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Intimate Care Policy

This policy was considered/written in. (March 2025). There was a consultation period which included staff, parents and the Board of Management in 2024.

1) Introduction

This intimate Care policy has been developed by the staff of St Nicholas' School in consultation with the relevant personnel to ensure that that needs and rights of students and staff are maintained and that highest standards of best practice are ensured at all times in the area of intimate and personal assistance.

Each student has the right to physical care assistance in order for them to participate fully in school life. The level of assistance required will reflect the needs of each individual student at any given time.

2) Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a pupil, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body. Direct contact involves physical contact between the pupil and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts. Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the pupil to complete personal and intimate care tasks. Intimate care includes; dressing and undressing, support with using the toilet and changing of nappies/continence/sanitary pads.

3) Induction Programme

All programmes for staff will include induction on principals and practice in relation to intimate physical care. An induction is essential not only to increase knowledge, enhance

skills and promote good practice, but also to provide a forum for staff to re-assess their own attitudes and values in this sensitive area.

4) Aims

The aims of this policy is to ensure that

- The dignity and welfare of students and staff is respected and maintained
- The rights of the students and staff are protected
- Best practice is promoted throughout the school within the framework of the current policy.

5) Medical Procedures

Medical or nursing procedures e.g. peg feed, nasal feed & diabetic carer requiring contact with the student will only be carried out by members of staff who are trained to do so.

6) Staff Guidelines

- Levels of staffing for the provision of intimate care assistance will be organised based on the individual needs of each classroom. This will be agreed at the beginning of the school year between the principal, staff involved with the students, parents and where necessary the multi-disciplinary team (CDNT).
- Staffing levels should be reviewed with the relevant staff as needs arise during the course of the year. Every effort will be made by the staff working in the classroom/school to provide two staff members for intimate care assistance. However, there may be occasions when only one member of staff is available. Two members of staff will always be available in situation where a hoist is used.
- In a situation where a staff member is obliged to undertake intimate care assistance on his/her own, that staff member will notify another staff member before assisting the student. The second staff member should be available to provide additional assistance should it be required.
- Where possible male staff will provide intimate care support to male students and female staff will provide care to support female students. However, within current resources, staff of either gender may be required as part of their duties to attend to the intimate care needs of both male and female students. Only female staff will attend the needs of students requiring assistance with menstrual care. Staff will not be involved in any way in the use of internal sanitary protection.

- Only staff who have completed manual and people handling training should assist in the physical transfer of students during intimate care. Staff should at all times follow best practice in relation to manual handling.
- Regular substitute staff may assist with intimate care, where they have certification (manual and patient handling and knowledge of the individual toileting programme (where applicable).
- Staff should never carry out an intimate care procedure unless they know how to do so correctly.
- Where facilities are shared, timetables will be drawn up and adhered to, as far as possible except in the event of emergency.
- Staff should ensure supplies of toiletries, gloves, aprons, towels and fresh clothes are to hand so that the student is not left unattended while items are found. If supplies run out while a student is using the bathroom facilities, then the staff member should replace the items.
- Staff should at all times follow best practice in relation to infection control. (refer to Infection control in schools).
- Staff should be discreet in the use of intimate care items and these should not be visible outside of designated areas.
- Intimate care assistance will at all times take place in the designated area.

7) Touch Massage

- Massage by staff will be confined to the hands, feet and face and undertaken with the express permission of the Principal. When using massage, staff must recognise the students' vulnerability. Approaching a student through touch in this way will be done within a relationship of trust built up gradually with staff who know the person well and who can sensitively interpret and respond to the student's reactions.

8) Student Welfare

- Address students by their name so that he/she is aware of being the focus of the activity
- Every student should be treated with dignity and have their privacy respected at all times.
- Physical contact during intimate care should be affirmative and supportive.

9) Child Protection

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member will report this concern immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP - in this case, school principal – in her absence to the DDLP – name displayed at front door).

10) Intimate On Trips

When out in the community intimate care will still be adhered to with the same level of care regarding the pupils dignity and respect. Intimate care will only be carried out in facilities which allow the respect and dignity of the student to be maintained.

11) Implementation

The Principal, Deputy Principal Teachers, and SNAs will be responsible for implementation of this policy. Staff members who are required to provide intimate care support to pupils should:

- Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the individual pupil's toileting programme (where applicable and ICP.
- Report any concerns, which may arise when carrying out intimate care duties, immediately to the DLP.
- Use protective clothing such as disposable gloves, and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks.

12) Ratification and Review

Ratified by: Board of Management, St. Nicholas's School .

Date: 05/11/2025

Signed by Chairperson: _____



Date: _____

18-11-2025

Mr. Simon Beale.

Review: Annually

Reviewed by _____ . Date _____