

CEIST

Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust



Intimate Care Policy

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1.0: Introduction

Presentation School Wexford is a Catholic Secondary School, guided by the ideals of Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Congregation. The school is committed to the pursuit of excellence in a caring environment.

2.0: Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Presentation Secondary School, Wexford operates under the trusteeship of C.E.I.S.T. – Catholic Education-an Irish Schools Trust.

- C.E.I.S.T. is the collaborative trustee body for the voluntary secondary school of the congregation of the Presentation Sisters, Christian Retreat Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and Daughters of Charity.
- C.E.I.S.T. is committed to honouring this rich heritage, promoting inclusion, hospitality, excellence and compassion in a teaching and learning environment inspired by the Gospel and by the unique wisdom of its respective Founders.
- C.E.I.S.T. aims, in a spirit of collaboration, to continually invite its members to reach their potential, in the context of a school faith community, which seeks to consciously embody a true expression of the Reign of God as announced by Jesus Christ.
- C.E.I.S.T. is committed to building school faith communities where good personal relationships are fostered, where the staff are supported and facilitated in their vital role within the school.
- C.E.I.S.T. faces unprecedented challenges today as it attempts to anticipate, define and meet the evolving needs of young people in the Third Millennium.
- C.E.I.S.T. schools endeavour to work closely with members of other Christian traditions in a spirit of ecumenical dialogue, emphasising what is held in common while valuing their own unique Catholic identity and Church community.



2.0: Rationale

This document outlines the approach to Intimate Care in Presentation Secondary School, Wexford.

The Intimate Care Policy has been developed to safeguard children and staff and should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Safeguarding Policy.

This policy applies to everyone involved in the intimate care of students in our school community. The individual's safety, dignity and privacy are of utmost importance. We appreciate that students may feel especially vulnerable when being helped with intimate care and the staff involved need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs.

3.0: Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents/carers.

Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care
- Cleaning up a child after wetting/soiling accident

4.0: Principles of Intimate Care.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views considered.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

5.0: School Responsibilities.

Presentation Secondary School, Wexford is committed to working with parents / guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students who require assistance with intimate care.

All staff working with children must be appropriately vetted.

Vetting includes:

- Only named vetted staff identified should undertake the intimate care of students.
- The Principal must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of students are familiar with, and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated policies and Procedures.
- Our AEN team and SNA team must be trained in the specific types of intimate care that they carry out and fully understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines within the context of their work.
- The SNA team will agree to and sign an Intimate Care Plan with the parents/ guardians and student, and other health professionals if appropriate.
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and students (if appropriate).
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the student's personal file and consent forms signed by the parents / carers and student (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed in the Intimate Care plan between the School, parents /carers and student (if appropriate).
- Intimate care arrangements that have been specially agreed with a parent are reviewed annually. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), are sought and considered to inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice they must report this to the DLP.

6.0 Guidelines for Best Practice.

- Disabled students can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs and follow agreed care plans.
- Involve the student in her intimate care. Try to encourage the student's independence as far as possible in her intimate care. Where the student is fully dependant talk with her about what is going to be done and give her a choice where possible. Check your practice by asking the student/ partner any likes or while carrying out intimate care.
- Treat the student with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the student's age and situation.
- Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent and only carried out by the named staff according to the Intimate Care Plan.
- Sensitive information about a child's intimate care is confidential.

- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image. Confident self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable. The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important. Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.
- If you observe any unusual marks, bruises or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the DLP for Child Protection. Complete a written record of concern.
- If during the intimate care of a student you accidentally hurt her, or the child misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure her safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard Students and staff.
- **Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained.**

7.0: General Care & Related Policies

Report any concerns about the conduct of a staff member who is assisting a child with intimate care practice to your DLP in accordance with the school's Child Safeguarding Policy.

Related School Policies

- Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding - Code of Conduct
- Student Support & Pastoral Care Policy
- AEN Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Vetting Policy

This policy is in keeping with the school ethos of providing a safe and secure environment for learning for all pupils and the wider school community.

8.0 Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 6th June 2024 following consultation with all stakeholders.

Chairperson: Mary Culleton

Date 6th June 2024

Principal: Billy Ryan

Date: 6th June 2024