

Holy Rosary Primary School Belfast



Intimate Care Policy

Presented to Board of Governors: February 2026

Happy, Respectful, Progressive, Successful.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Holy Rosary PS has adopted a Rights Respecting Approach to school life. All children learn about their rights and the importance of upholding them. In carrying out the guidelines listed in this policy we are recognising the many of the rights that feature in the UNCRC:

Article 3

Adults should do what is best for the children

Article 4

Government (*and therefore schools*) has a responsibility to make sure rights are protected.

Article 12

Children have a right to give an opinion and adults should listen and take it seriously.

Article 16

Children have the right to privacy

Article 19

Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated in body and mind.

Article 37

No one is allowed to punish children or harm them in a cruel or harmful way.

Article 42

Children have the right to know their rights.

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
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care
- Cleaning up a child after wetting/soiling accident

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.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- All staff working with children must be suitably vetted in compliance with the relevant Department circulars
- Only vetted staff should undertake the intimate care of children.
- The principal must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

- All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate) – see Appendix 2.
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child’s personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the School, parents /carers and child (if appropriate).
- The school needs to make provisions for emergencies i.e. a child wets or soils themselves (*see Parental Permission Sheet – Appendix 1*)
- Intimate care arrangements that have been specially agreed with a parent should be reviewed (at least annually). The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague’s intimate care practice, they must report this to the Designated Child Protection Teacher (in accordance with the school’s Child Protection Policy.)

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Dress child in uniform that he/she can adjust independently
- Keep a child at home if they are experiencing illness linked to toileting i.e. diarrhea episodes require a child to stay at home for a subsequent 48 hours
- Inform the school if the child is taking medication that will impact their toileting
- Ensure the school has your current contact details. If a child becomes unwell and requires a higher level of personal care than we are able to provide, we will contact you immediately (or the emergency contacts you have assigned). You, or your named contact, should be available to come to the school promptly to clean or change the child or take them home for bathing.

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. Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual 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 care tasks / treatments can be open to misinterpretation. Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.

Involve the child in their intimate care

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

Check your practice by asking the child / parent any likes / dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent.

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

When a child requires 'Intimate Care', two adults (vetted staff members) should be present. Staff should act in a discrete manner and ensure any incidents of Intimate Care are reported appropriately to parents.

Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent

A child with special needs can have multiple carers so a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents / carers / agencies / school ensures practice is consistent.

Be aware of own limitations

Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK.

Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important.

If you have any concerns, you must report them

If you observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to your designated Child Protection teacher.

If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to your designated Child Protection teacher.

Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child.

A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's safeguarding file.

INTIMATE CARE PROCEDURES

- Members of staff will only carry out care activities they understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. Certain procedures will only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.
- Individual care plans will be drawn up for any pupil requiring regular intimate care. (see Appendix 2)
- Where a care plan is not in place and a child has needed help with intimate care (in the case of a toilet 'accident') then parents/carers will be informed the same day. This information will be treated as confidential and communicated in person, via telephone or by an 'Intimate Care' slip. A consent form asking for permission to assist in changing a child in such instances is completed at the time of the pupil's admission (see App. 1).

Parents / carers must be informed about concerns. Please refer to:

- Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures – April 2005
- DENI Child Protection & Pastoral Care Guidance 1999
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Principles:

- There is a positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children.
- Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care.
- The individual child's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

The practical guidelines set out below, are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.

General Care

Male and female staff can be involved with children of either sex in:

- (a) Key-working and liaising with families.
- (b) Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child's review.
- (c) Meeting the developmental, emotional and recreational needs of the children.

Intimate Care

Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

It may be possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of their reactions to the intimate care they receive. Do not assume that a child cannot make a choice.

The intimate care of boys / girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:

(a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with school policy and procedures.

(b) Staff who are not governed by a professional code of conduct must follow policy and procedures in operation within their agency and direction and agreement must be provided by the Principal.

(c) When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place.

(d) 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.

(e) Report concerns to the Designated Teacher and make a written record.

(f) Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.

Intimate Care
Good Practice Checklist for Staff

Such care might be necessary with;

A child who has wet or soiled themselves

A child who has been hurt and treatment requires removal of clothing

- Let another member of staff know who requires care and ask them to accompany you in assisting the child
- Ensure the child's dignity at all times; they should be appropriately covered, door closed.
Devices, including mobile phones, should be left outside the changing area.
- Reassure the child and tell them what you plan to do
- Listen to the child's wishes
- If they are distressed or protest, stop the care immediately and seek advice or assistance from an appropriate member of staff
- Report the duty of intimate care to Designated Teacher/Vice-principal/Principal on the same day as you assisted the child
- Inform the parent about the care that was administered:
Personal/Intimate care record (and Accident/First Aid note if appropriate.)
Phone/Talk to the parent about the incident (if appropriate.)
- If you have any concerns regarding the child report them immediately to the Designated Child Protection Teacher – Mrs McGuigan

This Policy should be seen as a subsection of the overall Pastoral Care Policy.



HOLY ROSARY PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Appendix 1

NEW INTAKE date: _____

CHILD'S NAME: _____

	I Agree	I Disagree
I have received a summary copy of the Child Protection & Safeguarding policy. (A full copy of the policy is available upon request.)		
I have received a copy of the school guidelines on the administration of medicines.		
I consent to my child being changed by the Teacher or Classroom Assistant in the case of a toileting / soiling accident		
I consent to my child's photograph / work being displayed in the school		
I consent to my child's photograph appearing in any school publication.		
I consent to my child's photograph being published in any newspaper /parish magazine / local magazine.		
I consent to my child's photograph being published in any newspaper /parish magazine / local magazine & their <u>full names will be used</u> .		
I consent to my child being filmed by parents or professionals recording a school performance or other school activity		
I consent to my child being filmed by any television company or organisation (Education Authority) for use in their productions.		
I consent to my child's photograph / work appearing on the school website. In order to ensure individual children cannot be identified, <u>full names will not</u> be used. I also give permission to take part in video-conferencing.		
I consent to my child's photograph / work appearing on the website of other organisations e.g. Educational Authorities, charities and other agencies who work with the school		
I give permission for my child to access the internet, including email. I understand that the school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure pupils cannot access inappropriate materials and that the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the internet. I agree that the school is not liable for any damages arising from use of the internet facilities.		
I have read and accept, on behalf of my child, the school's Rules for Responsible Internet Use (available within the ICT policy on the school website.)		
I consent to my child being transported by car when necessary, by a teacher, member of the school's auxiliary / ancillary staff or by parent volunteers.		
I am interested in voluntary work within the school and consent to being vetted as required for Child Protection.		
My email address is :		

I understand the above requests will be honoured throughout my child's time at Holy Rosary Primary School unless I otherwise inform the school in writing.

Parent/Guardian _____ Date

Appendix 2



HOLY ROSARY PRIMARY SCHOOL

AGREEMENT FOR REGULAR INTIMATE CARE

Child name:	
DoB:	
Address:	
Parent/carer name:	

I/we give permission for the assistance detailed overleaf to be provided to my/our child and will advise the school of any change that may affect this provision.

Signed:

I, the child, give permission for the assistance detailed overleaf to be provided to me.

Signed:



HOLY ROSARY PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTIMATE CARE PLAN

Pupil:

DOB:

Assistance: Wipe bottom if soiled, change pants, change clothes if wet or soiled.
Other: _____

Timetable: when required

Persons Assisting:	Two members of staff (usually from SPiM team)
Location/Equipment:	Toilets, wipes, spare clothes Other: _____

Designation	Signature	Date
Parent		
Pupil (if appropriate)		
Teacher(s)		
Classroom Assistant(s)		
Principal or LSC:		