

# Scoil Bhríde, Ráth Chormaic

## Policy for Intimate Care and Toileting

(Reviewed December 2022)

### Introduction

Scoil Bhríde Rathcormac is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children will always undertake their duties in a professional manner.

### Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care is defined as “care tasks associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the sexual parts of the body”.

This is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out any invasive procedure that most children carry out for themselves but which some are unable to do due to physical disability, special educational needs associated with learning difficulties, medical needs or needs arising from the child’s stage of development.

Examples of intimate care include:

Assisting a child to change his/her clothes

Changing or washing a child who has soiled/wet himself/herself

Assisting with toileting issues

Providing first aid assistance

Carrying out a procedure that requires direct or indirect contact with an intimate area of a student,

assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided.

Supervision of an individual involved in intimate self-care

This policy and related procedures have been developed bearing in mind that all physical contact between staff and students:

- should be aimed at meeting the needs of students
- should respect the dignity of each student
- should be consistent with professional integrity of staff members

### Policy Rationale

The aim of the policy is to increase knowledge, enhance skills and promote good practice in this sensitive area. All staff will be made aware of the standards expected of them. Intimate care will be carried out only by regular school employees.

### Relationship to the School Ethos

All students and staff members have the right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect.

### Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of children and young people.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to staff.
- To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their individual needs and concerns are taken into account.

### **Assisting a child to change his/her clothes**

On occasions some younger children may need assistance with changing e.g toileting accident, getting wet outside, vomit on clothes.

Staff will always prompt and encourage child to attempt undressing and dressing unaided in private. However, if assistance is required this will be given.

### **Toileting Accidents**

A teacher must always be cognisant of his/her duty of care regarding effective supervision of all the students in the class when assisting a student with toileting. Another staff member will be asked to attend in a support role. At the junior infant induction meeting, the school procedures re toileting accidents will be outlined to parents.

### **Wetting**

- A supply of clean underwear, wipes, track-suit bottoms etc will be kept in the school. (secretary's office)
- In the first instance, the pupil will be offered wipes/ fresh clothing etc to get cleaned and changed by himself/herself.
- If, for any reason, the child is unable to clean or change himself/herself, two members of staff, familiar to the child will attend to him/her. One staff member will attend to the child while the other staff member will maintain a support role.

### **Soiling**

- In the event of a child soiling him/herself, the school will contact the parents/guardians/emergency contact to attend to the child. If the parent/guardian/ or emergency contact cannot attend within an appropriate timeframe verbal permission for school staff to change the child will be sought.
- The teacher will encourage the student to do as much for themselves as possible and support as needed.

Parents will be notified of these toileting accidents and a record of the incident will be kept. (Appendix 3) Wet/soiled clothing will be put in a plastic bag and given to parents when they come to collect the child or send it home with the child. Parents are asked to return the clothes/underwear given to their child.

### **Children with Specific Toileting/Intimate Care Needs:**

- In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care (including catheterisation) a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school. Parents, Guardians, Principal, Class Teacher, SNA, other relevant persons and if appropriate, the pupil, will attend.
- The specific care needs of the child, and how the school will meet them, will be clarified. Staff members i.e. SNA/s, involved in this care will be identified.
- Provision for occasions when Staff members are absent will be outlined (e.g., Substitute SNA's will not generally be involved in intimate care. Any change of personnel will be discussed with the

pupil. (if appropriate).

- Careful consideration will be given to individual situations to determine the most appropriate form of support and the intimate care procedures required. An Intimate Care Plan (See Appendix 1) will be drafted, agreed, and signed by parents, children and staff involved.
- Any changes will be discussed with parent/guardian and pupil and noted in the pupil's intimate care plan.
- Where a student requires manual handling as part of meeting their intimate care needs, the manual handling procedure should be defined in the pupil's Intimate Care Plan.
- As far as possible the pupil will be involved in identification of his/her personal requirements, wishes, changes etc
- A written copy of the agreement i.e. Intimate Care Plan will be kept in the pupil's file. ·
- Parents will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.
- At all times the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs. ·
- Staff will wear protective gloves.

### **Role of Special Needs Assistant**

SNAs are appointed to aid **with toileting and general hygiene** where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so. (Primary Care Needs – DES Circular 0030/2014)

- SNAs will be provided with appropriate training to address specific toileting needs

### **Elements of Good Practice for Staff**

While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all situations, it is important that the elements of good practice be followed:

- In the case of a student having an Intimate Care Plan, staff must be very familiar with the plan
- Use appropriate and professional language, specific language may be detailed in a care plan
- Verbalise your actions to the student in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure. ·
- Use visual cues for students with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive. ·
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation if checking to see if changing is required.
- Use protective gloves provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided.
- Intimate care procedures will be carried out in a manner which treats the student in a dignified and respectful way and allows the student the maximum level of privacy.
- The student's independence will be encouraged

### **Assisting a child who requires a specific medical procedure and who is not able to carry this out unaided**

The Administration of Medications Policy outlines the procedures for the administration of medicines in the school. Children with specific medical issues will have an individual Health Care Plan. School staff will receive appropriate training if necessary.

### **Swimming**

Children are encouraged to undress and dress independently in the changing rooms. Children are supervised by school staff and parents who are garda vetted through the school. A minimum of two adults are involved in supervision in each changing room. The role of the adults is supervisory only.

### **Administering First Aid.**

Staff must ensure that the care provided is professionally appropriate to the context and physical contact must be kept to a minimum.

## Reporting

If during the provision of intimate care assistance, a staff member:

- accidentally hurts/injures the student
- observes something which raises child protection concerns
- thinks the student has misinterpreted what is said or done
- observes the student having a very emotional reaction without apparent cause

the staff member/s involved in the intimate care assistance should immediately report such an incident to the Class Teacher and/or Principal as appropriate.

## Ratification and Communication

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management 12th December 2022. A copy of the policy is stored in the school plan and it is communicated to all staff. A copy of the policy is also published on the school website for parents.

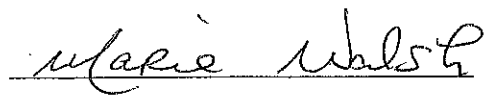
## Implementation

This policy will take effect from date of ratification by the Board of Management December 12th

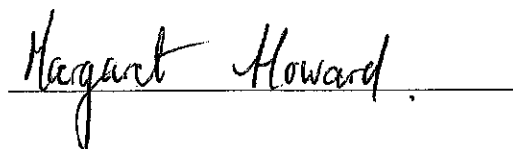
## Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by management and staff. The policy will be reviewed in January 2026 or earlier if necessary.

Signed: Marie Walsh (Chairperson of the Board of Management) Date: 12/12/2022

  
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Signed; Margaret Howard (Principal) Date; 12/12/2022

  
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**Appendix 1 Intimate Care Plan**

**Name:**..... **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name/s of Support Staff Involved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area of Need:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Equipment Required:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of suitable toilet facilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Details of Support Required:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency of Support:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SNA will :(details of actions to be undertaken by SNA)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Child will:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed;**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Parent/Guardian Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **(SNA/s) Date;** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **(Principal) Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2 Record of Intimate Care Intervention

Child's

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class:.....

..... Class

Teacher:.....

Name/s of Support Staff Involved: .....

Date..... Time.....

Support Provided:

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Signature/s of Support Staff Involved:

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