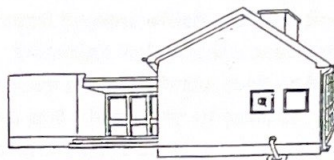
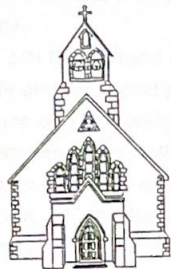


Saint Mary's Primary School



Intimate Care Policy

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St. Mary's P.S. Aughlisnafin

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Staff who work with children and children who have special needs will realise that the issue of intimate care is a difficult one and will require staff to be respectful of children's needs.
- 1.2 Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing.
- 1.3 Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour is open to scrutiny and staff at St. Mary's Primary School work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children wherever possible.
- 1.4 Staff deliver a full personal safety curriculum, as part of Personal, Social and Health Education, to all children as appropriate to their developmental level and degree of understanding. This work is shared with parents who are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.
- 1.5 St. Mary's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. St. Mary's Primary School recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

2. Our approach to best practice

- 2.1 All children who require intimate care are treated respectfully at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.
- 2.2 Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (Child Protection) and are fully aware of best practice.
- 2.3 Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation.
- 2.4 There is careful communication with each child who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss the child's needs and preferences.

- 2.5 As a basic principle children 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 themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.
- 2.6 Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child needs help with intimate care. Where possible, one child will be cared for by two adults. One adult will deal with the child's issue and the other adult is there for assistance and to ensure the child's privacy at this sensitive time. If the child is a female, two female members of staff will deal with the child. Where the child is male it might be suitable to have a trained male member of staff present. No volunteer or trainee member of staff will be allowed to assist with any issue relating to intimate care.
- 2.7 Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, while at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.
- 2.8 Parents/carers will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints.
- 2.9 When issues of Intimate care arise, parents of the pupils involved will be informed in writing of the event.