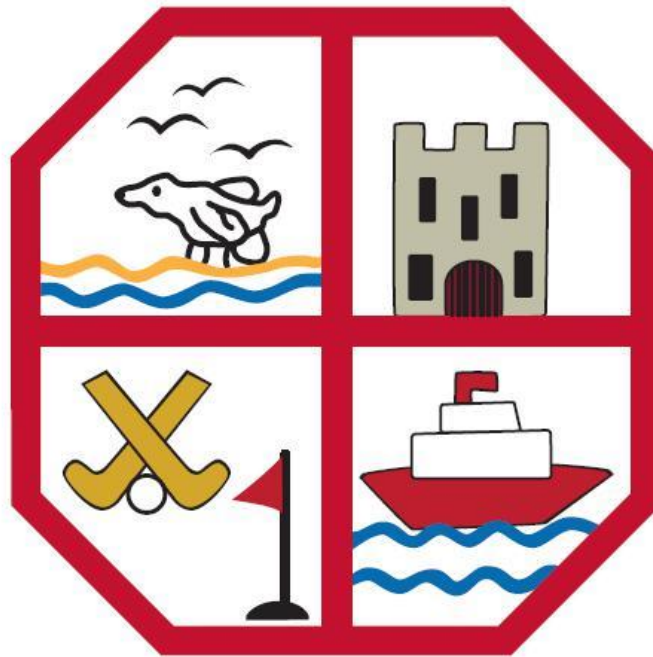


St Joseph's Primary School

Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children



October 2025

Vision Statement

A school at the heart of the community. Community at the heart of the school.

Mission Statement

In St Joseph's Primary School, we aim to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment. We celebrate the academic and non-academic achievements of all our pupils. We have very high yet realistic expectations for all our pupils and we encourage them to work hard and achieve their full potential.

Our parents are key partners in laying the foundations for future learning in the school. As a Catholic school the Board of Governors and Staff are firmly committed to promoting the spiritual, academic, social, physical, and aesthetic development of all our children.

In our school we aim to:

- Create a safe, enjoyable learning environment where effective learning is facilitated and quality teaching is provided;
- Implement all aspects of the NI Revised Curriculum;
- Help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning;
- Value, respect and nurture every child in our care;
- Encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another;
- Equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society;
- Develop and strengthen each pupil's understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school;
- Involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

INTRODUCTION

St Joseph's Primary School's Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children have been developed to safeguard children and staff in our school. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children. This policy is complemented and supported by a range of other school policies including: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Code of Conduct for Staff; Pastoral Care Policy; Health and Safety Policy; Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy; and Safe Handling Policy.

DEFINITION

Intimate care may be defined as any activity which is required to meet the personal care needs of an 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, parents and other relevant professionals.

Intimate care can include:

- Oral care;
- Washing;
- Dressing/undressing;
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care;
- Toileting

PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

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

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

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal, together with the Board of Governors, will ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with and understand St Joseph's Primary School's Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures.

When a child has a specific intimate care need, the care arrangements will be agreed by the school, parents/carers, professionals and child (if appropriate). Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children. 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 and staff.

- It is the policy of St Joseph's Primary School to involve the child in their intimate care and to try to encourage the child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care.
- Where a child has "wet" him/herself, the child will be afforded the opportunity to change him/herself into the underwear provided (which is available from the class teacher/ Principal's office). Parents/ Carers will be informed.
- Where the child requires more intimate care (eg: soils him/herself), the parent/carer will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school to assist the child or to take him/her home. The parent will be reassured that the child will be well cared for while awaiting the arrival of the parent/carer.
- We will treat every child with dignity and respect and at all times will ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation. We will try to involve the child in his/her own intimate care, where appropriate. We will endeavour to ensure that our practice in intimate care is consistent. A record of the intimate care given will be recorded and parents/ carers will be notified.
- We require parental permission for the above procedures. Where this is not given, the parent/carer will have the option to come into school to undertake the intimate care of the child or to take the child home. The Parental/ Carer Permission Form is included in Appendix A, for signing and returning as part of your child's induction to St Joseph's.

Menstrual Well-being and Period Dignity

Menstrual wellbeing fits into the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Area of Learning at Key Stage 2 under Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change. This includes:

- Knowing how the body grows and develops;
Being aware of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty;
- Knowing how babies are conceived, grow and are born.

Both boys and girls should be taught about menstrual wellbeing. By teaching all pupils together, you can send a powerful message that periods are not secret or shameful. They are not 'girls' business' and are normal and natural. It's important that boys have knowledge of and understand what girls experience before and during menstruation, and how their mood might change as they go through the menstrual cycle each month. Menstrual well-being is covered through the scheme 'Wonder of my Being' and 'Inside Out' workshops done by pupils in P7 with other cluster schools.

Teachers/Workshops cover:

- Facts about menstruation;
- Menstrual wellness - physical and emotional wellbeing leading up to and during periods;
- Menstrual hygiene - essential facts and how to deal with related situations;
- Challenges - pain, anxiety, fear, embarrassment and myths.

Period Dignity refers to the accessibility and availability of essential care needed to support a period, in conjunction with the breaking of stigma and taboo around periods.

- The NI Executive agreed in December 2020 to fund a pilot scheme to provide free period products to all schools in Northern Ireland with effect from September 2021.

Our key stage 2 mobile classroom toilet has been fitted with a sanitary bin plus posters from EA are displayed. We also have a sanitary bin in the staff toilet.

Promote positive self-esteem and body image

Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to abuse. The approach we take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Our attitude to a child's intimate care is important and must respect each child's dignity.

Reporting Procedures

If a member of staff has concerns regarding the welfare of a child, they will report their concerns immediately to a member of the Safeguarding Team in the school. A written record of all concerns will be made, in accordance with the schools' Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reviewing

The school will monitor, evaluate and review this policy every two years or sooner if the need arises.

Signed: Chair of BOG

Signed: Principal

Appendix A - Intimate Care Procedures

Please complete and return this sheet to your child's teacher.

- It is the policy of St Joseph's Primary School to involve the child in their intimate care and to try to encourage the child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care.
- Where a child has "wet" him/herself, he/she will be accompanied to the toilet by two staff members. The child will be afforded the opportunity to change him/herself into the underwear provided (which is available from the class teacher/office). Parents/ Carers will be informed.
- Where the child requires more intimate care (eg: soils him/herself), the parent/carer will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school to assist the child or to take him/her home. The child will be reassured while awaiting the arrival of his/her parent/carer.
- We will treat every child with dignity and respect and at all times will ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation. We will try to involve the child in his/her own intimate care, where appropriate. We will endeavour to ensure that our practice in intimate care is consistent. A record of the intimate care given will be recorded and parents/ carers will be notified.

I have read the above Intimate Care Procedures and agree to their implementation, if required.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/ Carer Signature: _____

Dated: _____