



Bray School Project NS

Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

Intimate care is any caring procedure which involves attending to a student when they are undressed or partially dressed; helping a student with washing (including intimate parts); helping a student to use the toilet; changing nappies or carrying out a procedure that requires direct or indirect contact with an intimate area of a student; or any procedure carried out while the student is in a state of whole or partial undress. The supervision of students while they are dressing and undressing will also be considered as intimate care.

The following procedure will apply in cases of:

- Wetting Incident
- Soiling Incident
- Vomiting on clothes
- Ongoing toileting or care needs as outlined in a student's individual intimate care plan and referred to in child's Individual Educational Plan
- Water/wet play incident or incident whereby child requires a change of clothes

This policy and related procedures have been developed bearing in mind that all physical contact between staff and students:

- Should be aimed at meeting the needs of students
- Should respect the privacy and dignity of each student
- Should be consistent with professional integrity of staff members

Relationship to School Ethos

All students and staff members have the right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are;

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- To ensure that the dignity and privacy of the student involved is maintained at all times
- To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner

Responding to Incidents (i.e. wetting, soiling, vomiting)

As a staff we act 'in loco parentis' and can deal with a toileting or vomiting accident in school. It is best practice to only provide help that is required by the student.

The staff member should encourage the student to do as much for themselves as possible. Any help provided by staff will be done with the consent of the child. Consent may be sought in the form of asking questions and talking through, at an appropriate level for the individual. For example "Can you take off your?" "Would you like help with ..." "I'm going to wipe/put cream on/take off x now, ok?"

Where necessary parents/ guardians should provide a spare changes of clothes and underwear which will be kept in the school. Staff are required to wear protective gloves when assisting changing a child. In the event of an accident, the following procedures are to be followed:

Wetting incident

- If the child (not on an approved toileting plan) has a wetting incident, the following will apply:
 - The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with a change of clothes and/or underwear as necessary.
 - Where the child is able, they will use said clothes to change themselves.
 - The SNA/ designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary.
 - If an SNA/ designated personnel is required to go into the toilet cubicle, it is best practice that a second adult is within sight.
 - Parents/guardians are informed.
 - Wet clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
 - Parents/guardians are asked to return "spare" clothes after washing.

Soiling incident

- If the child (not on an approved toileting plan) soils themselves, Parents/guardians are contacted and asked to come to the school. If a safe space is available, parent/guardian may choose to change child and then have child return to class. If safe space is not available, parent/guardian must bring the child home.
- In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the SNA/ designated personnel will do what is possible to make the child comfortable.

- The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with wipes.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with a change of clothes and/or underwear as necessary.
- The child will use said clothes to change themselves.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary.
- If an SNA/designated personnel is required to go into the toilet cubicle, it is best practice that a second adult is within sight, when practically possible.
- Parents/guardians are informed of details of incident upon arrival at school.
- Soiled clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
- Parents/guardians are asked to return “spare” clothes after washing.
- After an incident of diarrhoea, the child is advised to stay at home until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours.

Vomiting incident:

- If the child vomits on themselves, parents/guardians are contacted and asked to collect their child. In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the SNA/ designated personnel will do what is possible to make the child comfortable.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with wipes.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with a change of clothes as necessary.
- The child will use said clothes to change themselves.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary.
- If a SNA/ designated personnel is required to go into the toilet cubicle, it is best practice that a second adult is within sight, when practically possible.
- Parents/guardians are informed of details of incident upon collection
- Soiled clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
- Parents/guardians are asked to return “spare” clothes after washing.
- After an incident of vomiting, the child is advised to stay at home until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours.

Support for a Child Experiencing Their First Period at School

To ensure the comfort, dignity, and privacy of students, the school has established procedures for supporting a child who may experience their first menstrual period during school hours:

- **Procedure**
 - If a child informs a staff member that they have started their period, they will be accompanied to a private space to access supplies (sanitary pads, wet wipes, spare underwear, a small plastic bag for disposal, and a discreet pouch for privacy).
 - The staff member will discreetly offer assistance and explain the availability of the Emergency Period Kit.
 - The child will be encouraged to manage the situation independently, but assistance will be provided if requested.

- Parents/guardians will be notified after the incident, respecting the child's privacy.
- **Staff Training and Awareness**
 - Staff will be briefed on how to approach the situation with sensitivity and respect.
 - Teachers and SNAs will be aware of the location of emergency supplies and how to offer support discreetly.
- **Parental Involvement**
 - Parents/guardians are encouraged to have a conversation with their child about menstruation to prepare them for the possibility of it occurring at school.
 - Parents/guardians will have the option to contribute items to the Emergency Period Kit if they prefer specific products for their child.
- **Ongoing Communication**
 - The child's comfort and privacy are the primary concerns; any communication with parents/guardians will be handled discreetly.
 - If the child feels unwell or requires additional support, parents/guardians will be contacted for further instructions.

Students with Specific Intimate Care Needs

It may be the case that a pupil will have an ongoing need for assistance with toileting/intimate care.

In all such situations the following guidelines and procedures must be followed:

Role of Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians should identify any toileting or intimate care needs in their application form
- Parents/Guardians will be required to attend a meeting with the principal and SEN coordinator/ class teacher/Support Teacher to discuss the specific care needs of their child and how the school will meet them.
- Where possible, Parents/Guardians should provide the school with professional reports (O.T., nurse, Early Intervention Team, Enable Ireland etc) and/or relevant contact details. Professional report should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting intimate care needs of the child. Professional report may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the child at all times.
- An Intimate Care Plan will be developed based on parental and professional information and an application for SNA access and if necessary equipment will be completed.
- Parents/Guardians supply the school with the resources required to carry out the toileting or other care needs, which may include, but not be limited to;
 - Nappies
 - Wipes
 - Nappy Sacks
 - Spare underwear
 - Spare Clothes

- Creams (if necessary, outlined by medical prescription, and as detailed in Intimate Care Plan)
- Sanitary pads, wet wipes, spare underwear, a small plastic bag for disposal, and a discreet pouch for privacy

Role of the School

In the event that a specific toileting need has been identified for a student, an Intimate Care/Toileting Plan will be developed in partnership with the student's class teacher, support teacher, designated SNAs, Parents/Guardians and relevant support services.

If a child is not toilet trained, and wears nappies/pull ups to school, toileting will be scheduled twice during the school day. If a child soils himself/herself, child will be changed as soon as possible.

A written copy of the agreement will be kept in the student's file and Parents/Guardians will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.

The Care Plan must include

- Details of specific care need
- Identification of the staff members involved in this care, including provisions for when a staff member may be absent. (Substitute SNA's will not generally be involved in intimate care unless sanctioned by the Principal or SEN Coordinator).
- Details of additional equipment required and procedures for using same
- Child's preferred means of communication to include agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions.
- Child's current level of ability
- Cultural and/or religious sensitivities
- Signature of Class Teacher
- Signature of Principal / SEN Coordinator or Support Teacher
- Date of Care Plan implementation and review

Right to Refuse

As well as parental/guardian consent for the Intimate Care Plan, **any help provided by staff at any time, will be done with the consent of the child.** Consent may be sought in the form of asking questions and talking through, at an appropriate level for the individual. For example "Can you take off your?" "Would you like help with ..." "I'm going to wipe/put cream on/take off x now, ok?" If a child refuses help but is unable to support themselves, staff will contact parents/guardians to support the child in intimate care. If this is an ongoing issue, the staff will look to create a plan in consultation with the child, parents and relevant outside agencies (eg Occupational Therapist), if appropriate, to support the child either becoming independent in this task or to be comfortable with staff support, where required.

Refer to [Appendix A](#) for Intimate Care Plan template.

Implementation of an Intimate Care Plan should be tracked and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to continually monitor a student's progress and promote the development of independence.

Toilet Training of Children with an Intimate Care Plan

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to toilet train their child, at an appropriate time for their child. The school supports the recommendations of professionals and parental wishes in relation to toilet training.

When Parents/Guardians decide it is an appropriate time to toilet train their child, they are asked to speak with staff, review intimate care and toileting plan.

Both Parents/Guardians and staff should implement the same strategies when the child is being toilet trained. Regular communication should occur between Parents/Guardians and staff when a child is being toilet training is in progress.

Good Practice Guidelines

- While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all Intimate Care and Toileting situations, it is important that the following elements of good practice are adhered to:
- In the case that a student has an Intimate Care Plan, teachers and SNAs should ensure that they are completely familiar with the plan.
- There should be a minimum of two staff members within sight of one another, where possible.
- Address the student by name and ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity.
- Verbalise actions to the student in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.
- Use visual cues for students with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in a care plan.
- In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive.
- Respect the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation if checking to see if a nappy needs changing.
- Use protective gloves provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the student in a dignified and respectful way and allows the student the maximum level of privacy.
- The student's independence will be encouraged.

Water/Wet Play or any incident where child requires a change of clothes

If an incident occurs during the school day whereby a child playing with water/wet area or other area in which a change of clothes is necessary, the following procedures are followed.

If a child has intimate care needs, the child's intimate care plan is implemented. For all other children:

- The SNA/ designated personnel will provide the child with a change of clothes and/or underwear as necessary.
- The child will use said clothes to change him or herself.
- The SNA/ designated personnel will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary.
- If an SNA/ designated personnel is required to go into the toilet cubicle, it is best practice that a second adult is within sight, when practically possible.
- Parents/Guardians are informed
- Wet clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
- Parents/guardians are asked to return "spare" clothes after washing.

Reporting

If during the intimate care of a student

- A staff member accidentally hurts/injures the student
 - The staff member observes something which raises child protection concerns
 - The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done
 - The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause
- the incident must be reported to the DLP or Deputy DLP in their absence.

Implementation and Review

This policy will be implemented from December 2024

This policy will be reviewed at the end of December 2027 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 29/01/25

Signed: 

Date: 29/01/25

Alan Bedford, Principal

Appendix A

Intimate Care/Toileting Plan (required)

Child's Name	
Date of Birth	
Child's Class	
Relevant Staff	

Specific Care Needs	
Nature of Care Needs	
Child's Current Level of Ability	
Timeline & skills which need to be taught:	Timeline & procedures for teaching new skills
Procedures for Care	
Times and frequency each day when care is required	
Staff to be involved in this care	
Provisions for when named staff members are absent	
Equipment required for this care	
Procedures for using this equipment	
Additional materials / resources needed	
Procedures for storing and disposing of materials. <small>Please note parents/guardians are responsible for providing the school with necessary materials</small>	
Language to be used when providing this care:	Naming body parts: Naming bodily functions:

Cultural / religious sensitivities (if any)			
Date of Intimate care meeting:		Date intimate care plan finalised	
Review Date:			

Individuals involved in this plan	Name - printed	Signature
Parent / guardian 1		
Parent / guardian 2		
Class Teacher		
SNA 1		
SNA 2		
Support Teacher		
Other Relevant Personnel		
Principal		
Therapists		

Appendix B

Permission form for Intimate Care Provision

Should your child have a toileting accident (soil or wet themselves) or vomit in school and require changing we are willing, with your permission to clean and change your child as required.

We will follow the procedures outlined in our "Intimate Care Policy".

This role will always be undertaken by a member of staff (SNA or other named designated personnel) and you will be informed that an incident has taken place.

In such an event please indicate below how you would like us to proceed.

- In the event of my child having a toileting accident or vomiting in school and needing to be cleaned and changed, I give permission for a member of staff (SNA or named designated personnel) to clean and change him / her.

Child's name _____

Name or Role of Staff Member: _____

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian)

OR

- In the event of my child having a toileting accident or vomiting in school and needing to be cleaned, I would like to be contacted so that I can proceed to school.

I accept that if you are unable to contact myself or someone on the emergency contact list you will proceed to clean and change him / her as based on the procedures outlined in the "Intimate Care Policy"

Child's name _____

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian)