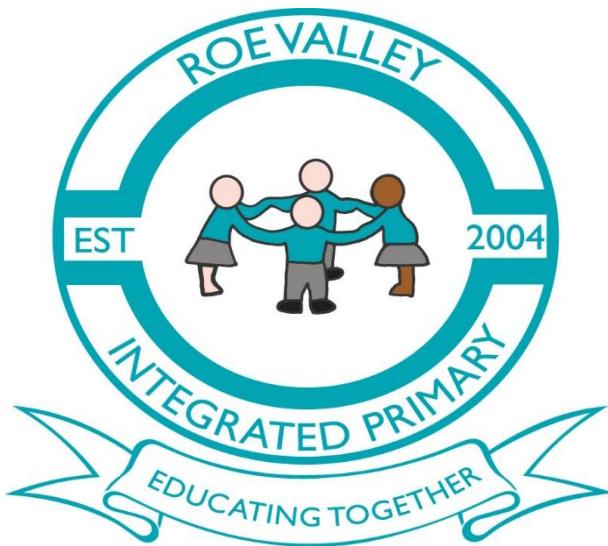


Roe Valley Integrated Primary School

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Article 3 -All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.



Signature of Chair of Board of Governors: _____

Designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection _____

Ratified: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Signature of DT/DDT: _____

Reviewed and updated: October 2025

Review due: December 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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 in Roe Valley Integrated Primary School. Children with specific needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Area Child Protection Committee's Regional Policy and Procedures April 2005.

2.0 DEFINITION

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

Intimate care can include

- Feeding
- Oral Care
- Washing
- Dressing/Undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Photographs
- Treatments such as enemas, suppositories, enteral feeds
- Catheter and stoma care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

3.0 PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the 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.

4.0 SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff working with children must be vetted by Roe Valley Integrated Primary School. This includes students on work placement and volunteers. Vetting includes:

- Access NI Checks / Pre-employment checks / Two independent references
- **Only** named staff identified by the school should undertake the intimate care of children
 - The school must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of children are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated Policy and Procedures e.g. ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007. All staff must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that carry

out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work. Intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents/carers and child (if appropriate) (appendix 6/7) Intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the child's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and child (if appropriate). Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the school, parents / carers and child (if appropriate). The school need to make provisions for emergencies i.e. a staff member on sick leave. Additional trained staff should be available to undertake specific intimate care tasks. Do not assume someone else can do the task. Intimate care arrangements should be reviewed at least six monthly. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the designated teacher for CP or Principal.

5.0 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. Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs. Staff also need to be aware that some adults may use intimate care, as an opportunity to abuse 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.

5.1 Involve the child in their intimate care Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible. (Appendix 1)

5.2 Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy

appropriate to the child's age and situation - A lot of care is carried out by one staff member/carer alone with one child. The practice of providing one to one intimate care of a child alone is unsupported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort / safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

5.3 Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent - A consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between parents/carers/school ensures practice is consistent.

(Appendices – 1-7)

5.4 Be aware of own limitations - Only carry out care activities you understand and feel competent and confident to carry out. If in doubt, ASK. Some procedures must be carried out by staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

5.5 Promote positive self-esteem and body image - Confident, self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable to sexual abuse. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.

5.6 If you have any concerns you must report them - If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the designated teacher/deputy

designated teacher for CP. If during the intimate care of a child you accidentally hurt them or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the designated teacher/deputy designated teacher for CP. Report and record any unusual emotional or behavioural response by the child. A written record of concerns must be made and kept in the child's nursing/medical notes/personal file. It is important to follow RVIPS reporting and recording procedures. Parents/carers must be informed about concerns.

Further advice/guidance

- *Regional Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures – April 2005*
- *DENI Child Protection and Pastoral Care Guidance 1999*
- *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007*

6 WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

6.1 Principles:

- There is a 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.*

6.2 General Care

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

- Keyworking and liaising with families.
- Co-ordinating of and contribution to a child's review.
- Meeting the development, emotional and recreational needs of the children.
- Escorting the children between sites, on outings and to clinics unless intimate care is needed.

6.3 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.

It may be possible to determine a child's wishes by observation of their reactions to the intimate care they receive. Do not assume that a child cannot make a choice.

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

- (a) The delivery of intimate care by professionally qualified staff will be governed by their professional code of conduct in conjunction with school policy and procedures.
- (b) Staff must follow policy and procedures in operation within school and direction and agreement must be provided by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection

(c) 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.

(d) If the child 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. Report concerns to your Designated Teacher and make a written record. Parents/carers must be informed about concerns.

7 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 (please refer to Appendix 1, Communication Proforma for Intimate Care: How I communicate).

- 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 the child as an individual with dignity and respect.

Policy Review

This policy will be kept under constant review and it will be formally reviewed annually. Responsibility for the review will be undertaken by AA McDonald - Designated Teacher for Child Protection and J.McDonagh/C.Boyd – Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection

- Review Date - October 2026.
- Reviewed annually and updated in consultation with staff
- Presented to and shared with the BOG regularly
- Shared with parents



Appendix 1

Communication Proforma for Intimate Care How I Communicate

Name: _____

Date: _____

I communicate using words / signs/ communication book /

Communication aid / body movements.

I indicate my likes / preferences by _____

I indicate my dislikes by _____

I show I am happy by _____

unhappy by _____

If appropriate please complete the following

When I need to go the toilet I _____

When I get changed I _____

Additional Information _____

Speech and Language Therapist

Occupational Therapist

Key worker/s _____

Contact-Number/s _____

Parent / Carer signature _____



APPENDIX 2

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 3

RECORD OF INTIMATE CARE INTERVENTION

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Name of support

staff involved: _____

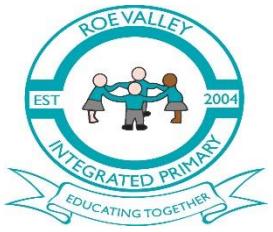
Date: _____

Time: _____

Procedure: _____

Further comments: _____

Signature(s): _____



APPENDIX 4

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: _____

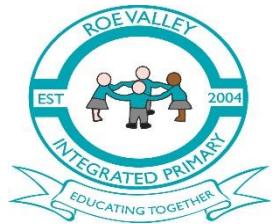
Parents/Carer: _____

Child (if appropriate): _____

Personal Assistant: _____

Senior Leadership: _____

SENCo: _____



APPENDIX 5

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 6

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND ADULT

Child's Name: _____

DOB: _____

Personal Assistant's Name: _____

Date of Agreement: _____

ADULT

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: _____

• Personal Assistant: _____



APPENDIX 7

PERMISSION FOR ROE VALLEY INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

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): _____