

# Intimate Care Policy



**Rosstulla School**

*'Together Towards Tomorrow'*

**Approved by Governors September 2023**

Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Intimate Care Policy is consistent with the ACPC Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children (2008), EA Guidance on the Provision of Intimate Care to Children and Young People at School which were developed to safeguard children/young people and staff.

This policy applies to everyone involved in the delivery, support and monitoring of intimate care of children/young people in the school.

## **Introduction**

Every pupil in Rosstulla School has the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

The guidelines in this policy are designed to safeguard children/young people and staff.

Children with special needs 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/young people.

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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/young adults and staff.

## **Definition**

Intimate care is any assistance that involves touching a child while carrying out a procedure that most children are able to do for themselves, but some are unable to manage without help. This may involve help with eating, drinking, dressing, and matters of personal hygiene such as washing and toileting. In some instances more specialised intimate assistance may be needed for children with physical or medical difficulties. (EANI Guidance)

## **Aims**

The aim of this document is to explain procedures put in place that:

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

## **Principles of Intimate Care**

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child/young person has the right to be safe.
- Every child/young person has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child/young person has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child/young person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

- Every child/young person has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child/young person has their right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child/young person has the right to have levels to intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

## **Safeguarding**

All staff undertaking the intimate care of children/young people must be familiar with, and understand, the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines.

Rosstulla

ensures that the programme of assistance is monitored and both child and adult given the opportunity to report any concerns that they may have to the Designated & Deputy Designated teachers for child protection.

All staff working within Rosstulla School supporting pupils with intimate care will be vetted by the Education Authority, ~~Belfast Region~~ with an Access NI check.

~~Staff employed by~~ Staff employed will also have completed

- Pre-employment checks
- Two independent references

Only ~~named~~ staff identified by Rosstulla School can undertake the intimate care of pupils.

As far as possible two members of staff will be present during intimate care including eating, personal hygiene, medication. However, due to limitations of staffing this may not always be possible, the child/young person and staff involved in intimate care should not feel isolated and assistance must be easy to call as soon as needed.

When a pupil requires assistance toileting and two members of staff are needed to be present this may be planned with another class team supporting. ~~However,~~ In the classrooms with built in toilets one member of staff may be sufficient providing the main door to the toileting area is left open while maintaining dignity and privacy. This should be indicated on the Individual Intimate Care Plan and agreed by the staff, parent/carer and where appropriate the child/young person.

If staff observe any unusual markings, discolourations or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to your Designated Teacher / Class Teacher.

If during the intimate care of a pupil does not consent, or you accidentally hurt them, or the pupil appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the pupil, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated 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 secure file on CPoms, this should be factual and include specifics of what has been said.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the Designated Teacher (VP) or in their absence the Deputy Designated Teacher urgently.

## Procedures

We will encourage a child's/young person's independence as far as possible in their intimate care. Where the child/young person is not fully independent we will talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

We will ask the child/young person/parent/guardian any likes/dislikes while carrying out intimate care. Effective communication between parents/guardians/staff ensures practice is consistent.

Repetition and consistency of support will help the child/young person develop independence. Small steps are important and potentially life changing in school and more importantly at home.

Staff should only carry out care activities they understand, feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt immediately bring to the attention of the Class teacher or Key stage coordinator.

Staff involved in the intimate care of a pupil will ensure they are aware of the child's/young person's method and level of communication, advice can be sought from the Speech and Language Team. Staff will ensure the child/young person is given time to respond to a question (using communication aids where necessary) and staff will explain what is happening even if there is no response.

Each child/young person will be treated with dignity and respect. We will ensure privacy appropriate to the child/young adult's age and situation.

A positive self – esteem and body image will be encouraged by staff carrying out intimate care. 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. Keeping in mind the child/young person's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

In some cases, procedures will ONLY be carried out by staff who have received training and have been assessed as competent to carry out e.g. medical procedures: enteral feeding, catheterisation. Requests for specific training for individual children/young people will be requested by completing a form issued by the Education Authority and with parental permission sought before training commences.

Alternative arrangements must be in place in the absence of the class staff team. All staff providing intimate care will be familiar with the Intimate care policy and have Access NI approval. To ensure this, staff with pending Access NI approval will be identified to the Key Stage Coordinator.

Staff are aware that the introduction of other staff to the care context without prior arrangement can increase the vulnerability of the pupil.

The assistant/s should talk to the child throughout the procedure e.g. "I am going to help you undress", "I am using a wipe to clean your bottom". The assistance can be rehearsed i

n the bathroom with the parent/s present to ensure clarity. Following this there should be no change to what has been agreed.

Teachers should be made aware of the care timetable, particularly if the pupil needs to be absent from class, and should be aware of the approximate time the procedure may take. Intimate care cannot be rushed. Taking the necessary time respects the needs of the child/young person.

If a pupil appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care will stop immediately and the pupil reassured whilst trying to find out the reason for the distress. The class teacher should be informed and report to the parent. However, concerns of a safeguarding nature must be reported to the designated teacher and a record made on CPoms alert sent to the DT. Parents and where appropriate other agencies will be made aware of any concerns.

A simple record is made of each intimate care procedure in the classroom.

An intimate care plan will be agreed with class staff, parent and pupil. (See appendix 1).

Provision is monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that policy and procedure is adhered to and that children and staff remain comfortable with the school's arrangements. Any concerns raised with the class teacher in the first instance and then the Key stage Coordinator.

### **Writing an intimate care plan**

The plan will have the child's safety, privacy, and dignity as paramount (Appendix 1). The plan should specify the assistance to be provided as clearly as possible e.g. undressing/cleaning the child, changing a nappy, holding child in position, etc.

The plan will include:

- Clear information regarding the assistance to be provided;
- The method of communication to be used by the child;
- The named person/s with responsibility to assist the child;
- The frequency of support;
- Arrangements in the absence of the named assistant/s;
- Arrangements for school events and activities;
- Strategies to prevent or deal with questions/comments from other pupils; and
- Details of a record of assistance

While it is recommended to have two members of staff assisting the child, this level of resourcing may not be available, and while the introduction of a second assistant may be perceived as providing protection against allegations of abuse, it can also further erode the child's privacy.

If the plan has been agreed and signed by parents, staff and child, if appropriate, it is acceptable to have one assistant unless there are implications regarding safe handling. There should at all times be support available nearby who can be easily called to assist in case of an emergency, this may mean using a different room.

Two trained persons are required to assist if a hoist is being used.

Intimate care arrangements should be reviewed at least six monthly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements.

## **Resources**

Rosstulla provides resources to ensure that procedures are carried out hygienically and safely.

This includes disposable aprons, gloves, wipes, Disinfectant for changing bed cleaning, handwashing facilities and Nappy bin in the shared hygiene room. A fresh apron and gloves should be worn for each time for each pupil. The bed should be completely wiped down each time.

Toilet steps to aid pupils getting onto the changing bed independently.

A hoist is available in the shared Hygiene room.

Additional resources should be requested at a time to ensure there is always a supply, from the Building Supervisor.

## **References:**

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Guidance%20on%20the%20provision%20of%20intimate%20care.pdf>

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/intimate-care-policy.pdf>

Name:	Diagnosis:
DOB:	
Class:	
<p>Essential equipment: Disposable aprons, gloves for staff - to be changed after each pupil has had assistance. Disinfectant for bed to wiped after each use.</p>	
<p>Manual Handling/Equipment used/supplies (Tick as appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Height adjustable changing bed with safety rails</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toilet and Toilet Step</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hoist (<i>2 trained members of staff need to be present</i>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pupil standing with support of bed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seating</li> </ul>
<p>Level of support needed (Tick as appropriate)</p> <p><i>* a record is kept of assistance provided</i></p>	<p>Select which intimate care activities young person may need assistance with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nappy *</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toilet training *</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feeding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Oral Care</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Washing, showering*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dressing/Undressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Menstrual Care *</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please list -</li> </ul>
<p>Communication (Tick as appropriate)</p> <p>Response and comfort of the child is paramount at all times.</p>	<p>Pupil will communicate need for assistance by and/or Staff member will communicate need to assist by -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Object/Symbol Reference</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intimate Care Activity (<i>where appropriate</i>) on visual schedule</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Using Makaton signs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Using Communication Board</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Using words</li> </ul>

<p>Staff member will talk child through the procedure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff member will talk the child through the procedure being provided</li> </ul> <p>Agreed verbal communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●</li> <li>●</li> <li>●</li> </ul>
<p>Who will assist with intimate care?</p> <p>Class team, though other staff may need to be called on at times.  All staff providing Intimate Care will be familiar with the Intimate Care Policy and will have read this Intimate Care Plan.  Staff performing Intimate Care will have had an Access NI check.  With toilets built into classroom, one team member may perform assistance on their own.  The assistance can be rehearsed in the bathroom with parents/carers present to ensure clarity if the parent wishes or advice is required by the school.</p>	
<p>How often will intimate care be needed?</p>	
<p>Advisory bodies (delete as appropriate)</p>	<p>Speech &amp; Language  Occupational Therapy  Manual Handling trainers  Other:</p>
<p>Related behaviour/  Conditions that may affect safe Handling</p>	
<p>Additional comments</p>	
<p>Signatures:</p> <p><u>Parents/carers</u></p> <p><u>Child (where appropriate)</u></p>	



