

Intimate Care Policy

Ratified at BOM Meeting on 24th October 2023

SignedChairperson of Board of
Management

Signed
Principal

Date.....

Date of next reviewOctober 2026

Introduction

This policy is designed to ensure that all children attending Rush & Lusk ETNS (RaLET), their families and school staff feel children are treated with respect and that their right to privacy and dignity is upheld and actively promoted, while also ensuring that staff feel supported and safe while working with children. This is particularly important when dealing with the issue of Intimate Care needs.

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”* (HIQA 2013). In addition to this, intimate care may also include tasks such as help with feeding, oral care and hair care. The supervision of children while they are dressing and undressing will also be considered as intimate care.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of this policy are:

- To safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- To ensure that the dignity and privacy of the child involved is maintained at all times
- To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate manner

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SCHOOL ETHOS

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

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

- Should be aimed at meeting the needs of children
- Should respect the privacy and dignity of each child
- Should be consistent with professional integrity of staff members

The following procedure will apply in cases of:

- Wetting Incident
 - Soiling Incident
 - Vomiting on clothes
 - Ongoing toileting or care needs as outlined in a child's Personal Pupil Plan and referred to in a child's School Support Plus Plan.
- Changing a device (example: for a diabetic)
- Water/wet play incident or incident whereby a child requires a change of clothes

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS (I.E. WETTING, SOILING, VOMITING)

- Staff members act *‘in loco parentis’* and can deal with a toileting or vomiting accident in school. It is best practice to only provide help that is required by the child.
- Parents/guardians in our Junior Autism Class and Junior Infants Class have been asked to provide spare changes of clothes and underwear which will be kept in the school.

In the event of an accident, the following procedures are to be followed:

- If a child soils or vomits on him/herself, parents/guardians are contacted and asked to collect their child.
- Staff will assist the child to clean themselves and make them comfortable.
- The staff member should encourage the child to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Staff should wear protective gloves when assisting the changing of a child.
- After an incident of diarrhoea or vomiting, the child is advised to stay at home until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIFIC TOILETING OR INTIMATE CARE NEEDS

It may be the case that a child will have an ongoing need for assistance with toileting/intimate care. In all such situations the following guidelines and procedures must be followed:

The SNA/teacher will provide the child with a change of clothes and/or underwear as necessary.

- The child will change him or herself where possible.
- The SNA /teacher will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary.
- If a SNA/teacher is required to go into the toilet cubicle, a second adult should be in sight where possible.
- Wet/ soiled clothes are sent home in a plastic bag.
- Parents/guardians are asked to return “spare” clothes after washing.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Regular communication should occur between parents/ guardians and staff when a child’s toilet training is in progress.
- Where possible, parents/guardians should provide the school with professional reports (O.T., nurse, Early Intervention Team. Enable Ireland etc) and/or relevant contact details. Professional reports should recommend toileting strategies and support school staff in supporting the intimate care needs of the child. Professional reports may also indicate the need for specialised equipment, to ensure the dignity of the child at all times.
- Parents/guardians 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 or Wipes
 - ☐ Disposable gloves or Nappy Sacks
 - ☐ Spare underwear
 - ☐ Spare Clothes
 - ☐ Creams (if necessary and as detailed in the child’s Personal Pupil Plan)

2. SCHOOL

- A Personal Pupil Plan will be developed in partnership with the child’s class teacher, support teacher, designated SNAs, parents/guardians and relevant support services (Refer to **Appendix A** for Intimate Care section of PPP template).
- An application for SNA access and equipment will be completed if necessary.
- If a child is not toilet trained, and wears nappies/pull ups to school, toileting will be scheduled during the school day. If a child soils himself/herself, the child will be changed as soon as possible.
- Implementation of an Intimate Care Strategy should be tracked and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to continually monitor a child’s progress and promote the development of independence. Refer to **Appendix B** for the recording template.

PERSONAL PUPIL PLAN (PPP)

A written copy of the Personal Pupil Plan will be kept in the child’s file and Parents/guardians will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.

The Personal Pupil Plan must include:

- Details of specific care need
- Identification of the staff members involved in this care, including provisions for when a staff member may be absent.
- Details of additional equipment required and procedures for using same
- Child’s preferred means of communication include agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions.
- Child’s current level of ability
- Cultural and/or religious sensitivities
- Signature of Class Teacher
- Signature of Principal / SEN Coordinator SET

- Date of Care Plan implementation and review

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

While it is not possible to prescribe guidelines that will apply in all Intimate Care and Toileting situations, it is important that the following elements of good practice are adhered to:

- In the case that a child has an Intimate Care Strategy, teachers and SNAs should ensure that they are completely familiar with this.

The child's independence will be encouraged.

- There should be a minimum of two staff members within sight where possible.
- Address the child by name and ensure he/she is aware of the focus of the activity.
- Verbalise actions to the child in a reassuring way to prepare them for each procedure.
- Use visual cues for children with limited communication, e.g. pointing at a wipe or picture board.
- Use appropriate and professional language. Specific language may be detailed in the PPP.
- Respect the dignity and privacy of the child in a supportive manner at all times.
- Have all equipment and materials to hand before commencing.
- Use discreet observation if checking to see they need changing.
- Use PPE provided.
- Take all precautions when disposing of soiled material in the bin provided.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

This policy was drafted in September and October 2023 in consultation with representatives from both teaching and SNA staff with the principal and Deputy Principal.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on Tuesday 24th October, 2023.

This policy will be communicated to all parents/ guardians on their child's admission to the school.

REVIEW This policy will be reviewed at the end of 2026 (or earlier if necessary) and amended by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Appendix A
INTIMATE CARE / TOILETING PLAN

Child's Name	
Date of Birth	
Child's Class	
Relevant Staff	

Specific Care Needs		
Nature of Care Needs		
Child's Current Level of Ability		
Timeline & procedures for teaching new skills:		
Procedures for Care		
A= Applicable N/A = Non-applicable		
	Times and frequency each day when care is required	
	Staff to be involved in this care	
	Provisions for when named staff members are absent	
	Equipment required for this care	
	Procedures for using this equipment	
	Additional materials / resources needed	
	Procedures for storing and disposing of materials. Please note parents/guardians are responsible for providing the school with necessary materials	
	Cultural / religious sensitivities (if any)	
	Date of Intimate care meeting:	Date intimate care plan finalised
	Review Date:	

Individuals involved in this plan	NAME -PRINTED	Signature
Parent / guardian 1		
Parent / guardian 2		
Class Teacher		
SNA 1		
SNA 2		
SET		
Other Relevant Personnel		
Principal		
Therapists		

Appendix B

INDIVIDUAL RECORD

Child's name: _____

Levels of support:

Assistance (A)

Independence (I)

Visual (V)

Date	Time	Undress	Wipe after Urination	Wipe after bowel	Re-dress	Wash & dry hands	Flush	Accident	Staff initials