



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

"Where we learn to love and love to learn"

Intimate Care Policy

Mission Statement

Together at St. Joseph's we learn to love,

Following Jesus,

Sharing God's gifts

Building God's world

Document Control	
Name of Policy	Intimate Care Policy
Date approved and adopted	January 2025
Date to be reviewed	January 2026

St Joseph's is committed to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of our children. We are committed to ensuring staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. Intimate care may be defined as an activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child in partnership with the parent, carer and the child. In school this may occur on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

- Assisting a child to change his/her clothes
- Changing or washing a child who has soiled him/herself
- Assisting with toileting issues
- Supervising a child involved in intimate self-care

For some children we have individual intimate care plans which have been devised by school and shared and agreed with parents due to identified needs of the child. These plans are reviewed termly. Teachers, Teaching Assistants and designated Learning Support Assistants will carry out intimate care in our school. Every situation will depend on the context and whether a designated trained person is required for the situation.

Principles of intimate care

No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress and staff must be sensitive to each child's individual needs. The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based as applicable:

- Every child has a right to be safe
- Every child has the right to personal privacy
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect
- All children have the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care and to have their views taken into account
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent

Parental responsibility

Parents/ carers must endeavour to ensure their child is continent before admission to school/ nursery (unless the child has additional needs). Parents/ carers must inform school if a child is not fully toilet trained before starting school, after which a meeting will be arranged to discuss their child's needs. It is expected that most children should be able to carry out personal tasks for themselves.

Partnership with parents is of importance when managing children's intimate care needs. It is important that parents:

- Discuss any concerns with staff about their child's intimate care or toileting needs prior to the child starting school/nursery
- Accept that on occasions their child may need to be collected from school or they will be called to come to school to care for their child themselves
- Provide wipes and changes of clothing for any child with a personal toileting need

Assisting a child to change his/her clothes:

This is more common in the Early Years Foundation Stage. On occasions, an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he/ she has a toileting accident, gets wet outside or has vomit on his/ her clothes. Staff will always encourage children to attempt dressing and undressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given. Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in

attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in distress and this is not possible. If staff are concerned in any way parents will be sent for and asked to assist their child.

Changing a child who has soiled him/herself:

If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school or whether to request the parent/carer to come to school to support the child or collect the child for changing at home. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. Intimate care routines should always take place in an area which protects the child's privacy and dignity by an assigned member of staff.

The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age appropriate responses.

- Another member of staff should be alerted to ensure that protocol is followed appropriately
- Appropriate equipment and clothes should be collected before escorting the child to a designated area
- Toilets should be cleared and blocked for use by others during the process
- The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process independently
- Dependant on age and circumstances, if a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will attempt to contact the emergency contact to inform them of the situation
- If the emergency contact is able to come to school within an appropriate time frame, the child will be accompanied and supported by a staff member until they arrive, avoiding further stress and preserving dignity
- If the emergency contact cannot attend, school will seek verbal permission for staff to change the child. If none of the contacts can be reached the Headteacher will be consulted and the decision taken on the basis of loco-parentis and our duty of care to meet the child's needs
- If a child is heavily soiled parents/ carers are requested to collect the child and take him/her home for a shower or bath before returning the child to school
- If the incident is believed to be due to illness or infection parents/carers will be requested to keep the child off school for 48 hours after symptoms have passed

Safeguarding guidelines:

- Ensure that the action you are taking is necessary
- Get verbal agreement to proceed
- Ensure the child is happy with who is changing him/her
- Be responsive to any distress shown

Basic hygiene guidelines:

- Always wear protective disposable gloves and apron
- Double bag soiled clothing for return to parents
- Area to be cleaned and disinfected by adult
- Ensure appropriate hand washing (child and adult)

Please note - If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Good practice guidelines:

- Involve the child in intimate care. Talk about what is being done or going to be done and where possible give choices. Ask the parent or child about any preferences while carrying out intimate care.
- Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.

- Do not work alone to provide intimate care to a child.
- Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.
- A child may have multiple carers so a consistent approach, achieved through effective communication between all parties is essential.
- Be aware of your own limitations. Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with.
- If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands/ misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure his/ her safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and recorded on CPOMS.