St. Mary & St. Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

We are guided by God who is at the centre of everything we do.
We support each other to be the best we can be to secure bright futures for everyone.
With our parishes, families and the community, we work together to create a school that is safe, happy, respectful and inspirational.

Introduction and Core Principles

Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is an essential aspect of our statutory safeguarding responsibility. Intimate care is defined as any care involving washing, touching, or procedures to personal areas (such as continence and menstrual management, dressing, or feeding) which children usually manage themselves but cannot due to age, physical difficulties or special needs.

The Governing Body recognises its duties under the **Disability Discrimination Act** to ensure no pupil with an impairment is discriminated against.

Core Commitments:

- The child's welfare, safety and dignity are paramount. Care will never be administered in a way that causes distress or pain.
- All children will be treated with respect, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion or ethnicity.
- Staff will support children to achieve the highest level of independent self-care appropriate to their age and developmental stage.

This policy aligns with and should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Policy for the Administration of Medicines
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Use of Force and Restraint Procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct / Safe Working Practice Guidance

Best Practice and Practical Arrangements

- **Staff Vetting:** Adults assisting children with intimate care must be school employees and hold appropriate DBS clearances.
- **Staff-to-Pupil Ratio & Privacy:** While two-person assistance is rarely practical or respectful of privacy, the attending staff member must inform another adult before beginning a procedure (or send a message to the school office if alone in a classroom).
- **Gender Guidelines:** Wherever possible, staff should care for a child of the same gender. Female staff will support boys where no full-time male staff are available. Male staff should not provide routine intimate care for girls.
- **Communication & Consent:** Staff will communicate with the child using their preferred method (verbal, symbolic, etc.). Where age and understanding allow, permission will be sought prior to any procedure. Religious and cultural values of families will be respected.

Infection Prevention and Hygiene

To minimise infection risks, staff follow strict hygiene protocols:

- Wear disposable gloves and aprons where appropriate.
- **Soiled garments:** Underwear will be double-bagged, sealed, and disposed of in an outside bin. Outer clothing will be bagged, sealed, and returned home at the end of the day. (Note: School has no facilities to wash soiled garments).
- **Replacements:** Spare school underwear can be provided if needed, with a request for a replacement item or financial donation.
- **Illness & Return to School:** Children with sickness or diarrhoea must remain home until they have been fully well and eating/toileting normally for 48 hours. Soiled areas will be closed off until hygienically cleaned.

Individual Care Plans and Health Needs

- **Health Care Plans:** Pupils requiring regular intimate care will have an individual Health Care Plan agreed upon with parents, school staff and external practitioners (e.g., School Nurse, Occupational Therapy).
- **Medical Procedures:** Invasive or non-invasive medical procedures follow strict protocol and staff training records. First aid emergencies involving intimate examinations will always involve a second adult present to protect dignity.

- **Physiotherapy & Massage:** Physiotherapy will only be carried out by trained external practitioners or school staff explicitly trained and supervised via a written program from a physiotherapist. Massage (confined to the back, hands, feet, and face for sensory development or relaxation) must follow therapist-devised programmes.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- **Reporting Concerns:** Any physical changes, marks, or soreness observed during care must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and logged in writing.
- **Allegations or Discomfort:** If a child expresses distress about a specific staff member, it must be reported immediately to the Headteacher so arrangements can be reviewed. Allegations against staff will follow formal disciplinary and safeguarding procedures.
- **Whistleblowing:** Any adult with concerns regarding a colleague's conduct must report it directly to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.
- **School Trips:** Individualised, safe intimate care arrangements will be planned in advance for all educational visits to ensure universal inclusion.

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