



**Building a Legacy**

# **Andrews Memorial Primary School**

## **Policy on Intimate Care**

## **Our school ethos**

*Andrews Memorial believes in the potential of every child: to create; to achieve; to celebrate; to make a difference. We believe in blending and balancing the traditional elements of literacy and numeracy with a stimulating, up-to-date and challenging curriculum. We recognise the potential for ICT to enhance learning across the curriculum.*

*We aim to ensure that we provide a welcoming, caring and happy learning environment, in and beyond the classroom; also that we deliver learning that is valued by the whole school community and which develops an understanding and an appreciation of the world around us.*

*Ultimately, we hope to nurture well-rounded young people, who can engage with each other and with adults; who respect everyone and who have a sense of moral responsibility.*

*We believe it is our duty to:*

*✓ Enthuse and enable pupils to reach their full potential by developing independence, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-esteem*

*✓ Create a positive atmosphere of encouragement and high expectations*

*✓ Build and nurture relationships between home, school and the community*

*✓ Provide a well-balanced, exciting and meaningful curriculum in a safe, caring and happy environment*

*✓ Promote an ethos of engagement and achievement built on effort*

*✓ Instil a sense of purpose in making a contribution to life in and beyond school*

## **Building a Legacy**

# Intimate Care Policy

## ***Introduction***

It is our intention to develop independence in each child. However, there will be occasions when help is required. Our Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff. It is one of a range of specific policies that contribute to our Pastoral Care / Safeguarding policy portfolio. The principles and procedures apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children.

Children are generally more vulnerable than adults and staff involved with any aspect of pastoral care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Intimate care may be defined as any activity that is required to meet the personal needs of an individual child on a regular basis or during a one-off incident.

Intimate Care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/Undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual care
- First aid and medical assistance
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

***Parents have a responsibility to advise the school of any known intimate care needs relating to their child.***

## ***Principles of Intimate Care***

The following are the fundamental principles of intimate care upon which our policy guidelines are based.

***Every child has the right to:***

- Be safe
- Personal privacy
- Be valued as an individual
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities
- Express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account
- Have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible

Reference: N.I. Area Health Boards

“Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children.”

## ***School Responsibilities***

1. All members of staff working with children are vetted. This includes students on work placement and volunteers. Vetting includes criminal record checks and two references.
2. Only named staff identified by the school should undertake the intimate care of children.
3. The Leadership Team 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.
4. Anticipated intimate care arrangements, which are required on a regular basis, are agreed between the school and parents and, when appropriate and possible, by the child. In such cases, consent forms are signed and stored in the child's file (***Appendix 1 & 2***).
5. Intimate care arrangements for any pupil who requires this support on a regular basis should be reviewed at least every six months. The views of all relevant parties should be sought and considered to inform future arrangements. Any amendments to the arrangements should be recorded and made available for all parties involved.

***Only in an emergency would staff undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed by the parents. This act of intimate care would be reported to a member of staff and parents at the earliest possible time following the event.***

6. If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, he or she must report this to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

## ***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.

Young children and children with special educational needs can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

Members of 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 forms of assistance can be open to misinterpretation.

***Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard children and staff.***

### **1. Involve the child in the intimate care**

Try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his or her intimate care. When a situation renders a child fully dependent, talk about what is going to be done, and, where possible, give choices.

Check your practice by asking the child or parent about any preferences while carrying out the intimate care.

**2. Treat every child with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the child's age and situation**

One staff member carries out a lot of care, alone with one child. The practice of providing one-one intimate care of a child alone is supported, unless the activity requires two persons for the greater comfort / safety of the child or the child prefers two persons.

**3. Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent**

As a child may have multiple carers, a consistent approach to care is essential. Effective communication between all parties ensures that practice is consistent.

**4. Be aware of your own limitations**

Only carry out activities you understand and feel competent with. If in doubt, **ASK**. Some procedures must only be carried out by members of staff who have been formally trained and assessed.

**5. Promote positive self-esteem and body image**

Confident, self-assured children who feel their bodies belong 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 both efficient relaxed and enjoyable.

**6. If you have any concerns you must report them**

If you observe any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, report it immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. If a child is accidentally hurt during intimate care or misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure their safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Teacher. 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 personal file. Parents / carers must be informed about concerns.***

***Working with Children of the Opposite Sex***

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 but the current ratio of female to male staff means that assistance will more often be given by a woman.

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

- When intimate care is being carried out, all children have the right to dignity and privacy. They should be appropriately covered, the door closed or screens/curtains put in place.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.

- Report any concerns to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and make a written record.
- Parents/carers must be informed about any 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. Depending on their maturity and levels of stress, children may communicate using different methods - words, signs, symbols, body movements, eye pointing, etc.

#### ***To ensure effective communication:***

- Make eye contact at the child's level
- Use simple language and repeat if necessary
- Wait for a 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

It is important to note that in addition to the information in the Intimate Care Policy, reference should also be made to the Child Protection and Pastoral Care Policies.

Andrews Memorial Primary School will review, evaluate and update this policy when necessary.

## APPENDIX 1

### AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD/TEACHER AND CLASSROOM ASSISTANT

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Assistant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Classroom Assistant***

As the Classroom 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 in the toilet, as soon as you ask me
- I will avoid all unnecessary delays
- When you use our agreed emergency signal, I will stop what I am doing and come and help
- 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 only use the agreed emergency signal for real emergencies
- 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) \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Assistant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

### PERMISSION FOR ANDREWS MEMORIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

*I understand that:*

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

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Male/Female \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_