

CARRICKFERGUS

MODEL SCHOOL



Intimate Care Policy



Carrickfergus Model School – Intimate Care Policy

Our Intimate Care Policy is part of our collective pastoral care policies and aims to ensure that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all our children with respect and dignity when intimate care is given. We believe that any care given should alleviate distress and upset.

A) Intimate care is any care which involves one of the following:

1. **Assisting** children to change clothes eg for P.E., swimming and school performances.
2. **Changing** children who have soiled themselves or fallen in the playground.
3. **Providing comfort** to upset or distressed children.
4. **Assisting** children who require specific medical procedures and who are not able to carry this out unaided (only those specifically trained may do this).
5. **Assisting** older girls with sanitary care.
6. **Helping** children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties (SEBD).

1. Assisting children to change their clothes: This is more common in our Foundation Stage. On occasions an individual child may require some assistance with changing if, for example, he/she has an accident at the toilet, gets wet outside, or has vomit on his/her clothes etc.

- *Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. However, if assistance is required this will be given.*
- *Staff will always ensure that they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give children the opportunity to change in private, unless children are in such distress that it is not possible to do so.*
- *If staff are concerned in any way parents will be contacted as soon as possible and asked to assist their child.*
- *In any instance where children are changed, under these circumstances, parents will be informed.*

2. Changing children who have soiled themselves: If a child soils him/herself in school a professional judgement has to be made whether it is appropriate to change the child in school, or request the parent/carer to collect the child for changing. In either circumstance the child's needs are paramount and he/she should be comforted and reassured throughout. The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses.

- *As appropriate, children in KS1 and KS2 will be given the opportunity to change his/her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.*
- *School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose. These are kept in the Medical Room.*
- *If a child is not able to complete this task unaided, school staff will act as loco-parentis and change the child. Parents will have already signed to say that their child may be changed if necessary.*

- *When changing, staff will be aware of:*
 - *Child Protection Guidelines and policies*
 - *Pastoral Care and the ethos of the school*
 - *Basic Hygiene Routines eg wear protective disposable gloves, seal any soiled clothing in a plastic bag for return to parents and use appropriate cleaning materials.*

3. Proving comfort or support to a child: There are situations and circumstances where children seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Early Years). Where this happens, staff need to be aware that any physical contact must be kept to a minimum. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, staff must ensure that at no time can the act be considered intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate, staff must provide care which is professionally appropriate to the age, gender of the child and to the context. If a child requires physical comfort from a member of staff, this should always be in the presence of another member of staff or adult.

If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged in a way which communicates that the touch, rather than the child, is unacceptable.

If a child touches a member of staff inappropriately, as noted above, this should be discussed, in confidence with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

4. Assisting children who require specific medical procedures and who are not able to carry this out unaided.

Our Adminstrating of Medications Policy outlines arrangements for the management of the majority of medications in school. This is communicated to all parents on an annual basis.

Written parental permission must be given before any medication is dispensed in school.

5. Assisting older girls with sanitary care.

Whilst this is not required often in primary school, it may be something that staff in Upper Key Stage 2 have to deal with. The procedures are as follows.

- *If this happens in school for the first time, parents should be contacted immediately. The child should not be spoken to in front of her peers and should be reassured as much as possible, taking great care not to embarrass her. If the girl is aware of what is happening, the female member of staff may speak freely to her but should the girl be unaware, this should be left to the parent to explain.*
- *If this is not the first time it occurs and the girl is unprepared, parents will still be contacted but sanitary wear and spare underwear can be provided by the school. This will also be stored in the medical room.*
- *Girls may use the disabled toilet which also has a sanitary bin installed.*
- *Girls who cannot go swimming for this reason will provide a note for their teacher. All staff should remain sensitive and professional when dealing this matter.*

6. Helping children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties (SEBD).

We are committed to inclusion and to meeting the needs of all our children, including those with SEBD. Opportunities will be provided for all staff to gain understanding of the causes of inappropriate behaviours and guidance given in the development of individual behaviour management plans. External advice may also be sought in relation to children with specific SEBD needs.

B) After School Activities

Relationships during After School Activities tend to be more informal, however, staff are still guided by our Safe-Guarding and Child Protection procedures, Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policies. It is normal to have only one adult present in a number of our school-based after school activities. In the event of a First Aid incident, additional adult support will be sought immediately.

C) Swimming

Our Primary 5 – Primary 7 classes participate in a swimming programme at the Amphitheatre Centre in Carrickfergus.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or unacceptable behaviour does not occur. Children use the group changing facilities in the centre and exemplary behaviour is expected. Where a child needs additional support for changing parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain a high level of dignity but increase independence.

D) Residential Trips

Residential educational visits are an important part of our Primary 6 and Primary 7 school experience. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in this less formal setting. As with After School Activities, more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual. Staff are still guided by our Child Protection procedures, Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policies.

Some specific Intimate Care issues may arise in a Residential context. These are notes below.

Showering

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations, and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. This means that staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct and adults must not change or shower in the same place as children.

Night Time Routines

It is established that the children's bedrooms are private spaces and anyone else wanting to enter the room should knock and announce their intention to enter.

At bedtime, children are given a set amount of time to change and prepare for bed and will be told when the supervising teachers will visit the rooms to check all is okay and switch off the lights. A reciprocal arrangement is in place in the mornings.

There are occasions when incidents take place during the night and the need arises to;

- 1. Assist a child to change his/her clothes*
- 2. Change a child who has soiled him/herself*
- 3. Provide comfort to an upset or distressed child*
- 4. Assist a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to self-administer or who requires supervision to self-administer.*