

# Our Lady of Lourdes School Ballymoney

Caring, Sharing, Learning together to meet the future

## Intimate Care Policy



## **Intimate Care Policy Rationale**

It is our intention in Our Lady of Lourdes to develop independence in each child, however there will be occasions when help is required. Our Intimate Care policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our Safeguarding of pupils.

This intimate care policy should be read in conjunction with the schools' policies as below

- Safeguarding policy and Child Protection procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct and guidance on safer working practice
- Health and Safety policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs policy

The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to the individual needs of the child and young person concerned. Our Lady of Lourdes recognises its duties and responsibilities which requires that any pupil with an impairment that affects his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities must not be discriminated against.

## **Definition**

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves, but some pupils 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 pupils involved in intimate self-care.

Intimate care can include:

Feeding, Oral care, Personal hygiene, Dressing/undressing, Toileting, Menstrual Care, Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds, Catheter and stoma care, Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

In some instances, more specialised intimate assistance may be needed for children with physical or medical difficulties.

#### The Pupil

- The pupil has the right to assistance that respects his/her dignity, and to feel safe when being moved or handled.
- The pupil has the right to feel comfortable with the adult assisting him/her, and to make it known if this level of comfort is disturbed.
- The pupil should be encouraged to engage in the care procedure, to know what is happening and give permission at each stage.
- The pupil should be encouraged to work towards independence and helped to do so as much as possible.

#### The Parents

- Parents have the right to information regarding school policy and procedures designed to meet the needs of their child. The school should work closely with parents to ensure that all aspects of the care procedure are shared and understood.
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that all relevant information is provided to help the school assist their child in an appropriate way. Parents should meet the adult/s who will provide intimate care to the child and be informed of the school's arrangements in the event of this person/s being absent.
- Parents should consider alternative arrangements to allow the child to participate in school activities (PE, examinations, performances, swimming, sports day, etc.), and activities outside school (field trips, educational visits, transport, etc.).
- The school should gain written permission from parents for the care to be provided

#### Confidentiality

- Information regarding agreed procedures must be treated confidentially and recorded/held only in the pupil's school file. Information should not be disclosed or discussed with any adults other than those with responsibility for the pupil's personal care and should not be referred to in the presence of other pupils.

- Care should be provided at agreed times, at the pupil's request or in response to an agreed signal. Staff should make themselves familiar with the pupil's manner of communication, whether verbal, sign or eye contact.
- Appropriate terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions should be clarified between the pupil, parents, and his/her assistant(s).

### **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based. Every child has the right to:

- be safe;
- personal privacy;
- be valued as an individual;
- be treated with dignity and respect;
- involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities;
- express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account; and
- have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent

### **School Responsibilities**

- The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of pupils will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. It is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.
- We recognise that there is a need to treat all pupils, whatever their age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. The child's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate and personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently and sensitively: no pupil should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.
- Staff will work in close partnership with parent/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.
- Where pupils with complex and/or long-term health conditions have a health care plan in place, the plan should, where relevant, take into account the principles and best practice guidance in this intimate care policy.

- Members of staff must be given the choice as to whether they are prepared to provide intimate care to pupils.
- All staff undertaking intimate care must be given appropriate training.
- This Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

### Writing an Intimate Care Plan

- It is paramount that the plan should respect and observe the pupil's safety, privacy, and dignity (Appendix 2).
- The plan should include:
  - Clear information regarding the assistance to be provided;
  - The method of communication to be used by the pupil;
  - The named person(s) with responsibility to assist the pupil;
  - The timetable, if possible, when assistance will be provided;
  - Arrangements in the absence of the named assistant(s);
  - Arrangements for school events and activities;
  - The means by which the arrangement will be monitored;
  - Strategies to prevent or deal with questions/comments from other pupils; and the maintenance of a record of assistance (Appendix 3).

While it is recommended to have two members of staff assist the pupil, this level of resourcing may not be available and while the introduction of a second assistant may be perceived as providing protection against allegations of abuse, it can also further erode the pupil's privacy.

If the plan has been agreed and signed by parents, staff, and pupil if appropriate, it is acceptable to have one assistant unless there are implications regarding safe handling.

Two persons are required to assist if a hoist is being used. In this case the second person should be identified and made known to the pupil and parents.

Alternative arrangements must be in place in the absence of one or both named staff. However, the school should be aware that the introduction of other staff to the care context without prior arrangement can increase the vulnerability of the pupil and adults.

The plan should specify the assistance to be provided as clearly as possible e.g. undressing/cleaning the pupil, changing a nappy, holding pupil in position, etc.

The assistant(s) should talk to the pupil throughout the procedure e.g. "I am going to help you undress"

The assistance should be rehearsed in the bathroom with the parent(s) present to ensure clarity. Following this there should be no change to what has been agreed.

Teachers should be made aware of the care timetable, particularly if the pupil needs to be absent from class and should be aware of the approximate time the procedure should take. The assistant(s) should ensure their return to the classroom is noted.

The plan should be signed by all contributors and reviewed annually or when the needs of the pupil change.

## Training and Resources

Guidance/advice may often be provided by the pupil's parent, and/or the pupil him/herself.

All staff providing personal care must have received pupil protection training. Specialised training may be required if the pupil uses a wheelchair, hoist, colostomy bag or requires an invasive procedure such as rectally administered medication. This training may be arranged through the Children and Young Peoples Services Directorate of the EA, and the Health Trust School Health Teams.

The school's arrangements in the absence of named assistants should involve only members of staff who have undergone the appointment procedure, including background scrutiny. Casual substitute staff should not provide intimate care in the school setting.

The school will endeavour to provide appropriate accommodation that ensures privacy for the pupil and is sufficiently spacious to accommodate any other equipment the pupil may need, such as a changing bench or hoist. The provision of appropriate accommodation and equipment should be arranged in conjunction with the Children and Young Peoples Services Directorate of the EA.

The school will endeavour to provide resources to ensure that procedures are carried out hygienically. This may include disposable aprons, gloves, wipes and medicated hand washing products.

Additional requirements may include labelled bins for the disposal of soiled waste; items such as needles, catheters, etc., and arrangements for the collection of such waste. This can be arranged through the Operations and Estates Directorate of the EA and the District Council.

Schools will ensure that the assistant has a means of attracting attention and assistance in an emergency.

## **Child Protection**

The Governors and staff at this school recognise that pupils with special needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. The school's child protection will be adhered to.

### **Vulnerability to abuse**

Pupils should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance, and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth.

However, the following factors may increase a pupil's vulnerability:

- Experience of multiple carers;
- The inability to distinguish between assistance and abuse; and
- The inability to communicate.
- While adults are protected by their adherence to procedure, the following factors may increase their vulnerability:
  - The possibility of accidents;
  - The possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpretation; and
  - The possibility of the pupil becoming aroused.
- The school will ensure that the programme of assistance is monitored and both pupil and adult given the opportunity to report any concerns that they may have. The Safeguarding Team will undertake this responsibility in collaboration with the SENCO Coordinator

From a child protection perspective, it is acknowledged that intimate care involves risks for children and adults as it may involve staff touching private parts of a pupil's body. In this school best practice will be promoted and all adults (including those who are involved in intimate care and others in the vicinity) will be encouraged to be vigilant at all times, to seek advice where relevant and take account of safer working practice.

- Where appropriate, pupils will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.
- If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a pupil's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the Safeguarding Team. A clear written record of the concern will be completed, and a referral made to Children's Services Social Care if appropriate, in accordance with the school's child protection procedures. Parents/carers will be asked for their consent or informed that a referral is necessary prior to it being made but this should only be

done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child at increased risk of suffering significant harm.

- If a pupil becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a specific member of staff, this should be reported to the class teacher or Principal. The matter will be investigated at an appropriate level (usually the Principal) and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue/s is/are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.
- If a pupil, or any other person, makes an allegation against an adult working at the school this should be reported to the Head-teacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Principal) who will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with the school's policy: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff and Volunteers. It should not be discussed with any other members of staff or the member of staff the allegation relates to.
- Similarly, any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Principal or to the Chair of Governors, in accordance with the child protection procedures and 'whistle-blowing' policy.

### **Physiotherapy**

- Pupils who require physiotherapy whilst at school should have this carried out by a trained physiotherapist. If it is agreed in the IEP or care plan that a member of the school staff should undertake part of the physiotherapy regime (such as assisting children with exercises), then the required technique must be demonstrated by the physiotherapist personally, written guidance given and updated regularly. The physiotherapist should observe the member of staff applying the technique.
- Under no circumstances should school staff devise and carry out their own exercises or physiotherapy programmes.

- Any concerns about the regime or any failure in equipment should be reported to the physiotherapist.

### **Medical Procedures**

- Pupils who have complex needs might require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/carers, documented in the health care plan or IEP and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.
- It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.
- Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained in accordance with LA guidance. 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 policy has been informed by the EA "Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children" published 7/11/2018 <https://www.eani.org.uk>

**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body on..... (Date)**

**Our Lady of Lourdes School - Permission for intimate care**

**Name of Pupil:**

**DoB:**

**Address:**

**Parent/Guardian:**

**I/we give permission for the assistance detailed overleaf to be provided to my/our child**

**and will advise the school of any change that may affect this provision.**

**Print name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**I, the child, give permission for the assistance detailed overleaf to be provided to me.**

**Print name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Appendix 2**

**Our Lady of Lourdes School - Intimate Care Plan**

**Pupil: DoB:**

**Diagnosis:**

**Specify Assistance Required:**

**Timetable Attached YES / NO**

**Person(s) assisting:**

**Alternative arrangements:**

**Location/equipment:**

**Designation      Signature      Date      Parent:**

**Pupil:**

**Assistant(s):**

**Principal:**

**Appendix 3**

**Our Lady of Lourdes School - Intimate Care Record**

**Pupil Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**Time**

**Intimate Care Need**

**Signature 1**

**Signature 2**



# Our Lady of Lourdes School Ballymoney

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## School Poem

You're **unique** and **one of a kind**  
Your life can be what you want  
Take the days just one at a time  
**Count your blessings** not your troubles  
You'll make it through whatever comes along  
Don't put limits on yourself  
So many dreams are waiting to be realised  
Decisions are too important to leave to chance  
Reach for your **peak**, your **goal**, your **prize**  
The longer one carries a problem the heavier it gets  
**Live a life of serenity** not a life of regret  
Remember that a **little love** goes a long way  
A lot goes forever  
Remember that **friendship** is a wise investment  
**Life's treasures are people**. . .together  
Realise that it is **never too late**  
Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way  
Have **health and happiness**  
Take the time to **wish upon a star**  
And don't forget – for even a day  
How very **special** you are

Castle Street, Ballymoney, County Antrim BT53 6JX  
Tel: 028 2766 2050 / 028 2766 5079  
[www.ourladyoflourdesballymoney.com](http://www.ourladyoflourdesballymoney.com)