



MILLBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children

Definition

Intimate care may be identified as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to inform the school of the intimate needs of their child and staff accept their responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents to ensure these needs, within the context of the school environment, are appropriately met.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral Care
- Washing
- Dressing/Undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual care
- Treatments, in line with the medical care records provided by parents to the school.
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care.

Principles of Intimate Care:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be consulted and involved in their own intimate care and such views will be taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Responsibilities of Staff involved with intimate care:

- All staff working with children must be vetted. This includes students from Regional Colleges on placement eg those studying Health and Social Care, as well as volunteers, in line with the requirements of ACCESS NI.
- Only named identified staff should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The Principal/Designated Teacher for child protection must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand, the Intimate Care Policy and relevant Guidelines.
- All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care specific to the context of their work.
- Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents/guardians and child (if appropriate).
- Additional trained staff will be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks in the event of a member of staff being on sick leave.
- Intimate care arrangements will be reviewed regularly. The views of all relevant parties will be sought and considered to inform future provision.
- **If a member of staff has a concern about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the school's designated child protection teacher.**

Guidelines for Good Practice

Mission Statement

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

These guidelines apply to every member of staff involved in the intimate care of children.

- Disabled children can be especially vulnerable and staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.
- Involve the child in their intimate care.
- Treat every child with respect and ensure that privacy is appropriate to the child's age and situation.
- Make sure that practice in intimate care is consistent, particularly if a child has multiple carers.
- Ensure effective communication between parents and other relevant outside agencies to consolidate consistent practice.
- Be aware of self-limitations.
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image. Confident, self-assured children are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. Approaches to intimate care must convey messages of self-worth.
- Concerns must be reported to the school's designated child protection teacher. Responsible adults involved in the intimate care of a child should immediately report any unusual markings, discolouration's or swelling. Any accidental hurt as a result of intimate care should also be reported, following reassuring the child and ensuring their safety. A written record of concerns should be kept on the child's personal file, in line with the Child Protection Policy of the school.
- Parents/Guardians must be informed of any concerns.

Working with children of the opposite sex

Principles

The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

Intimate Care

The intimate care of boys/girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

- The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by Millburn Primary School's professional Code of Conduct, in conjunction with the school's policy and procedures and in agreement of the designated teacher for child protection/Principal.
- When intimate care is being carried out, ALL children have the right to dignity and respect ie they should be suitably covered, the door closed or screens/curtains in place.
- If a child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out the care should immediately stop. Time should be taken to try to ascertain why the child is distressed and reassurance should be given.
- Concerns should be reported to the designated teacher and a written record maintained.
- Parents/guardians should be informed of the concerns.

Changing after Accidents

From time to time, young children in school may need some reassurance with intimate care, eg help with changing clothes and cleaning after wetting, soiling or vomiting incidents. It may be that they will need assistance should such incidents arise.

In a situation where a child needs some assistance with intimate care, a member of staff will help but toilet doors will remain unlocked. Another member of staff will be informed so that there is an openness and shared information about the care given. It should be noted that by the time a child starts school, they are generally expected to be independent in terms of their use of the toilet and their facilities.

Should children wet themselves, school staff will help by providing spare clothing, if available. If the child is able, they will be encouraged to change their clothing. However, if they need help and are willing to receive it, a member of staff will help. Again, this assistance must not be given without another member of staff being made aware of it. If this situation does occur the parent will be informed.

If a child soils their clothes in school, the parent or other appropriate person will be contacted to take the child home or bring a change of clothes with a view to changing the child themselves. If it is not possible to speak to the listed contact for arrangements to be made, the child will be supported to clean themselves and change their clothes for their own comfort. The same set of guidelines will apply.

When helping children with intimate care, we aim to provide them with the appropriate level of caring support whilst minimising, as far as possible, the level of physical contact with the child.

Should a member of staff have concerns about a child, or a situation, they should report these to the designated teacher for child protection or the Principal. If a parent or carer has concerns about a child, or questions about a situation in the school, they should contact the Principal.

We believe that the positive working relationship between home and school is a major factor in providing care and security for the children. This working relationship thrives on openness, effort and trust. We will do all in our power to promote this in our dealings with children, parents and the wider community.

Last reviewed September 2024

Next Review September 2026

Intimate Care Record

