**LOANENDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**Personal Care Policy**

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| **Date of Rewrite of Policy** | February 2023March 2020 | **Mrs L Armour****PRINCIPAL** |
| **Date of Governor****Ratification of Policy** | 30 September 2019 | **Mr M Lucas****CHAIR OF BoG** |
| **Review Date of Policy** | February 2026 |  |
| **Person (s) Responsible for review and update of Policy** | Mrs L ArmourMrs V Watson |  |

**February 2023**

**INTIMATE CARE POLICY**

**Introduction**

This policy represents the agreed principles for ‘Intimate or Personal Care’ throughout Loanends Primary School. It has been developed to safeguard pupils and staff. The policy applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of pupils.

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

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools” (DENI Circular 2017/04) and the Safeguarding Board for NI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

**Aims**

* to safeguard the rights and promote the best interests of the children;
* to ensure children are treated with sensitivity and respect, and in such a way that their experience of intimate care is a positive one;
* to safeguard adults required to operate in sensitive situations;
* to raise awareness and provide a clear procedure for intimate care;
* to inform parents/carers how intimate care is administered;
* to ensure parents/carers are consulted regarding the intimate care of their children.

**Principles**

* 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 and
* Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

**Definition**

Intimate Care can be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have the responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with pupils and parents.

Intimate Care can include:

* supporting a pupil with dressing/undressing;
* assisting a pupil requiring medical care, who is not able to carry this out unaided;
* cleaning a pupil who has wet or soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell;
* providing first aid assistance;
* supervising a child who has exercised the choice of intimate self-care and
* menstrual care.

In the case of a specific procedure only a person suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure, (e.g. the administration of rectal diazepam, catheterisation) Parents have the responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child in advance of them starting the school.

**Supporting Dressing/Undressing**

The school considers that helping a child with an outer layer of clothing (eg. a jumper/cardigan or coat) is not an intimate act and therefore acceptable.

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child dressing or undressing (particularly in Early Years) due to an accident, soiling themselves or due to a medical condition. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

If staff are concerned in any way parents/carers will be consulted or sent for and asked to assist their child.

Staff will endeavour to ensure they have a colleague in attendance when supporting dressing/undressing and will always give the child the opportunity to change in private, unless the child is in such distress that he/she is not possible to do so.

**Medical Care**

Pupils requiring short-term and long -term medical care involving intimate care, will receive this care in line with the child’s ‘Care Plan’ (if one is in place). The content of any ‘Care Plan’ will be discussed with the relevant medical body.

Parents/carers as a first option will be asked to provide medical procedures that involve intimate care unless other provision is made available by the Education Authority. If this is not possible, the school will seek the necessary advice from the Education Authority and/or medical professionals.

If it is possible for the staff of the school to provide the level of medical care required, the staff member(s) will receive the appropriate training. Written permission must be received from the person with parental responsibility before a medical procedure can be carried out.

**Soiling and Wetting**

Staff will use common sense approach when tending to a child who has soiled themselves during the school day.

Parents/carers of Primary 1 pupils are asked to send into school, a labelled bag containing clean underwear for their child, to be kept in the child’s school bag.

If a child’s underwear requires changing due to a soiling or wetting incident, the child will be asked to do this in private and if possible, carry out changing themselves.

If a child has a medical condition which is likely to lead to soiling, the parents/carers will be asked to sign a permission form so that staff, as appropriate, can support the child in cleaning themselves and changing clothes.

If a parent/carer has not previously given consent, the school will contact the parent/carer or other emergency contact giving specific details about the necessity for cleaning the child. If a parent/carer or emergency contact **is able to** attend, the child will be looked after separately to preserve dignity until the parent/carer arrives.

Pupils will not be left on their own whilst waiting for a parent/carer to arrive. An adult will stay with them, giving comfort and reassurance. The child will be dressed at all times and never left partially clothed. If a parent/carer or emergency contact **cannot attend**, the school will seek verbal consent from a parent/carer for staff to clean and change the child if appropriate, using spare uniform kept in school.

When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child’s privacy and will respect the child’s wishes and feelings.

If a child needs to be cleaned, staff will make sure that:

* the procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process;
* the child is encouraged to care for him/herself as far as possible;
* physical contact by staff is kept to a minimum when carrying out the necessary cleaning;
* privacy is given appropriate to the child's age and the situation.

All staff must be familiar with normal precautions for avoiding infection, must follow basic hygiene procedures and have access to protective, disposable gloves. These are stored in the disabled toilet.

**Menstrual Care**

A supply of sanitary products is kept in the P6 store. It would be helpful if parents could inform the school if they feel their daughter may need support or access to sanitary bins or protection in school. This will be handled sensitively, and the pupil advised of where the necessary items are located should they require them unexpectedly.

In the event of a pupil requiring sanitary products unexpectedly, they are advised to speak to Mrs O’Neill in the first instance. If she is unavailable, Mrs Armour is the next point of contact.

**Swimming**

Our KS2 classes participate in the school’s swimming programme at Antrim Forum. The pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when in the changing area; however, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard the pupils with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure the expected levels of behaviour are evident.

Antrim Forum is organised on a village style changing basis. This supports the effective supervision and privacy of the pupils when changing. Where a pupil needs additional support for changing, this will be discussed with the parent/carer and suitable arrangements put in place after consultation. The parent/carer will be asked to give their consent for assistance in writing. As far as possible, two adults will be present in the changing area.

**Residential Visits**

Residential educational visits are an important part of our Primary 7 school experience. Particular care is required when supervising pupils in a less formal setting. Staff will be mindful of the School’s Code of Conduct.

Some specific personal/intimate care issues may arise in a school residential trip context.

**Showering**

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower.

It is school policy that staff should avoid being in a room with pupils in a state of undress and **should** **not** be involved in supervising pupils when they are showering after activities.

The pupils are advised to shower in the facilities provided for their own specific use. However, for any reason a member of staff needs to enter a room or changing room with pupils in a state of undress, they should always do so in the company of another member of staff. It should be noted that this may not always be possible and therefore all staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct. Staff for example should never change in the same place as children or shower in the same area as pupils.

It is best practice in our school that when an incident has taken place that has necessitated a member of staff to be present when children are changing that an **incident** **report** is completed. This form is included in the school trip pack for the adult in charge.

**Night Time Routines / Pupil Bedrooms**

It is established practice that pupil rooms are private spaces and anyone else wanting to enter the room should knock and announce their intention to enter.

There are occasions when incidents take place during the night or and the need arises to:

* Assist a child to change his / her clothes;
* Change a child who has soiled him / herself;
* Provide comfort and reassurance to an upset or distressed child;
* Attend to a child who has become unwell;
* Assist a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Guidance as above will be followed with the support of an additional member of staff in attendance.

**Safeguards for Staff**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

* gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary;
* all intimate procedures should be carried out in the presence of two members of staff;
* allow the child a choice in the sequence of care;
* be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions;
* be aware of own limitations and only carry out activities in which you feel competent and confident. If in doubt, ask a colleague for help and advice;
* a record of the incident should be recorded in the school’s Intimate Care Log. (Both members of staff present should sign the entry in the Intimate Care Log) and
* if a staff Member has any concerns about a colleague’s intimate care practice, they must report this to the Designated teacher.

**Safeguards for Children**

Although all staff and volunteers in Loanends Primary School must gain Access NI clearance before working in the school, only paid staff should support children who require intimate care. This will not be the responsibility of Volunteers.

Children’s rights to privacy will always be respected when dealing with intimate care issues.

**Working with Children of the Opposite Sex**

**Principles:**

* There is positive value in both male and female staff being involved with children;
* Ideally, every child should have the choice of carer for all their intimate care;
* The individual child’s safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance.

*The practical guidelines set out below, are written in the knowledge that the current ratio of female to male staff means we are far less likely to be able to offer the choice of same sex carer to male children.*

**General Care**

Male and female staff can be involved with children of either sex in:

1. Keyworking and liaising with families;
2. Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child’s review;
3. Meeting the developmental, emotional and recreational needs of the children and
4. Escorting the children between sites, on outings and to clinics unless intimate care is needed.

**Intimate Care**

Wherever possible, boys and girls should be offered the choice of carer and second carer. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child’s parents are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

**The intimate care of boys/girls can be carried out by a member of staff of the opposite sex with the following provisions:**

1. The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional Code of Conduct in conjunction with the school’s Child Protection Policy and procedures;
2. When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy i.e. they should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens / curtains put in place;
3. If the pupil appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance;
4. Report concerns to your Designated Teacher and make a written record and
5. Parents/carers must be informed about concerns.

**Communication with Children**

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure that they are aware of the child’s method and level of communication.

Children communicate using different methods e.g. words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing.

**To ensure effective communication:**

* Ascertain how the child communicates e.g. consult with child, parent/carer and, if appropriate, communication needs must be recorded;
* 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 each child as an individual with dignity and respect.

**Review**

This policy has been approved by the Board of Governors and will be reviewed every three years or as relevant guidance (including Child Protection) dictates to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

**INTIMATE CARE LOG:**

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| --- |
| See the source imageSee the source image**Intimate Care Log** |
| **Date:** | **Name of Pupil:** | **Class:**  |
| **Reporting Adult:** | **Place and Time of Care:**  |
| **Reason for Care:**  |
| **Names of additional adults aware of this care need:** |
| **As a result of this incident and care:****(Please tick)*** The Class Teacher was informed.
* The Parent was informed.
* The child went home.
 |
| **Signature of DT:**  | **Date:** |

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**LOANENDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Parental Permission for Intimate Care**

I give my permission for **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** to receive intimate care (for example helping with changing or following toileting) should the need arise.

I understand the staff are following the school’s Intimate Care Policy and will endeavour to encourage my child to achieve independence in this area with dignity and respect.

I will provide the necessary clothes and sanitary products.

I understand I will be informed discretely (Pre-prepared note/phone call) on each occasion this happens.

Staff with responsibility are: Mrs Watson(Designated Teacher), Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 Classroom Assistants.

There may also be other staff included depending on the circumstances. Staff in attendance is recorded in our Intimate Care Log. Mrs O’Neill is the point of contact for older girls who may require sanitary products.

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (Parent/Guardian)

**Date:** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**In the event of a pupil requiring intimate care from Loanends Primary School the following staff will meet his/her needs.**

**Providing Intimate Care Supporting**

Mrs McMichael

Mrs McConnell

Mrs Livingstone

Mrs Brady

Mrs White

Mrs Williamson

Mrs O’Neill

or

Mrs Armour

Mrs O’Neill

or

Mrs Armour

Mrs Watson

to sign IC Log

Mrs Watson

to sign IC Log

Where possible, two members of staff will attend to the child’s needs. This may not always be possible but if a single staff member is involved, they will follow our Child Protection protocols.

In the event of a Member of Staff being absent the next person in the flow chart will provide the Intimate Care.

Where none of the above staff are available to provide intimate care, the family will be telephoned for advice re attendance or a family member being able to come to provide intimate care. This will be in very exceptional circumstances.

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (Parent/Guardian)

**Date:** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Educational Visit Incident Record Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | Name of School |
| 2. | Name of group leader |
| 3. | Date, Time and Location of Incident |
| 4. | Name and address(es) of witness(es)  |
| (a) |  |  | 1. (b)
 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | 1. (Please state in your own words what happened including details of names and status of those involved)
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| 6. | 1. Describe what action was taken (e.g. details of First-Aid, police or medical involvement)
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | 1. Signed:
 | 1. Date:
 |

The information on this form is requested for the purpose of organising an educational visit. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the school to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.