



St. Michael's School
Intimate Care Policy

Introduction

This policy was drawn up by the Principal in line with recommendations and guidelines relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding taking into consideration the level of intimate care currently required within our school.

St. Michael's School is committed to ensuring that the intimate care of pupils will be undertaken by staff in a professional manner at all times. We recognize the need for pupils to be treated with respect when intimate care is required. Staff work in close partnership with parents/guardians to share relevant information. The pupil's welfare is of paramount importance and his/her experience of intimate personal care should be a positive one. It is essential that every pupil is treated as an individual and that care is given gently, sensitively and respectfully.

Rationale

We strive to develop the highest standard of independence that is possible at an age appropriate level for each pupil. We recognize that there will be times when assistance with intimate care is required.

The policy and related procedures have been developed to give direction to staff with regard to supporting pupils with their intimate care needs bearing in mind that all contact between staff and pupils with regard to intimate care should:

- meet the needs of the pupil;
- respect the dignity and privacy of the pupil;
- be consistent with the professional integrity of staff members;
- ensure the highest standard of best practice.

Roles and Responsibilities

All school employees are Garda vetted.

Intimate care will be carried out only by authorized school employees. Students on placement are not involved in the intimate care of pupils.

Intimate care consent forms are signed by parents/guardians on enrolment and are kept in the office on pupils' files. Parents/guardians have a responsibility to advise the school of any intimate care needs of their child and all staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with them.

Should a parent/guardian request that school staff do not undertake an aspect of intimate care on behalf of their child, this request must be in writing and will be respected. In the event of intimate care being required, the parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to come to the school to attend to their child's particular need.

If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they must report this to the Designated Liaison Person/Deputy Designated Liaison Person only.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

We provide a secure, healthy and caring environment which values the uniqueness of each person. Mission Statement.

The staff and management recognize the pupils' rights and will treat them with dignity, empathy and trust. Pupils receiving this care will feel comfortable and confident that their privacy will be protected at all times.

Aims / Objectives

This policy aims to:

- promote good practice.
- enable pupils to become independent.
- ensure the safety and well being of all staff and pupils.
- develop a framework of procedures whereby all intimate care issues are dealt with in a competent and safe manner.
- comply with legislation in the area of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, intimate care is defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of individual pupils which they are unable to carry out for themselves on a regular basis or during a one-off incident. It refers to all aspects of support to a pupil, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body.

Direct contact involves physical contact between the pupil and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts.

Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the pupil to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care may include:

- toileting;
- oral care;
- washing intimate body parts/showering (if required);
- feeding;
- dressing/undressing/changing clothing;
- treatment for head lice;
- menstrual care;
- first aid and medical assistance;

- supervision and prompting of a pupil involved in intimate self-care.
- This list of examples is not exhaustive.

Principles of Intimate Care

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

- be safe;
- personal privacy;
- be valued as an individual;
- be treated with dignity;
- 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.

Guidelines/Procedures

These guidelines are designed to safeguard pupils and staff. While it is not possible to provide guidelines/procedures which will apply in all situations, it is important that the elements of best practice be followed.

- All pupils have the right to be safe and to be treated with respect.
- Comments shall not be made nor discussed or inferred in the presence of the pupil during intimate care other than to instruct or support the pupil.
- All pupils are supported to achieve the highest level of independence relative to their age and abilities. Staff should not carry out any action that pupils can carry out for themselves.
- Pupil intimate care will be provided based on the principle of least intrusive approach.
- A high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to the pupil.
- Views and emotional responses of pupils will be actively sought through appropriate means. A special effort will be sought to interpret the views of non-verbal students. Pupil Personal Plans will also take into account communication needs of pupils and make provision as appropriate.
- Staff will be cognisant in their approach to development changes such as puberty/menstruation.
- Two staff members should attend to a pupil requiring intimate care.
- Careful communication with each pupil requiring intimate care in an age appropriate manner should be given.
- An explanation of what is happening or will happen is given in a straight-forward and reassuring way so that pupils are aware of the focus of the activity.
- Correct use of appropriate terminology for parts of the body and bodily functions is used in line with the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- The pupil's permission is sought before undressing if he/she is unable to do so independently.

- Respect and sensitivity are shown with regard to gender, cultural or religious practices.
- Facilities and supplies are provided to ensure the safety and comfort of pupils and staff.
- Adequate supplies are provided to ensure that staff can carry out intimate care when required. Supplies can be requested using the ‘stores’ notebook on a Friday.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to supply a change of clothing and/or undergarments should intimate care be required on a regular basis.
- As intimate care is a personal matter, sensitive information will be shared only with those who need to know.
- Staff will report any concerns about physical changes in a child’s presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises or soreness to the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person in line with the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Any unusual response by the pupil, emotional or behavioural, will be reported to the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person and a written record provided.
- If a pupil becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into by the Designated Liaison Person or the Deputy Designated Liaison Person and the outcomes recorded.
- Poor hygiene and/or unclean undergarments must be noted and reported to the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- A record of the intimate care provided is recorded in the Intimate Care Report Book and a copy is sent home with the pupil. When and where necessary, a telephone call will be made to the parent/guardian outlining level of care.
- A worry box is located on the corridor and in each room which can be used by the pupils as a facility to communicate any issue or concern they may have.
- A care plan will be drawn up for a pupil who requires intimate care on a regular basis.

Intimate Care Plan/Pupil Personal Plan

An Intimate Care Plan will be drawn up for pupils who need regular and targeted support with regard to intimate care, e.g. for those who are not toilet trained. These pupils will be identified by the Class Teacher and Special Needs Assistant and this plan should be signed by parents/guardians (see Appendix 1).

The Pupil Personal Plan detailing general intimate care needs will be drawn up SNA, in consultation with the Class Teacher, pupil (age appropriate) and if relevant, a family member. Template of the Pupil Personal Plan is available on Aladdin for staff (Appendix 2) will be used to provide details of the pupil’s current significant care needs, as outlined in Circular 0030/2014-‘The Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme to support teachers in meeting the care needs of some children with special educational needs, arising from a disability’.

As Pupil Personal Plans may contain sensitive information regarding individual pupils, they will be filed in the class blue confidential pupils’ information folder, on Aladdin

under the particular pupil's documents and available on request by relevant staff and/or parents/guardians. A copy of the pupil personal plan is sent to the SENO annually, as required (see Appendix 3).

The Pupil Personal Plan and where applicable, the Intimate Care Plan will identify the following:

- any particular needs/intimate care tasks required by the pupil;
- support needs to carry out each task;
- specific approaches that need to be used, e.g., use of visuals as a specific means of communication etc.;
- resources required to carry out each task;
- approaches to develop independence over time in this area.

Any particular intimate care needs identified within these plans are to be carried out in line with the Guidelines/Procedures as detailed within this Policy.

Training

All relevant staff will receive manual/patient handling training in the management of intimate care needs, should the situation warrant it.

Safety

- From a child protection perspective both the pupil and the staff members are at exposed risk; accepting this creates an awareness so safety can be maintained.
- Staff should be careful not to leave themselves open to the possibility of allegations and ensure that actions, comments or remarks cannot be misinterpreted.
- Staff will wear protective, disposable, latex/vinyl gloves to avoid infection.
- Whilst every effort will be made to adhere to best practice, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practical, a full written record of the incident should be made and reported to the Principal.

Links to Other Policies

Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment Policy

Health, Safety & Welfare Statement

SPHE Policy

RSE Programme

Stay Safe Programme

Anti-Bullying Policy

Outings Policy

Swimming Policy

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if:

- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures.
- Procedures are clear and roles and responsibilities defined.
- From experience, staff and pupil are confident with the procedures as outlined.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was presented to the Board of Management at a meeting on 4th March 2015 and ratified by the Board on 3rd June 2015. It was reviewed at a staff meeting on 10th November, taking into account amendments/suggestions and will be reviewed by the Board of Management on 17/11/2021.

A copy of the policy will be placed in the Policy Folder in each room and is available on Aladdin. The policy will be available on the school's website, www.stmichaelsholyangels.com and on request from the school office.

Timeframe for Implementation & Review

This policy will be reviewed at least once every two years. This review will include all procedures, including how they are working in practice.

Signed: Sr. Bernadette Carron
Sr. Bernadette Carron, D.C..
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 17.11.2021

Appendix 1: Intimate Care Plan

Intimate Care Plan

Pupil Name: _____ **Class:** _____

Was this care plan discussed with pupil? Yes / No

If 'No', please indicate reason:

Assistance required with:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Detail the steps involved in assisting/supporting the pupil if the above occurs:

e.g. prompting, encouragement, means of communication, use of visuals, intervention etc.

What is the pupil able to do for himself/herself?

This will be considered at the review stage as it is an area for encouraging learning and promoting independence, no matter how small the participation.

Assistance/support to be provided by:

The approval of the pupil is sought in relation to the staff member(s) involved in his/her intimate care.

Where will it occur?

Please be specific about identified area.

Equipment required:

Clarify responsibility for provision of supplies, e.g. school / home

Any other comments:

Date plan drawn up: _____ Review Date: _____

Agreed by: _____

Teacher

S.N.A.

Parent

Guardian

Good communication between school and home should provide consistency in approach to personal intimate care. The Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis or as the need arises.

Appendix 2: Pupil Personal Plan

Pupil Care Plan 20__/20__

Name: _____

Class: _____

Teacher: _____

Class SNA: _____

<i>Priority Concerns Care needs as per Cir. 0030/2014</i>	<i>Aims</i>	<i>Role of SNA Identify means of communication/supports, for pupils as necessary</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Steps towards independence (goals)</i>
Assistance with Feeding				
Administration of Medication/ care needs associated with specific medical condition				
Assistance with toileting and general hygiene				
Assistance with mobility and orientation				
Providing supervision				
Frequent interventions including withdrawal of pupil from classroom				
Assistance with moving and lifting of pupils				
Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access				

To be reviewed: _____

Signed: _____

SNA

Class Teacher

Appendix 3: NCSE Form

<u>Summary of Pupil Care Needs Currently being Supported in the school</u>					<u>Please insert date</u>		
<p><u>To be completed for students currently accessing SNA support.</u></p> <p><u>Please submit to SENO at the start of the new allocations period, at point of new SNA application or prior to a care needs review</u></p>							
School Name	St. Michael's Sp. N.S.			School Roll No.	17971H	Breakdown of current SNA Allocation to the school e.g. 1FT post and 1 x 0.5 post	
Name of student accessing SNA support	DOB	Disability	Details of student's current significant care needs [as per Cir. 0030/2014]		Statement of supports provided by SNA to student		
Signature of School Principal					Date		

Date Received – SENO use only