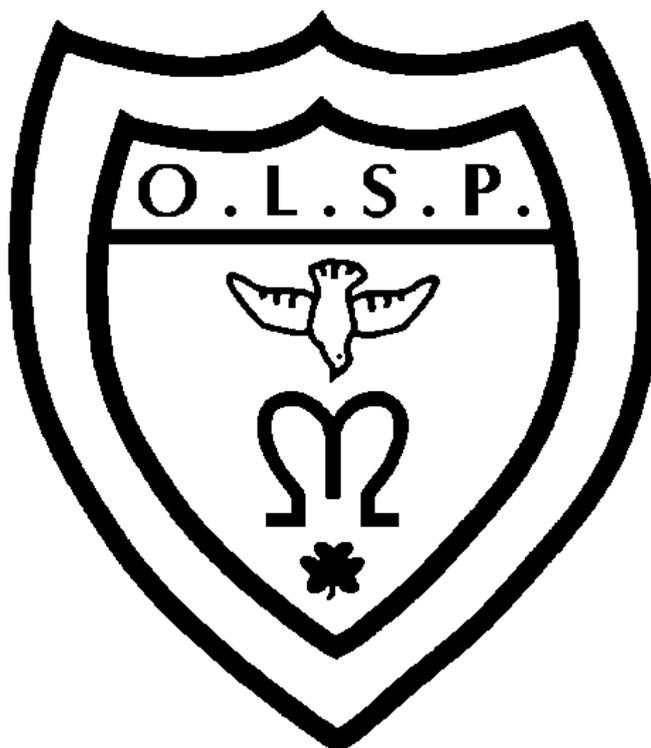


Our Lady and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Nursery and Primary School



Intimate Care Policy **A family of schools working together**

Last Review: Autumn Term 2016
Next Review: Autumn Term 2017

Our Lady and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Nursery and Primary School

Intimate Care Policy

Mission:

The Catholic Faith and the principles of the Gospel are central to the daily life of Our Lady and St Patrick's School. We are committed to:

“Living, Loving and Learning Together in God’s Way”

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to give clear guidance to members of staff involved in intimate care.

Definition

Intimate care is any care which involves the washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care.

Guidelines

Staff undertake their duty of intimate care in a professional manner at all times.

Staff treat the children with respect when intimate care is given.

A child's dignity is always preserved with a high-level of privacy, choice and control.

Staff adapt practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes.

The child is supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible for their age and abilities.

Wherever possible the same adult, on a regular basis, does not care for the same child. This ensures as far as possible that over familiar relationships are discouraged from developing.

Regardless of age and ability the views of children with special needs are sought and where deemed appropriate acted on.

Health and Safety

When dealing with children that require intimate care, all staff wear gloves provided by the school.

Any waste is disposed of in a safe and appropriate manner.

Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children in school exercise caution in the use of physical contact. The following guidance is viewed as best practice:

- Touching is limited to the minimum time required and is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.
- Staff are ready to justify actions they have taken and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.
- Repeated physical contact with an individual is likely to raise questions unless it has been formally agreed.

Children in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and is not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement takes account of the circumstances surrounding a child's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress.

First Aid

A child's dignity is always considered whilst administering first aid and where contact of a more intimate nature is required another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be informed of the task being carried out.

Physical Education

Some staff are likely to come into contact with children from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or in the use of equipment. Staff are aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation. Where it is anticipated that a child might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable child.

Changing Areas

Children are always given dignity and privacy when required to be changed. However a certain level of supervision is essential to safeguard them with regard to health and safety consideration and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. Staff are aware that they must be vigilant about their own conduct when supervising children in a state of undress.

Out of School Trips/Residential

Staff take particular care when supervising children in a less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or at an after school club. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of children is no different than at school. Staff must act appropriately at all times and be vigilant about their own conduct.

To ensure children's safety increased vigilance is required when monitoring their behaviour on residential, or other school trips. It is important to exercise caution so that a child is not compromised and a member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour.

On occasions some children might be short of personal funds and this might lead to embarrassment. It would be acceptable for a member of staff to subsidise a child provided that this was disclosed to colleagues.

If staff come into contact with children whilst off duty, they must behave as though in a professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide intimate care off the school site they should seek advice from their line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.