



Intimate Care Policy

Our Intimate Care policy and guidelines have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They 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 an individual child.

- Intimate care can include:
- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

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.

PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

The following are the fundamental principles (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991) upon which our policy and guidelines are based, and are in line with Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children (ACPC) 2005

- 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.

At St. Mary's we aim to foster a high level of independence in our pupils with regard to personal hygiene practices. Children are encouraged to go to the toilet before morning break and before lunch/dinner time. At other times during the school day they have independent use of toilet facilities and are encouraged to indicate if they wish to use the toilet. They will be encouraged to undertake basic hygiene practices such as cleaning themselves and washing their hands after using the toilet. They will be encouraged to wash their hands if they are dirty and before eating food. Children will also be encouraged to change/dress independently.

On entry to P1 most children are toilet trained and can carry out tasks relating to their own personal care independently, even in the event of toiletry accidents or wetness due to water play or sickness. We do recognise however, that there may be exceptions to this, where specific medical, developmental or special educational needs are identified. In such cases intimate care procedures will be discussed and agreed with parents prior to the child starting school and an Individual Care Plan drawn up.

In the event of an incident requiring intimate care, the child will be provided with wipes and alternative clothing and encouraged to carry out the cleaning and /or changing process independently. If the child is unable to carry out his/her own personal care independently, he/she will be assisted in the cleaning/changing process. This will ensure the comfort and best interests of the child. Children will be always treated in a caring and sensitive manner.

All P1 AND P2 parents are given an INTIMATE CARE FORM to complete at beginning of the school year, indicating if they wish to come into school to change their child themselves or opt for school staff to provide this service. These forms are retained in CLASS FILE.

All instances of Intimate Care are recorded in a Personal Care Book and dated and signed by staff involved.

If a child appears to be having continual 'accidents', a strategy may need to be agreed between the parent and the school and a change of clothes left in school.

Staff at St. Mary's understand that children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. All staff involved in intimate care are sensitive to the needs of the child and are aware that some care tasks can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

- All staff working in our school have received child protection training and are vetted in accordance with Child Protection Guidelines. They fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Procedures.
- In the case of a very specific type of intimate care being required, staff will receive specific training to enable them to do so.
- Parents will be informed (by note or phone) if an incident requiring intimate care takes place.
- Staff will always involve the child in their intimate care and will try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her own intimate care.

- Staff should not assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the designated teacher for child protection.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF UNDERTAKING THE INTIMATE CARE OF A CHILD

In the case of toiletry accidents/sickness/wetness through water play, where a child needs to be cleaned/clothes need to be changed the following procedures will be put into place:

- If a child is fairly independent the child will be involved in their **own intimate care**. Staff will provide the child with the necessary equipment e.g. wipes, change of underwear /clothes. The child will be encouraged to carry out the cleaning and changing process independently in the toilet with the door closed. The adult will wait outside and periodically reassure the child.
- We recognise that circumstances may arise when a child who is usually independent is **unable to clean /change him/herself**. In these circumstances, in order to preserve the comfort and dignity of the child, a member of staff will assist the child, including directly cleaning if necessary. Following good practice guidelines another staff member will be in the vicinity.
- Where a child has **special/additional needs and is unable to carry out personal tasks independently**, intimate care procedures will be discussed and agreed with parents and an Individual Care Plan drawn up.
- The parent/designated adult will be discreetly informed of any such incident.
- Soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag, sealed and discreetly given to parent/designated adult at end of the day.

SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

The following procedures will be followed by staff undertaking the intimate care of a child.

- Staff in the classroom will be made aware that an 'intimate care' incident has arisen.

- Two members of staff will accompany the child to the toilet and the first member of staff will assist or carry out any necessary cleaning and changing tasks.
- The second staff member will remain present around the toilet area to assist the first member of staff. They will also supervise the other children in the classroom. As far as possible will prevent other children from going out to the toilet until the intimate care procedures have been completed.
- When a child requires assistance with personal care, the cleaning and changing of children will be carried out in the open area of the toilets and not behind a closed cubicle door. The staff member involved in the intimate care must be mindful of the child's right to privacy and dignity at all times.
- **Staff will endeavour to ensure that the child's privacy and dignity are respected at all times and will comfort and reassure them throughout.**
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance. Report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record. Parents/carers must be informed about concerns.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Non-allergenic baby wipes will be used to clean children unless they have a known allergy. Parents should inform the class teacher of any such allergy and discuss alternatives.
- Any staff member involved will wear disposable gloves to ensure the health and safety of the children and themselves and prevent the spread of infection.
- All used wipes and gloves will be disposed of in a sealed plastic bag.
- After these procedures staff and child should use an antibacterial hand wash for health and safety reasons.

Adopted on: ____ November 2024

Next Review: November 2028

Signed: _____


(Chair of Governors)

ST. MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, dressing or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves). In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

St. Mary's P.S. is committed to ensuring all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will always undertake their duties in a professional manner. St. Mary's recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so under Child Protection procedures.

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account whenever possible. If you wish to come into school and change your child yourself, you can indicate this wish below. However, in certain circumstances when a parent/carer can not be contacted, the parent's wishes may need to be waived, where failure to provide appropriate care would result in distress/discomfort for the child e.g. child sitting in soiled or wet clothes for a length of time.

- ☐ I give permission for staff to provide intimate care for my child.
- ☐ I do not wish staff to provide intimate care for my child. I wish to be contacted and provide the care myself

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer

Contact numbers

Name	Number

Please read the Intimate Care Policy and complete the slip below.

I have read, understand and agree with the Intimate Care Policy of St. Mary's

In the event that I am unable or unlikely to be at the school within 10 minutes, I am aware that a member of staff will provide my child with wipes and alternative clothing and if necessary assist my child in the cleaning/changing process.

Signed