



Intimate Care Policy

School Philosophy and Mission Statement

St Kieran's College, as Ireland's oldest all-boys Catholic Secondary School, continues its founding aim of the pursuit of real excellence in education and formation, in the light of the Gospel, so as to allow all our students to realise the fullness of their potential.

Academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally our students are encouraged to strive for all that is possible in the relentless pursuit of perfecting their individual gifts and talents.

In so doing they bring to life the joy intended by our motto, "Hiems Transiit", for themselves, those they love and the community where they will live, serve and lead.

Rationale

The policy was devised to document agreed intimate care procedures to ensure appropriate safeguards were in place to protect the welfare and dignity of children who require intimate care at school or during school activities.

Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the genitals. Examples include care associated with continence as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

Practices and Procedures

All staff members and parents/guardians will be made aware of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement along with the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools published by the Department of Education and Skills.

The Stay Safe programme is taught in all classes as part of the Safety and Protection strand- unit of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.

Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. Staff who provide intimate care to children will be required to familiarise themselves with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools published by the DES.

St Kieran's College is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner and strictly adhere to Child Protection procedures at all times. Management and staff recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child will be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Every effort will be made to ensure that appropriate apparatus (e.g. changing bench) will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/ occupational therapist as required. The installation of any such apparatus will depend on the provision of funding from the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

Staff will be encouraged to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children and to take developmental changes such as the onset of puberty into account.

Staff members will always carefully communicate with each child who needs help with intimate care to determine their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc.) to discuss their needs and preferences. The child will be made aware of each procedure that is carried out and the reasons for it.

As a basic principle, children will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for themselves as they can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child receives intimate care. Where possible, one child will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present.

The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Each child's class teacher will act as an advocate to whom they will be able to communicate any issues or concerns that they may have about the quality of care they receive.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into by the Principal and the outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

The Intimate Care Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____.

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of
Management

Date: _____

Date: _____