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|  **Seagoe** **Primary School** |  |

Intimate Care

 Policy

**January 2024**

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 Seagoe Primary School. It has been drafted in conjunction with the Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children.

In Seagoe Primary School, we aim to meet the needs of each child in our care through having appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and through actively seeking to promote each child’s welfare. Due to the young age which children start their education, children in the Nursery and Foundation Stage usually have some measure of dependence on adults to meet their physical needs. Children with a disability may also have physical needs that require the assistance of adults.

DEFINITION

Intimate Care can be defined as an activity required to meet the personal needs of each individual child in partnership with their parents and the child. Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of the particular care needs of their child.

Intimate Care can include:

* Washing
* Dressing/undressing
* Toileting
* Oral Care
* Menstrual Care
* Feeding
* Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

Every child has the right to:

* be safe;
* be valued as an individual;
* be treated with dignity and respect;
* be involved and consulted on their intimate care to the best of their abilities; and
* express his/her views on their intimate care and to have such views considered.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and the Principal to ensure that:

* All staff have undergone appropriate vetting and have had Child Protection training;
* All staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the principles of intimate care;
* Intimate care arrangements/procedures have been agreed by the parents/guardians;
* All staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines;
* Consent forms are signed by parents/guardians;
* Staff will not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents/guardians;
* Intimate Care arrangements are reviewed regularly; and
* The procedures outlined in the Policy are adhered to.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

All staff involved in providing or assisting with intimate care need to be sensitive to each child’s individual needs and be aware that some care tasks or treatment could be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these good practice guidelines should safeguard both children and staff.

* Involve the child in their intimate care.

The school will try to encourage a child’s independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent, we will talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible. Staff will check their practice by asking the parent/guardian any likes/dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent.

* 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 alone with one child. The practice of providing one-to-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 Seagoe Primary School that, where possible and appropriate, the adult involved in intimate care can be seen by another adult; this may be through a doorway or window.

* Be aware of own limitations.

Staff will only carry out care activities they understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures will only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

* 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.

* Report any concerns.

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling including in the genital area, report immediately to your Designated Teacher. If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or he/she misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety, and report the incident immediately to your Designated Teacher.

If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care will be stopped. Staff will try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance and report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.

A written record of concerns will be made by the Designated Teacher and kept with the school’s Child Protection Records.

INTIMATE CARE PLANS

The Parents/Guardians of children who 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.

Where planned intimate care is required on a regular basis for example with pupils with Special Educational Needs, an Intimate Care Plan must be agreed in discussion with parents. The plan should be signed by all who contribute on an agreed basis.

NURSERY

We realise in Seagoe Nursery Unit that some of our children may need changing during their time in school. Members of staff involved with intimate care are sensitive to each child’s individual needs.

In the event of a toileting/other accident:

* The child will be directed to the toilet by a member of staff.
* The child will be encouraged to clean him/herself independently under direction but will be given help by a member of staff if necessary.
* Members of staff will remain in full view of others whilst changing the child, but the child will not be left in full view of other children.
* Wet or soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag and given to the adult who is collecting the child at the end of the day.

Informing parents

* Parents will be informed of this policy at induction and at the commencement of each school year.
* Parents will be asked to sign annually to confirm that they have been made aware of the policy and that they agree to staff cleaning/changing their child if necessary.
* This policy will be available on the school website.
* Any parent who is not in agreement with this policy will be contacted and must make themselves available to clean and change their child when necessary.
* There may be occasions when parents will be contacted to come and help with changing, depending on the circumstances or care need.

FOUNDATION STAGE - Primary 1 +2

In the event of a toilet/other accident:

* The child will be directed to the toilet.
* The child will be encouraged to clean him/herself independently, with verbal support given by the teacher or Classroom Assistant.
* Parents will be contacted to come and help with changing, if the child is unable to do so.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This Intimate Care Policy is part of a suite of Pastoral Care, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

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