



# Intimate Care Policy

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Updated	August 2025
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<b><u>Signed:</u></b>	<b><u>Signed:</u></b>
<b>Chair of Board of Governors</b>	<b>Principal</b>

# Introduction

## The School Ethos

At Crawfordsburn Primary School we believe in the importance of learning to care for others, ourselves and the world around us. We have a primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all the pupils within our school and we are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment that ensures that no child will be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

Crawfordsburn Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff will undertake their responsibilities in such a way that the rights, dignity and welfare of the child is protected. The school is committed to ensuring that staff undertaking these responsibilities are supported by policy, training and monitoring.

All school staff will receive child protection training and are provided with facilities and equipment to ensure the safety, privacy and dignity of pupils.

## Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of an individual child on a one-off incident or a regular basis. Intimate care may involve washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up after a child has soiled him/herself), that most children can carry out for themselves, but with which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child's stage of development.

Parents/guardians 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 their parents/guardians.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing e.g. after falling in mud
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual care
- First aid and medical assistance
- In some instances, more specialised intimate care assistance may be needed for children with physical or medical difficulties.

## **Policy Aims**

Our Intimate Care Policy and accompanying guidelines have been developed to:

- Safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children.
- Provide guidance, support and protection to staff.
- Reassure parents that their children are cared for and protected.

The policy and guidelines apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy and guidelines are based. Every child has the right to:

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

## **School Responsibilities**

All teaching and non-teaching staff are Access NI checked on application. Only members of staff who are familiar with the Intimate Care Policy will be involved with the intimate care of children.

All occasions of intimate care will be recorded, signed and dated and reported to the Designated Teacher who will keep the written record (see Appendix 1) in the Safeguarding Folder.

Where it becomes clear that a child requires regular intimate care, an Individual Intimate Care Plan (see Appendix 2) will be created. This will be created at a meeting between the class teacher, the Designated Teacher and the child's parent/s/guardian/s. Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents/guardians and child (where appropriate).

All parents will be asked annually to give permission (see Appendix 3) for staff to attend to the intimate care of their child (with particular reference to toilet accidents or illness) should the need arise.

## **Working with Parents**

Partnering with parents is an important principle at Crawfordsburn Primary School and is necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. For example, much of

the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents.

Parents have a responsibility to advise the school in writing of any known regular intimate care needs relating to their child.

### **Guidelines for Good Practice**

Initially all 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 himself/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child the responsibility for cleaning themselves, providing them with wipes etc.

When a child requires intimate care, staff will ensure that they are treated with respect at all times, and that the child's welfare and dignity remain of paramount importance. *If a child appears distressed, uncomfortable or refuses when intimate care is explained, started, or carried out, the care should stop immediately.*

The above information and the following guidelines below are designed to safeguard children and staff and apply to every member of staff involved with intimate care.

### **Involve a child in their intimate care**

- Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his / her intimate care by use of words, actions, social stories or visuals.
- Where the child is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

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

- Two people will be used for the greater comfort / safety of the child.
- Make sure the practice in intimate care is consistent.
- Effective communication between parents / carers / agencies ensures practice is consistent.
- Be aware of own limitations. Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. Some procedures must be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed e.g. Epipen administration, diabetes testing etc.

### **Communication with Children**

- All staff caring for a child have the responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication e.g. words, signs, symbols etc.
- To ensure effective communication: Make eye contact at the child's level. Use simple language and repeat if necessary. Wait for a response. Continue to explain to the child what is happening even if there is no response. Treat the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

- If a child appears distressed, uncomfortable or refuses when intimate care is explained, started, or carried out, the care should stop immediately.

### **Occasional Intimate Care**

By the time a child starts school they will normally be expected to be independent in terms of their use of toilet facilities. Sometimes young children may need assistance with intimate care e.g. help with changing clothes and cleaning after a wetting, soiling or vomiting incident.

It may be that they need general help or that they have had an accident that requires an adult to help with intimate care.

In order to safeguard the child, the following code of conduct will be adhered to at all times:

- Children will be encouraged to adjust clothing themselves when using the toilet. Children who wet their clothes after a toileting accident will be given clean replacements and depending on the child's level of independence will be encouraged to change themselves in the privacy of a cubicle in the toilet area.
- If assistance is required there will be two adults present where possible.
- If this is not possible the adult supporting the child will inform another member of staff as to their whereabouts and the need to help a pupil.
- In all toileting accidents the child's parents will be informed by a member of staff.
- We will keep a written record of the incident.

### **Changing Clothing**

- Parents should buy items of clothes with fastenings appropriate for the age of their child e.g. Velcro straps instead of laces for younger children.
- Encouragement and assistance will be given to young children struggling with clothes that are inside out, buttons and zips.
- Fastening buttons and zips on waistbands should be done in full view of another member of staff.

### **First Aid**

- Emergency First Aid is only to be administered by a qualified First Aider.
- Written reports of accidents must be recorded.
- Ice packs, wipes and plasters can be administered by staff for minor bumps and cuts.
- Parents should be informed immediately of a bump to the head.
- See First Aid Policy.

## Toileting

During their time at primary school, some pupils may have an experience that may require staff to provide care at a very personal level e.g. as a result of wetting/soiling.

The following procedures must be observed at all times:

- The child will be moved to the toilets to preserve their dignity and privacy.
- A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean themselves where possible.
- Only children whose parents have given permission for them to be changed may be changed.
- The Parent/Carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned and informed immediately.
- The member of staff changing must alert another member of staff prior to starting to change the child.
- If a child appears distressed, uncomfortable or refuses when intimate care is explained, started, or carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- Children will be changed as soon as possible after reporting the accident.
- While changing, every attempt should be made to give the pupil privacy and preserve their dignity.
- Staff must wear disposable gloves when assisting a child to change.
- The child must be encouraged to remove any clothes to be changed for themselves as much as possible.
- Where necessary, the child will be given a baby wipe to attempt to freshen themselves. Staff will not physically clean or touch intimate areas but will offer verbal instruction and support.
- The child should be encouraged to dress themselves, with help given when necessary.
- Soiled clothing should be sealed in a plastic bag, and this put into another bag. This should be given to the child's parent/carer on the same day.
- In all toileting accidents the child's parents will be informed by a member of staff. In some instances, for example, where a child has been unable to clean themselves, parents/guardians will be required to come to school to collect their child as soon as possible.
- All occasions of intimate care will be recorded, signed and dated and reported to the Designated Teacher who will keep the written record (see appendices of policy) in the Safeguarding Folder.

## **Regular Intimate Care**

Intimate care arrangements required on a regular basis will be agreed between the school and the parent/carer and when appropriate and possible, the child. An Individual Intimate Care Plan (see Appendices of policy) will be created. This will be created at a meeting between the class teacher, the Designated Teacher and the child's parent/s/carer/s.

## **Monitoring and Review of Intimate Care Plan**

Intimate Care Plans will be reviewed regularly and any amendments to the arrangements will be recorded and made available for all parties involved e.g. if a member of staff is sick and another member of staff is required to complete intimate care duties.

If a parent or carer has concerns about a child or questions about a situation in school they should contact their child's class teacher who will deal with the concern or query promptly.

## Appendix I



Name:	Date and Time:
Incident:	Staff Involved:

**Appendix 2**  
Crawfordsburn Primary School



Individual Intimate Care Plan

<b>Pupil:</b>		<b>Class:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b><u>Diagnosis Summary/Circumstances:</u></b>			
<b><u>Assistance Required:</u></b>			
<b><u>Timetable:</u></b>			
<b>Persons Assisting:</b>			
<b>Alternative Arrangements:</b>			
<b><u>Location/Equipment:</u></b>			
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Parent/Carer:</b>			
<b>Pupil:</b>			
<b>Class Teacher:</b>			
<b>Designated Teacher:</b>			
<b>Principal:</b>			

### Appendix 3

#### Permission for staff to provide Intimate Care



<b>Child's Name:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
<b>Parent's Name:</b>	
<b>Contact Number:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	

I give permission for the school to provide appropriate Intimate Care support to my child in the event of a situation that requires their clothing to be changed e.g. toileting, illness, water play etc.

<b>Printed Name:</b>	
<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Relationship to Child:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	



## Appendix 4

### Intimate Care in relation to toileting

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The following procedures must be observed at all times:

- The child will be moved to the toilets to preserve their dignity and privacy.
- A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean themselves where possible.
- Only children whose parents have given permission for them to be changed may be changed.
- The Parent/Carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned and informed immediately.
- The member of staff changing must alert another member of staff prior to starting to change the child.
- If a child appears distressed, uncomfortable or refuses when intimate care is explained, started, or carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- Children will be changed as soon as possible after reporting the accident.
- While changing, every attempt should be made to give the pupil privacy and preserve their dignity.
- Staff must wear disposable gloves when assisting a child to change.
- The child must be encouraged to remove any clothes to be changed for themselves as much as possible.
- Where necessary, the child will be given a baby wipe to attempt to freshen themselves. Staff will not physically clean or touch intimate areas but will offer verbal instruction and support.
- The child should be encouraged to dress themselves, with help given when necessary.
- Soiled clothing should be sealed in a plastic bag, and this put into another bag. This should be given to the child's parent/carer on the same day.
- In all toileting accidents the child's parents will be informed by a member of staff. In some instances, for example, where a child has been unable to clean themselves, parents/guardians will be required to come to school to collect their child as soon as possible.
- All occasions of intimate care will be recorded, signed and dated and reported to the Designated Teacher who will keep the written record (see appendices of policy) in the Safeguarding Folder.