**St Daigh’s N S**

**Intimate Care, Toileting and Changing Policy**

St. Daigh’s 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. St. Daigh’s recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress.

**Our approach to best practice**

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child’s welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in lifting and moving) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

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

The child 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 him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

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 is toileted. Where possible one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented. It is the policy of St Daigh’s N S that two adults (SNAs and or teachers) will be present, as discreetly as is possible, when any intimate care is given.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, whilst at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/guardians on a regular basis and recorded on the child’s care plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents/guardians will be taken into account wherever possible within constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child’s presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. she/he will immediately report concerns to the DLP for child protection attention.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/guardians 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.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (Child Protection Procedures for details).

**First Aid and Intimate Care**

Staff who administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil’s dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. assisting with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing), another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Regular requirement of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between St. Daigh’s, those with parental responsibility and the necessity for such requirements should be reviewed regularly. The child’s views must also be actively sought and, in particular, any discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

**Physical Education and Other Skills Coaching**

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.

Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.

Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

**Changing Clothes**

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing 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 or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering changing rooms, 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 vigilant about their own conduct, e.g. Adults must not change in the same place as children.

**Out of school trips, clubs etc.**

Employees should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities should also be familiar with St. Daigh’s policy on trips and outings regarding out of school activities.

To ensure pupils’ safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring their behaviour on field trips, holidays etc. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behaviour. On occasions (field trips/days out, etc.) some pupils might be short of funds and would be embarrassed or singled out if this were known. It would be acceptable for a member of staff to subsidise a child, provided that this was disclosed to colleagues.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises where a chaperone will not be present, are not permitted unless specific approval is obtained from the principal or other senior colleague with delegated authority. Staff should not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a child.

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

**Procedures for changing children**

The following procedure will apply in cases of

Wetting

Soiling

Vomiting on Clothes

At all times we will maintain the privacy and dignity of the child.

The teacher/SNA will provide the child with a change of underwear, which the child uses to change him/herself. If necessary, we will provide a complete change of clothes. The teacher/ SNA will assist the child with dressing only if absolutely necessary. If the child has soiled him/herself the parents/guardians will be contacted in order to take their child home. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the teacher/SNA will do all that is necessary to make the child comfortable.

Wet/soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag and parent/guardian will be informed of what has happened when they collect their child. Parents/guardians are asked to return the clothes given to the child, washed and folded.

Changes of clothes and underwear are kept in the ASD/ GML rooms. Junior teachers also have a change of clothes in their classrooms.

**Adoption of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 8th March 2023

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: March 2024 or earlier if required.