

**& Nursery Unit**

**INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

**October 2019**

Ratified: 2019

Review Date: 2022

**INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

***Rationale***

The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff within our school. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. Staff involved with intimate care need to be sensitive to the individual needs of the children. We as a school are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Policy for the Administration of Medicine
* Pastoral Care Policy
* Special Educational Needs Policy
* Procedures and policy on use of force and restraint
* Staff Code of Conduct

***Introduction***

We, at Ballydown Primary School and Nursery Unit, take seriously our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care. Meeting a pupil’s intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.

The school recognises that there is a need to treat all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity, with respect when intimate care is given. **The child’s welfare and dignity is of paramount importance**. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers to share information and provide continuity of care.

The Intimate Care Policy should be read in conjunction with the DENI Circular 2017/04- “**Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - a guide for Schools**” (updated September 2019)

***Definition***

**Intimate care can be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child.**

Intimate care may involve washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but some children are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

It also includes supervision of children involved in intimate self-care.

Intimate care may involve:

1. Assisting a child to change his/her clothes

2. Changing or washing a child who has soiled him / herself

3. Assisting with toileting issues

4. Providing first aid or medical assistance

5. Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child

# 6. Supporting a child with menstruation

***Principles of Intimate Care***

The following are the fundamental principles upon which this policy is based:

* *Every child has the 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*
* *Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities*
* *Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account*
* *Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible*

All members of staff working with children are vetted through ACCESS NI.

***Best Practice***

All children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given for their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for his/herself as possible.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.

There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the child is of an appropriate age and level of understanding, permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

Staff who provide intimate care are aware of best practice regarding infection control, including the need to wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.

Children who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Individual Education Plans (IEP) or care plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved. These plans include an appropriate risk assessment to address issues such as moving and handling, personal safety of the child and carer.

Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be noted and taken into account.

Where a care plan or IEP is not in place, parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. had a toileting ‘accident’ and soiled him/herself).

It is advisable for a member of staff to inform another adult when they are going to assist a child with intimate care. Every child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. The child will be assisted by two adults, if this is possible.

The religious views and cultural values of families should be taken into account, particularly as they might affect certain practices or determine the gender of the carer.

All staff should be aware of the school’s Code of Conduct with particular reference to the confidentiality section. Sensitive/personal information will be shared only with those who need to know.

All incidents of Intimate Care should be documented using the Record of Intimate Care form (See Appendix 1)

***Working with Parents/Carers***

Partnership with parents/carers is an 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, including knowledge of existing medical needs or any religious/cultural sensitivities.

Parents will be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child’s needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Health Care Plans and any other plans which identify the need for intimate care where appropriate.

Prior permission for intimate care is obtained from all parents on entrance to our Nursery Unit and then on entrance to the Primary 1 year. These permission forms will be stored centrally for the duration of each child’s attendance at our nursery unit or school. (See Appendix 2)

If parental permission is withdrawn at any stage throughout the child’s school life, then written notification must be provided to the school.

Where written permission is not given by parents they must provide contact numbers for family members who can be contacted and arrangements made for them to come to school within a reasonable length of time from the incident occurring.

Information regarding an intimate care issue will be given to parents, on the day of the incident, via written correspondence on the Notification of Changing of Clothes. (See Appendix 3)

***Most Likely Scenarios within school***

**Changing a child who has wet/soiled him/herself**

If a child wets or soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child’s needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The child will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves. School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. If a child is not able to complete this task unaided and shows distress, then staff will contact the parents. Staff should always wear protective disposable gloves. Seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents.

In the case of the child in Foundation Stage and in order to avoid any unnecessary distress, a member of staff may assist the child, unless a parent has requested otherwise or if the child is reluctant. Parents will be informed if a child has had to be changed.

**Swimming**

Our Primary 4-7 classes participate in a swimming programme. 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. 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.

# Changing for PE/ Extra Curricular Activities

Boys and girls will change separately from P4 and as appropriate to individual need or request.

***Child Prot*ection**

The Governors and staff recognise that children with special needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. The school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be adhered to. Best practice will be promoted and all adults will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times.

***First Aid Staff***

Any member of staff who administers first aid will be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child’s privacy and dignity. This will be recorded in the record of first aid folder.

***Staff at Ballydown Primary School and Nursery Unit***

All members of staff working with children are vetted by the Education Authority. This includes students on work placement. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague’s intimate care practice he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

***Record Keeping***

It is good practice for a written record to be kept in an agreed format every time a child has assistance with intimate care, including date, time, incident, action taken and any comments such as changes in the child’s behaviour. It should be clear who was present and should be signed by 2 members of staff.

These records will be kept in the child’s file in the classroom and centrally in the medical room and will be available to parents/carers on request.

All staff and volunteers will follow guidance of all safeguarding policies and adhere to the staff code of conduct. Any concerns will be reported to the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding & Child Protection Mrs Irvine or in her absence, Mr Murphy or Mrs Lindsay and make a written record; parents must be informed about any concerns.

***General Information***

All children are encouraged to use the toilet at the beginning of break and lunch to minimise the risk of toilet accidents.

Children are free to go to the toilet throughout the day.

Before school starts, access is made available to a toilet block from each playground area from 8.55 – 9.10 am.

During break and lunch time and after-school activities, children have access to their toilets from the playground areas.

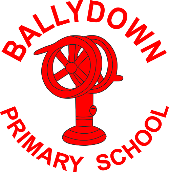
As far as possible, for gardening/sand/water/art/ activities etc children will bring in or be provided with appropriate clothing/footwear to minimise the risk of accidents occurring.

Nursery parents are provided with a guide to Intimate Care procedures at the start of the Nursery school year. (See Appendix 4)

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Board of Governors) Date:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

***Appendix 1***

***Ballydown Primary School & Nursery Unit***

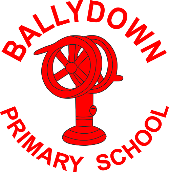
***Record of Intimate Care***

**& Nursery Unit**

Teacher’s Name:…………………………………………… Class:………………. Year:………………

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Time | Child’s Initials | Incident | Action Taken  & Additional Comments  eg change in child’s behaviour | Signature of person **dealing with the incident** | Signature of other adult **involved or in close area** |
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***Appendix 2***

***Ballydown Primary School & Nursery Unit***

***Parental Permission for Intimate Care***

**& Nursery Unit**

***Year:…………………***

Should it be necessary, I **give / do not give** permission for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Child’s name) to receive intimate care (eg help changing clothes or help following a toileting difficulty) from either the class teacher or a classroom assistant.

Please tick:

I understand that staff will endeavour to encourage my child to be independent.

I understand that I will be informed discreetly in written form or, if there are any

further issues with the child, I may be phoned directly.

I understand that Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be followed.

I will provide a **change of underwear & socks** (in a named bag) that will remain in school.

If you do not give permission for intimate care for your child, then please list 2 contact names and phone numbers that may be notified to come to school to clean and change your child.

Contact 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If we are unable to contact the named persons above, please advise below as to how you wish the school to deal with the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Appendix 3***

***Ballydown Primary School & Nursery Unit***

***Notification of Changing of a Child***

**& Nursery Unit**

Your child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_has been changed today as he/she:

* Had a toilet accident
* Got wet at the water tray/during an outdoor activity/ during a practical activity
* Was ill
* Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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* Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Appendix 4***

**Intimate Care Procedure**

As far as possible all the children in the Nursery will be encouraged to be as independent as possible with regards to intimate care. From time to time, toilet accidents do occur. If this is the case the following procedure will be followed if requested on the parent consent form.

* The child will be accompanied by a member of staff to the Nursery bathroom.
* The child will be encouraged to remove wet or soiled clothing with adult help if required.
* Any wet or soiled clothing will be placed into a plastic bag and hung on the child’s coat peg.
* The child will be offered a toilet wipe and encouraged to clean themselves thoroughly. If the child is becoming distressed adult assistance will be offered.
* A change of clothing which the child has in the bathroom will be given to them and they will be encouraged independently to dress themselves.
* A change of clothing note will be placed in the child’s drawer indicating why the child has been changed and by whom.

If a parent has requested on their consent form to be contacted in case of a toilet accident this will be done immediately.

