
Intimate Care & Toileting Policy



**San Carlo Senior National School,
Leixlip, Co. Kildare**

Introduction:

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a pupil, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body. Direct contact involves physical contact between the pupil and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts. Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the pupil to complete personal and intimate care tasks. Intimate care includes; dressing and undressing (underwear), support with using the toilet, changing of continence pads, washing intimate body parts, showering (if required) and menstrual 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 ensure that the dignity and privacy of the student involved is paramount
- To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner by school staff in consultation with parents/guardians.

Devising the Intimate Care Plan:

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting /intimate care, a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school with a view to drawing up an Intimate Care Plan (Appendix 1).

This meeting will be attended by the Parents or Guardians and if appropriate the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Co-ordinator, Special Needs Assistant (SNA), the Principal and other relevant staff or professionals involved in the pupil's care. The specific needs of the pupil and how the school can best meet those needs will be clarified. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified. As far as possible the pupil will be involved in the identification of his/her personal wishes or requirements. Additional items of clothing/incontinence underwear/sanitary wear will be provided by parents/guardians as necessary. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made, signed by the parties involved and retained in the pupil's file. Where a pupil requires manual handling (lift/transfer) as part of their intimate care needs, manual handling procedures will be outlined in the intimate care plan.

Staff will be trained in the use of lifting/transfer equipment in consultation with the pupils' care givers e.g. occupational therapist. The pupil's intimate care plan will be reviewed at the beginning of each academic year or as needs arise during the year e.g. where there is a change in the pupil's mobility. Parents/Guardians are responsible for keeping the school up to date with any changes to the pupil's intimate care requirements.

Procedures:

Two members of staff should be present when dealing with intimate care/ toileting needs. Temporary staff and persons in the school on work placements will not be involved in dealing with intimate care needs. Any change of personnel will be discussed with the parents/guardians and pupil. Provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff members involved are absent. It will not be necessary for two people to administer intimate care. However, the door is to be left slightly ajar with the second person remaining outside the door. Staff members will be trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual pupil.

Appropriate protective gear will be provided (e.g. gloves, aprons etc.) Appropriate disposal of incontinence items/sanitary wear etc. will be provided by parents/guardians. Pupil's intimate care needs will be discussed in private where confidentiality can be maintained. In order to promote independence, the pupil will be facilitated in performing as much of his/her own intimate care needs as he/she is physically able to do. Before commencing an intimate care task, the staff member will explain to the pupil, using an appropriate method of communication, what they are about to do and how they will do it. Staff will check in advance that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on school outings. At all times the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs.

Child Protection:

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member will report this concern immediately to the Principal who is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). Such issues may include:

- The pupil seems unusually sore, tender or bruised
- The pupil seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The pupil has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause
- The pupil makes an allegation against a staff member

Any concerns will be dealt with by the DLP in accordance with Children First and the Department of Education & Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary School.

Staffing Levels:

Toileting 'Accidents' –

As teachers we act in 'loco parentis' and can deal with a toileting accident without assistance. It is good practice to only provide help that is required by the student. The teacher should encourage the student to do as much for themselves as possible. 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.

Swimming -

Throughout the year, some classes of San Carlo National School participate in swimming lessons in the National Aquatics Centre. Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. Where a child needs additional support for changing, parental permission will be sought and a personal care plan will be drawn up so as to maintain dignity but increase independence.

Showering –

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing their clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying, teasing or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur. This means that staff should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, avoid remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour. Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff is present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore staff need to be vigilant

about their own conduct. 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 young children are changing that an incident report is made.

Intimate Care Needs of students in the Special Classes:

It is school policy that;

- The personnel involved in intimate care needs of students are usually SNA's but teachers may be involved.
- There should be a minimum of two staff members present at all times. Additional support will be provided by mainstream SNA's if needed.
- No substitute SNA should be involved in the toileting of a student unless sanctioned by the Principal or the SENCO, in consultation with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Parent Responsibilities:

Parents/Guardians need to identify any toileting needs in their application form. They should supply the school with the resources required to carry out the toileting or other care needs, which may include, but not be limited to;

- Nappies
- Wipes
- Creams
- Nappy Sacks
- Spare underwear
- Spare Clothes

Intimate Care/Toileting Plan:

In the event that a specific toileting need has been identified for a student, an Intimate Care/Toileting Plan (See Appendix A) will be developed in partnership with the student's class teacher, designated SNA's and the student's parents/guardians.

The Care Plan must include;

- Specific Care Need
- Number of staff required to meet the needs of the student
- Identification of the staff members involved
- Additional equipment required
- Child's preferred means of communication to include agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions.
- Child's level of ability
- Cultural and/or religious sensitivities
- Signature of Class Teacher
- Signature of SENCO/Principal
- Date of Care Plan

Menstruation:

If a child with additional educational needs or a child in the special class is menstruating during the school term. It is advised that the parent(s)/guardian(s) should inform the staff member(s) working with the child, if they deem that the child may become distressed during the school day during this time. Arrangements should be made as part of the Intimate Care Plan (Appendix A) to provide guidance and support to staff members in this instance.

Elements of Good Practice for Staff:

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

- In the case that a student has an Intimate Care Plan ensure you are completely familiar with the plan.
- Address the student by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity.
- 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.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in a care plan.
- In intimate care, the touch should be affirmative and supportive, not rough or insensitive.
- Respect the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation if checking to see if a nappy needs changing.
- 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.
- A record of all intimate care/toileting incidents shall be kept (See Appendix B)
- The student's independence will be encouraged.

Reporting:

All toileting 'accidents' involving students with no Intimate Care Plan must be reported to the student's parents. A report should also be made informed if during the intimate care of a student, a staff member;

- Accidentally hurts/injures the student
- The staff member observes something which raises child protection concerns
- The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause the incident must be reported to the Special Class Teacher/Principal/SENCO or the DLP or Deputy DLP as appropriate.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

Teachers and the Principal assume shared responsibility, participate in, and contribute to the implementation of an effective and equitable 'Intimate Care and Toileting Policy'.

Success Criteria:

The school evaluates the success of the policy through;

1. Participation of all staff in the policy
2. Safe and effective care of all students in our school
3. Feedback from all staff
4. Feedback from relevant parents/guardians.

Implementation:

This policy is effective immediately from September 2025.

Review Timetable:

This policy will be reviewed at the end of June 2026 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Evaluation:

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis.

Ratification:

This Intimate Care & Toileting Policy has been formally adopted for use in the school by the Board of Management at its meeting on and formally comes in to operation on 29th September 2025.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Tony Boland

BOM Chairperson

Cian Forde

School Principal

Date: _____



Appendix A –

Scoil San Carlo Senior National School Intimate Care Plan

Section A – Personal Details

Student's Name:	
Date Of Birth:	
Class Group:	
Parent(s)/Guardian(s):	

Section B – Care Intervention Required

Please tick the appropriate box:

Tasks	Intimate Care Intervention Required By Staff	Student Can Perform With Minimal Assistance & Supervision From Staff
Toileting		
Menstruation		
Hand Washing		
Dressing and Undressing for PE		
Supported Eating (including tube feeding)		
Administering Medicines (including skin creams)		

Section C – Facilities & Equipment

Facilities/Equipment Required	Yes/No	Comments
Changing table/bed		
Grab rails		
Step		
Locker for supplies		
Mirror at suitable height		
Disposal unit/bin		
Hoist		
Other moving and handling equipment		
Emergency alarm		
Other		

Section D – Supply of Materials

Supplies	Family Supplies	School Supplies
Pads/nappies		
Wipes		
Spare Clothes		
Cloths/Paper Towels		
Soap		
Disposable Gloves & Aprons		
Disposal Sacks		
Sterilising Fluid and equipment		
Toilet Paper		
Other		

Section E – Staff Involvement

Staff Member	Details of Training Required	Date Training Given

Section F – School Permission to provide Intimate Care

- ∂ I/We give permission for San Carlo Senior National School to provide intimate care to my/our child.
- ∂ I/We will advise the school of anything that may affect issues of personal care (e.g. if medication is changed or my child has an infection)
- ∂ I/We understand the procedures that will be carried out and will contact the school immediately if there are any concerns.

1. Signature: _____

Date: _____

Relationship to the child: _____

2. Signature: _____

Date: _____

Relationship to the child: _____

Appendix B –



Scoil San Carlo Senior National School

Record of Intimate Care Intervention

Student's Name:	
Date Of Birth:	
Class Group:	
Name(s) of staff involved:	

Date	Time	Procedure	Signature(s)	Comments