

*Saint Macartan's
Primary School*



Intimate Care Policy

This policy represents the agreed principles for 'intimate care' throughout the school. This policy has been agreed by all staff and governors within the school.

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is:

- to safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children;
- to ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one;
- to safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations;
- to raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care;
- to inform parents in how intimate care is administered;
- to ensure parents are consulted in the intimate care of their children.

Please note that in this policy the term 'parent' refers to the person with parental responsibility for the child.

1.2 Principles

It is essential that every child is treated as an individual and that care is given as gently and as sensitively as possible. As far as possible, the child should be allowed to exercise choice and should be encouraged to have a positive image of his/her own body.

It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position. Given the right approach, intimate care can provide opportunities to teach children about the value of their own bodies, to develop their safety skills and to enhance their self esteem.

Parents and staff should be aware that matters concerning intimate care will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively and that the young person's right to privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

1.3 Definition

Intimate care is one of the following:

- supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing;
- providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil;
- assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided;
- cleaning a pupil who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell.

2.1 Supporting dressing/undressing

The school considers that helping a child with an outer layer of clothing (eg. a sweatshirt or coat) is not an intimate act and therefore acceptable. Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child dressing or undressing (particularly in Foundation Stage) due to a medical condition, an accident or soiling themselves. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided. Parents/carers are asked to sign the consent form giving permission for staff to assist in intimate care. Any specific care arrangements must be agreed with the school.

2.2 Providing comfort or support

Children may seek physical comfort from staff (particularly children in Foundation Stage). Where children require physical support staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum. At all times this will be child initiated and with the focus to encourage and help the child to calm or settle. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of 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 suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child. If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable this can be gently but firmly discouraged for example through the use of high 5ing a particularly clingy child.

2.3 Medical Care

Pupils requiring short term and long term medical care involving intimate care will receive this care in line with the child's 'Care Plan'. The content of any 'Care Plan' will be discussed and agreed with the relevant medical body.

Parents as a first option will be asked to provide medical procedures that involve intimate care. If this is not possible, the school will seek the necessary advice from the EASR

If it is possible for the staff of the school to provide the level of medical care required, the staff member/s will receive the appropriate training. Written permission must be received from the person with parental responsibility before a medical procedure can be carried out. **Refer to 'Administration of Medication Policy.'**

2.4 Soiling

Staff will use common sense when tending to a child who has soiled themselves during the school day.

If a child's underwear is changed due to a soiling incident the child will be asked and encouraged to change their underwear in private and carry out the act themselves. Help will be provided with any zips and buttons. A record of the incident will be kept in school and the parent will be informed verbally or via a note in the child's school bag. (Appendix 1)

If a child has a medical condition which is likely to lead to soiling and subsequent staff intervention, the parents will be asked to sign a permission form so that staff can clean and change their child if necessary.

If a parent *does not* give consent, the school will contact the parents or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child.

If the parents or emergency contact is able to come within a few minutes, the child is comforted and kept away from the other children to preserve dignity until the parent arrives.

Children are not left on their own whilst waiting for a parent to arrive, an adult will stay with them giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed. If a parent or emergency contact cannot attend, the school will seek to gain verbal consent from parents for staff to clean and change the child. This permission will be sought on each occasion that the child soils him or herself. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted the Principal will be consulted. If put in an impossible situation where the child is at risk; staff will act appropriately and may need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

- protective gloves are worn;
- the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process;
- the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible;
- physical contact is kept to a minimum in order to carry out the
- necessary cleaning;
- privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation;
- any soiling that can be, is flushed down the toilet;
- soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag, unwashed, and sent home with the child.

3.1 Hygiene

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves. These are stored with the first aid box in the staff room.

4.1 Protection for staff

Staff should at all times be mindful of their code of conduct, Appendix 3, remembering that their actions should be beyond reproach and always child centred. They should:

- gain a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary;

- allow the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encourage them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable;
- allow the child a choice in the sequence of care;
- be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions.

4.2 Safeguards for children

All staff and volunteers in Saint Macartan's Primary School must gain Access NI clearance before working in the school. Children's rights to privacy will always be respected when dealing with intimate care issues. Volunteers will not be asked to carry out intimate care.

5.1 Review

This policy will be reviewed in Jan 2018 or as relevant guidance (including Child Protection) dictates to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Appendix 2: intimate care permission

Pupils Name: _____

Parent/ Guardian: _____

I give permission for school staff to assist my child with intimate care provision as required by my child.

I understand that any specific requests need to be forwarded to the school in writing.

Signed _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Staff Code of Conduct

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe. School staff and volunteers are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school. As a member of a school community, each person has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

1. Setting an Example

- 1.1 All staff and volunteers who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 1.2 All staff and volunteers must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.
- 1.3 All staff and volunteers must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 1.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out by the employing authority.
- 1.5 All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students

- 2.1 Staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 2.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student or colleague to a member of the school's Safeguarding team (DT/DDT for Child Protection or the Principal).
- 2.3 The school's DT is Karen Mc Ginn, The schools DDT is Alisa Mc Guinness
- 2.4 All staff and volunteers are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and staff must be familiar with these documents and other relevant school policies eg e-Safety and acceptable Use Policy

- 2.5 All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 2.6 As staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.
- 2.7 Staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies

3. Relationships with students

- 3.1 All staff and volunteers must declare any relationships that they may have with students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. A declaration form may be found in appendix 1 of this document.
- 3.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

4. Pupil/Student Development

- 4.1 All staff and volunteers must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- 4.2 All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.

5. Honesty and Integrity

- 5.1 All staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 5.2 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Principal, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

6. Conduct outside of Work

- 6.1 All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

- 6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 6.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff should seek advice from the principal when considering work outside the school.

7. *E-Safety and Internet Use*

- 7.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the schools' E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.
- 7.2 Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- 7.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.
- 7.4 Contact with students should only made via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.

If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the principal immediately.

- 7.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the schools Record Management Policy and Disposal Schedules

8. *Confidentiality*

- 8.1 Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.
- 8.2 Confidential information about students should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any other person other than a need to know basis. In circumstances where

the student's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be shared anonymously.

- 8.3 There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.
- 8.4 If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquires should be passed to senior leadership.
- 8.5 Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support students, they must not compromise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances.
- 8.6 Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to a senior member of staff without delay

9. Dress and Appearance

- 9.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image
- 9.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- 9.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

10. Disciplinary Action

Staff and volunteers should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

11. Compliance

All staff must complete the form in appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

When using any form of ICT, including the Internet, in school and outside school

For your own protection we advise that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with students, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies.

- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook and You Tube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes your school email address, school mobile phone and school video camera.
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data is kept secure and used appropriately.
- Only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of SLT.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute.
- Emails should be checked daily, as a minimum on working days or every other day if one day is particularly busy.
- You have a duty to report any e-Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school.

Appendix 1

Relationships with students outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

| Employee Name | Student Name | Relationship |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | | |
| | | |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal

Appendix 2

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name

Position/Post Held.....

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal