless of age and ability, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special needs should be actively sought in regular reviews of these arrangements.

### Changing facilities

When children need to be changed in nursery this procedure should not necessarily cause the school a great deal of extra expense. The dignity and privacy of the child should be of paramount concern. Children will be changed in the toilet area which has been made private by use of a screen or by closing over a toilet door but not locking it. Before starting to change a child, the adult involved will inform another member of staff who will be responsible for monitoring procedures.

### Health and Safety

Staff should always wear an apron and gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled or when changing a soiled nappy. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag, which can be sealed. This bag should then be placed in a bin which is specifically designated for the disposal of such waste.

Guidance to safeguard children and education staff with regard to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (physical contact, first aid, changing clothes).

### Physical contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact.

The expectation is that staff will work in “limited touch’ cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil’s needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone the action is described to. Staff must always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child’s view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and leave staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

### Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property.

In such cases only the minimum force necessary should be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control.

In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported to parents and Principal.

Under no circumstances would it be permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment, to modify behaviour, or to make a pupil comply with an instruction. Physical force of this nature can, and is likely to, constitute a criminal offence.

### Pupils in distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil’s distress, their age, and the extent and cause of the distress. Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from their principal or other appropriate person.

### First Aid and intimate care

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required ( e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing ), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between the school, those with parental responsibility and the child concerned should be documented and easily understood. The child’s views must also be actively sought and, in particular, any discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

## CHANGING PROCEDURES TULLYGALLY NURSERY

**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 play. In the event of this happening we will-**

- Encourage children to come to an adult if they need changed
- Inform another adult in the room what we are doing and ensure that we remain visible to them while preserving the dignity of the child
- Provide reassurance and encouragement at all times
- Help child get their change of clothes from their bag in the entrance hall
- Ensure child has privacy e.g. in toilet cubicle with door closed/screened area as appropriate
- Provide a plastic bag and help child put wet/soiled clothes in
- Talk child through process of changing clothes, if necessary, 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, 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 / guardian has been provided. If a child has soiled then a parent / guardian or one of the contacts named by them may be contacted by the class teacher if appropriate- e.g. if they have had a very messy accident.
- Where consent from a parent / guardian for staff to change their child has been refused then the parent / guardian 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 / guardian and leave the child unchanged. Staff will apply duty of care if parent / guardian cannot be contacted and will change the child. Keep appropriate records
- Record all actions and pass on to parents/guardians, keeping a record in nursery  
Sample of changing record to be shared with parent / guardian and kept on record

Record to be copied and shared with parent / guardian and kept on record

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