



# Presentation Senior School

*"A community of learners inspired by the vision and values of Nano Nagle"*

## Intimate Care Policy

### Introductory Statement

This policy was collaboratively devised in March 2014 by all of the school stakeholders in accordance with the school's agreed policy on policy formation as published on the school's website.

### Rationale

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

### Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Respect, empathy, trust and integrity are the four core values central to all relationships between all people in our school community. It is agreed that, in order to adhere to these core values with respect to the delivery of intimate care, children receiving this care must always feel comfortable and confident that their privacy and dignity will be appropriately preserved and protected at all times.

### Policy Content

#### 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 and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing or bathing.

#### Practices and Procedures

- 1 All staff members and parents/guardians will be made aware of the school's Child Protection Policy along with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools published by the Department of Education and Skills. Copies of these documents are published on the school website.
- 2 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 will be encouraged to reinforce the personal safety messages within the home.
- 3 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 familiarize



themselves with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools published by the DES.

- 4 Presentation Senior School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner 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.
- 5 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).
- 6 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 and menstruation into account. Wherever possible staff, who are involved in the intimate care of children, will not be involved with the delivery of relationship and sex education (RSE) to those children as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.
- 7 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.
- 8 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.
- 9 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.
- 10 Parents/guardians will be involved with their child's intimate care arrangements on a regular basis. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing and equal opportunities legislation.
- 11 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.
- 12 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.



## **Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014. A copy of the policy is stored electronically in the school plan which is available to all staff. A copy of the policy is also published on the school website.

## **Implementation**

This policy will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014.

## **Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by management and staff. The policy will be reviewed along with the child protection policy at the first board of management meeting of each school year. It may be reviewed at other times of the school-year if a review is requested by one of the school stakeholders.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fr. Pdraig McMahon  
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Tunney  
Principal

