

# Alexander Dickson Primary School



Helping small  
people with  
BIG ideas

## Intimate Care Policy

## **Mission Statement**

“Our school builds relationships with kindness and honesty. We encourage creativity, imagination and independence. We will develop learning for life and work through effort and collaboration”.

Our school community also agrees that its key values are:

- Honesty
- Learning
- Kindness
- Friendship
- Effort

## **Introduction**

It is our intention to develop independence in each child. However, in our school 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 Pastoral Care Policy. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

## **Definition**

*Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents.*

## **Intimate care can include:**

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- 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

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

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

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is important that all individuals recognise their responsibilities in implementing the intimate care policy.

School Member	Responsibilities
<b>PRINCIPAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Overall responsibility for intimate care policy and procedures;</li><li>▪ Ensure the policy is communicated to school community;</li><li>▪ Ensure annual child protection training takes place, including a refresher on intimate care arrangements;</li><li>▪ Arrange for new staff to be informed of intimate care arrangements;</li><li>▪ Liaise with pupils and families where regular intimate care is required;</li><li>▪ Monitor intimate care records.</li></ul>
<b>STAFF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Maintain record of intimate care permission;</li><li>▪ Follow intimate care policy and procedures;</li><li>▪ Consult the child involved before providing/assisting with intimate care;</li><li>▪ Report any intimate care required to parents in a timely fashion;</li><li>▪ Record all instances of intimate care provided in bound book;</li><li>▪ Inform child's class teacher after intimate care has been provided;</li><li>▪ Inform building supervisor if cleaning supplies need replaced.</li></ul>
<b>SMT / GOVERNORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be familiar with school policy and procedures;</li><li>▪ Ensure that policy and procedures are implemented and reviewed as appropriate;</li><li>▪ Support staff and parents in the implementation of the policy and procedures.</li></ul>
<b>PARENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Encourage and support child to be independent in their intimate care;</li><li>▪ Liaise with school if child is experiencing issues which may make it likely they will require intimate care;</li><li>▪ Launder and return any borrowed items of clothing in a timely fashion;</li><li>▪ Attend school to provide intimate care or collect child if requested;</li><li>▪ Be familiar with school policies and procedures.</li></ul>
<b>PUPILS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be independent in their intimate care;</li><li>▪ Tell a member of staff if they need intimate care.</li></ul>

Parents will be asked to provide permission for staff members to administer intimate care. Parents who do not provide permission will be contacted immediately and requested to attend in order to change their child if the need arises.

If parental permission has been granted, pupils will be encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves with staff offering assistance as necessary/appropriate. If permission has been granted but the pupil is unwilling to accept assistance or is very distressed a parent will be contacted.

Intimate care may be provided in the following situations:

- If a child has wet or soiled themselves;
- If a child has vomited on themselves;
- If the child is very distressed or suffering unduly;
- If a child requires first aid involving intimate care;
- If the child requires medical attention involving intimate care (medical procedures are agreed with parents/guardians in an Individual Healthcare Plan and should only be administered by named staff members with appropriate training).

Intimate care will only be provided to older children in extenuating circumstances. It is expected that older children should be able to manage their own intimate care with some guidance. Feminine hygiene products are available for older girls.

Where a child has a regular and/or anticipated need for intimate care, arrangements are agreed between the school and parents. These arrangements are recorded and are kept in the child's confidential file.

All staff working with children are vetted through the Access NI clearance process and receive annual child protection training. Only staff members who are known to children and who are familiar with the intimate care policy will be involved in providing intimate care to children.

### **Procedures**

The decision to provide intimate care should be made by the Principal, a teacher or classroom assistant. The staff member providing intimate care will alert another member of staff to the fact that this is happening and the second member of staff will remain close by wherever possible.

The child will be removed to a less public place to maintain dignity and avoid a feeling of humiliation. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child. Clothing will be provided if necessary. Items of clothing should be washed and returned to school as soon as possible.

Staff will record instances when intimate care has been administered in a bound intimate care book, including: the date; time; name of pupil; summary of incident and care provided; name of staff; signature of staff. Parents will be informed at home time or immediately if the child is unwell or distressed.

If a member of staff, other than the child's own class teacher approves intimate care, the class teacher will be informed as soon as possible.

Children will be consulted about their intimate care and their agreement sought before any actions are taken. The procedure should be discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with

the child throughout the process. The child should be encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible and physical contact should be kept to a minimum. Staff should at all times be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

Staff should follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves.

### **Intimate Care and Child Protection**

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice he or she must report this to the designated teacher for child protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt while receiving intimate care, or misinterprets the actions of the adult providing care, staff members will report the incident to the designated teacher for child protection immediately.

## **Guidelines for Good Practice**

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

These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their needs.

Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care as an opportunity to abuse children. It is important to bear in mind that some forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to the following guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

#### **1. Involve the child in the intimate care.**

In Alexander Dickson Primary School, we try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where a situation renders a child fully dependent we will talk about what is going to be done and give choices where possible e.g. 'Would you like me to help you or would you like to do it yourself?'

#### **2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation.**

Where possible one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more than one. In the event of an intimate care procedure the adult must inform another member of staff.

#### **3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent.**

As a child may have multiple carers a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.

#### **4. Beware of your own limitations.**

Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt ASK. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed – e.g. for children with complex medical needs.

#### **5. If you have any concerns you must report them.**

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swellings report it immediately to the Designated Teacher for child protection.

If a child is accidentally hurt during the intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the accident immediately to the Designated Teacher. Report and record any unusual emotional behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made available to parents and kept in the child's personal file.

## **Other relevant documents – Child Protection Policy**

## Appendix 1



### Emergency Intimate Care Good Practice Checklist for Staff

*To be used in circumstances in which a child has wet or soiled themselves or when a child who has been hurt or sick and treatment requires the removal of clothing.*

Staff **must** ensure that the well-being and dignity of the child will remain paramount at all times during any incident requiring intimate care.

- 1. Reassure the child and, if appropriate, remove the child to a less public place to maintain dignity and avoid a feeling of humiliation.*
- 2. Summon another adult to support you as quickly as possible. If possible, do not leave the child to do so.*
- 3. Reassure the child and tell them what you plan to do. Try and gain their consent / permission e.g. 'Would you like me to help you or would you like to do it yourself?'*
- 4. Offer choices where possible and listen to the child's wishes. If they are distressed or protest stop the care immediately and seek advice from another member of staff.*
- 5. Inform the parent about the level of care that was administered and hand over any wet or soiled clothing for washing. It is likely that they may wish to come and collect their child.*
- 6. Complete Intimate Care record book following the event.*

If you have any child protection / safeguarding concerns about the child report them immediately to Mr Lawther or Mrs Muirhead.