

Rathmore Primary School



Intimate Care Policy

Date Ratified:	May 2024
Date of Review:	In line with the school's schedule for policy review.

This policy has been written following a consultation process, ratified by the Board of Governors and communicated to the school community as required. It will be monitored and reviewed as part of the school's policy review schedule.

Intimate Care Policy

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Article 16

Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life.

The School Ethos

Rathmore Primary School seeks to be a vibrant, caring community dedicated to the development of each pupil. Through a culture of high expectation, pupils will learn the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to realise their full potential, excelling now and in the future. Together we are committed to fostering independence and responsibility, individually and collectively.

The policy is founded on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and reflects the ethos of our school.

Rationale

The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. These guidelines apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Children with disabilities can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care will need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

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

- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy is based. Every child in Rathmore Primary School 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 views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account;
- have levels of intimate care that are appropriate and consistent.

School Responsibilities

At Rathmore Primary School all staff are Access NI checked on application. All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy.

Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents and child (where appropriate).

If a staff member has concerns about an intimate care practice they must report this to their Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Deputy Designated Teachers.

A member of staff will only enter the pupils' toilet area for a reason regarding safety, well – being or discipline.

Guidelines for Good Practice

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. This policy is designed to safeguard children and staff and applies to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Staff: Hygiene practice – apron and gloves.

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.
- 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.

- One to one intimate care is supported.
- Two people can be used for the greater comfort / safety of the child or where the child prefers two people.

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 eg enteral feeding, rectal diazepam.

Communication with Children

- All staff caring for a child has the responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the child's method and level of communication eg 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 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.

Regular and Occasional Intimate Care

Regular Intimate Care

Intimate care arrangements required on a regular basis are agreed between the school and parents when appropriate and possible, by the child. A meeting is arranged between parents and members of staff to discuss the detail of intimate care required. This will be reviewed bi-annually at parent and teacher consultations.

This discussion will inform future arrangements. Any amendments to the arrangements will be recorded and made available for all parties involved eg if a member of staff is sick and another member of staff will complete intimate care duties.

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 eg 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.

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.