Dickson Primary School

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

(including the SPECIALIST PROVISION CLASSES)

Rarified by Board of Governors on: August 2026

To be reviewed: August 2028

Contents

Introduction 3
Definition of Intimate Care 3
Aims 4
Principles 4
Our Approach to Best Practice 4
Working with Parents 5
Writing an Intimate Care Plan 5
Links with other agencies 6
Voice of the Child 6
Recruitment 6
Staff Professional Development 6
Environmental 7
The Protection of Children 7
Vulnerability to abuse 7
Toileting Procedures (see Appendix 4) 8
Further Guidance 8
Appendices 8
Monitoring and Evaluation 9
APPENDIX 1 10
RECORD OF AGENCIES INVOLVED 10
APPENDIX 2 11
RECORD OF INTIMATE CARE INTERVENTION 11
APPENDIX 3 12
WORKING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE PLAN 12
APPENDIX 4 13
TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN 13
APPENDIX 5 14
AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND CLASSROOM ASSISTANT 14
APPENDIX 6 15
PERMISSION FOR DICKSON PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE 15

Intimate Care Policy

The Intimate Care policy has been developed in line with the Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children.

Introduction

Dickson School is 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 recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding children have been developed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Please note: The term parent/s is used to refer to parents, carers and legal guardians.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. 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.

Intimate care for pre-school children may also involve help with drinking, eating, dressing, supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care and toileting. Help may also be needed with changing colostomy bags, catheterisation and other such equipment. It may also require the administration of an insulin injection, EpiPen or rectal medication.

In most cases intimate care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of equipment associated with the process. In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent will undertake the procedure. Any additional training will be provided by the school.

Aims

The aims of this document and associated guidance are:

- To provide reassurance to staff and parent/s
- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into account

Principles

This document embraces the principles of The Children (N.I.) Order 1995, Cooperating to Safeguard Children 2003 and The Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures 2005.

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual
- Every child has the right to remain healthy
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs
- Every child has the right to information and support that will enable him or her to make informed and appropriate choices
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs
- Every child (and parent) has the right to information and procedures for any complaint or queries he or she may have regarding intimate care

Our Approach to Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child's welfare and dignity are of paramount importance.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children, taking into account their developmental stage. The child 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 him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves.

Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. When a child can change themselves, they can be appropriately supervised by one adult, however, if the child requires adult intervention and support, two adults will always be present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented in the personal intimate care plan.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's intimate care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Working with Parents

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any school and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care. Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious/cultural sensitivities. Prior permission must be obtained from parents before Intimate care procedures are carried out (see appendix 7). Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), Health Care Plans and any other plans which identify the need for intimate care where appropriate. Exchanging information with parents is essential through face-to-face contact, telephone or written correspondence. However, information concerning intimate care procedures should not be recorded in home/school books as it may contain confidential information that could be accessed by people other than the parent and named staff member.

Writing an Intimate Care Plan

Where a routine procedure is required, an intimate care plan should be agreed in discussion with the child, school staff, parents and relevant health personnel. A routine procedure that requires the support of school staff, will only be considered appropriate when specific care has been advised by a health professional due to a specific toileting need. The plan can only be agreed if the child consents and is compliant when intimate care from a member of the school staff is required.

The school will consider Intimate Care Plans for children who do not have a specific medical need, or children who are non-compliant, but these plans will record the need for a parent to travel to school to provide the necessary care. The plan should be signed by all who contribute and reviewed on an agreed basis.

In developing the plan, the following should be considered:

a) Whole School implications

- The importance of working towards independence
- Arrangements for home-school transport, sports day, school performances, school trips, etc.
- Ensure that there is enough stock of equipment such as nappies.
- Who will substitute in the absence of the appointed person?

b) Classroom management

- A system for the child to leave class without disruption to the lesson
- Avoidance of missing the same lesson all year due to medical routines
- Awareness of a child's discomfort which may affect learning
- Implications for physical play e.g. discreet clothing, additional time for changing
- Strategies for dealing with pressure from peers. e.g. teasing/bullying particularly if the child has an odour

All plans will be clearly recorded to ensure clarity of expectation, roles and responsibilities. They will reflect all methods of communication including emergency procedures between home, school and medical services. A procedure will also be included to explain how concerns arising from the intimate care process will be dealt with (e.g. School's Complaint's Policy).

Links with other agencies

Positive links with other agencies will enable school-based plans to take account of the knowledge, skills and expertise of other professionals and will ensure the child's well-being and development remains paramount.

Voice of the Child

Dickson Primary School will agree the appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff. It may be possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of reactions to the intimate care. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents/carers are usually in the best position to act as advocates. It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing. To ensure effective communication with the child, staff will ascertain the agreed method of communication and identify this in the agreed Intimate Care Plan.

Recruitment

Parents must feel confident that relevant staff have been carefully vetted and trained, helping to avoid potentially stressful areas of anxiety and conflict. Recruitment and selection of candidates for posts involving intimate care will be made following the usual Safeguarding, AccessNI checks, equal opportunities and employment rights legislation. Candidates will be made fully aware of what will be required and detailed in their job description before accepting the post.

Staff Professional Development

- Staff will receive training in working practices which comply with Health and Safety
- All staff will receive Safeguarding/Child Protection training as part of Whole School Training.
- Staff will 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.
- Staff will receive Moving and Handling training where appropriate.

- Newly appointed staff will be closely supervised until completion of a successful probationary period.
- The school will keep a dated record of all training undertaken.
- The school will ensure staff understand the needs of children from different racial and cultural backgrounds and specialist advice sought when necessary.

In addition, identified staff members should be able to:

- Access other procedures and policies regarding the welfare of the child e.g. Child Protection Policy
- Communicate with and involve the child in the intimate care process
- Offer choices, wherever possible
- Develop, where possible, greater independence with the procedure of intimate care.

Environmental

Where children have a long - term incontinence or a disability requiring regular intimate care, the school may require specially adapted facilities. Specialist advice from medical or therapy staff will be sought when considering space, heating, ventilation and lighting.

Additional considerations we have in place include:

- Facilities with hot and cold running water
- Protective clothing including disposable protective gloves - provided by the school
- Labelled bins for the disposal of wet & soiled nappies/pads
- Waste for incineration
- Supplies of suitable cleaning materials; anti-bacterial spray, sterilising fluid, deodorisers, anti-bacterial hand wash
- Supplies of appropriate clean clothing, nappies, disposal bags and wipes
- Changing mat or changing bench
- An effective system to alert staff for help in an emergency.

The Protection of Children

The School's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to. If a member of staff has any concerns about changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Further advice will be sought from outside agencies if necessary. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Vulnerability to abuse

Children should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth. It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school's

Child Protection policy and procedures. The following are factors that can increase a child's vulnerability:

- Children who need help with intimate care are statistically more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse
- Children with Special Educational Needs, including disabilities may have less control over their lives than others
- Children may experience multiple carers
- Children may not be able to distinguish between intimate care and abuse
- Children may not be able to communicate.

If a child is hurt accidentally, he or she should be immediately reassured, and the adult should check that he or she is safe, and the incident reported immediately to the designated line manager.

Toileting Procedures (see Appendix 4)

If the toilet management plan has been requested, agreed and signed by parents, children and staff, it is acceptable for only one member of staff to assist unless there are implications for safe moving and handling of the child. The plan will consider the following:

- Location of the plan for reference, ensuring discretion and confidentiality.
- Location of recording procedures, ensuring discretion and confidentiality.
- Necessary equipment & waste disposal – see environmental.
- Clear labelling of equipment and procedures will be displayed e.g. Wipe table after use. Relevant Policies These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other School policies:
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Safe Handling Policy
- The Administration of Medicines in Schools
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying policy

Further Guidance

Regional Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children which can be accessed here.

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedures Manual which is available here.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Record of Agencies involved
Appendix 2 Record of Intimate Care Intervention
Appendix 3 Working Towards Independence record

Appendix 4 Toilet Management Plan
Appendix 5 Agreement Between Child and Classroom Assistant
Appendix 6 Permission for Schools to Provide Intimate Care

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Pastoral care Coordinator and approved every 2 years by the Board of Governors. This policy will be continually published on our school app accessible to all parents. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Pastoral Care Coordinator.

Signed:

Mrs C Ferguson (Chair of Board of Governors) Mrs E Williamson (Principal)

APPENDIX 1

RECORD OF AGENCIES INVOLVED

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

GP: _____

School Nurse/Health visitor: _____

Continence Advisor_____

Physiotherapist: _____

Occupational Therapist:_____

Hospital Consultant:_____

Physical/Sensory Service:_____

Social Worker:_____

Others: _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 2

RECORD OF INTIMATE CARE INTERVENTION

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Name of support staff involved:_____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Procedure: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Further comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Signature(s): _____

_____

APPENDIX 3

WORKING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE PLAN

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Name of support staff involved: _____

I can do: _____

_____

_____

I will try to do: _____

_____

_____

Review date: _____

Parents/Carer: _____

Child (if appropriate): _____

Personal Assistant: _____

Senior Management/SENCO: _____

APPENDIX 4

TOILET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Name of support staff involved: _____

Area of need: _____

Equipment required:_____

Location of suitable toilet facilities: _____

Support required: _____

Frequency of support:_____

Signed: Parent/Carer: _____

SENCO: _____

APPENDIX 5

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND CLASSROOM ASSISTANT

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Classroom Assistant's Name:_____

Date of Agreement: _____

Personal Assistant

As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- When I am the identified person, I will stop what I am doing to help you
- I will avoid all unnecessary delays
- I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times
- I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing
- I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally
- If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you
- I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan.

Child

As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:

- I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me
- I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times
- I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet.
- I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed
- I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change

We will review this agreement on: _____

Child (if appropriate): _____

Parent/Carer: _____

Classroom Assistant: _____

APPENDIX 6

PERMISSION FOR DICKSON PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

This form will be completed annually by all parents via the school app.

I understand that:

- I give permission to the school to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing, toileting, administering medication.
- I will advise the Principal of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to child:_____

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Male/Female: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Number(s): _____