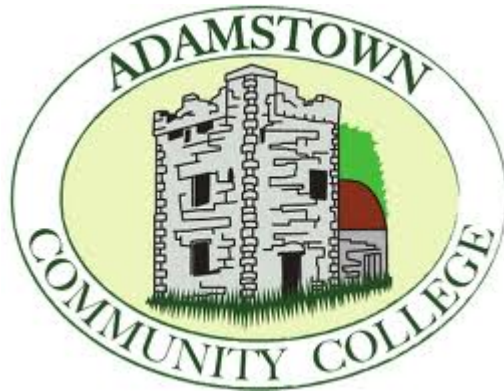


ADAMSTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE



INTIMATE CARE POLICY

This policy applies to students who are unable to carry out a procedure to intimate personal areas because of physical difficulties or other special needs. The policy also applies to supervision of students involved in intimate care.

In Adamstown Community College we are dedicated to helping each student to achieve his/her individual potential with the provision of a quality system of supporting additional needs as being central to this commitment.

Aim:

- To ensure that the dignity, privacy and care of the student involved is paramount.
- To develop a framework of procedures whereby intimate care requirements are dealt with in an appropriate and dignified manner.
- Promote good practice in this sensitive area.
- To ensure that all staff responsible for the intimate care of students will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times as it is acknowledged that these adults are in a position of great trust.
- To ensure that a child who requires intimate care is provided with a positive experience and is not attended to in a way that causes pain or distress.

Definition:

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more procedural tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing. Attending to a student when he/she is undressed or partially dressed, washing (including intimate parts), helping to use the toilet, changing nappies or carrying out a procedure that requires direct or indirect contact with an intimate area of a student. The supervision of students while they are dressing or undressing will also be considered as

intimate care.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management:

The Board of Management will ensure that this policy is cognisant of the Child Safeguarding Statement. The Board is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of students will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The Board of Management acknowledges that these adults are in a position of great trust.

Principal:

It is the responsibility of the Principal to safeguard and promote the safety and welfare of the students in Adamstown Community College. A meeting will be held with parents/guardians/carers and other relevant professionals to discuss the intimate care needs of the student and to devise a care plan. The Principal will ensure appropriate and safe accommodation is provided for students who require intimate care. Appropriate training will be sourced by the Principal for staff involved in providing intimate care. The Principal will act as the Designated Liaison person in the event of any reports received relating to Child Protection.

Staff

All staff involved in supporting children with intimate care needs will work in close partnership with parents/guardians/carers and other professionals to share information and provide continuity of care.

Information on intimate care of individual students will be treated as confidential.

Staff who undertake intimate care must follow appropriate school protocol in terms of health and safety and hygiene. The school management will provide the necessary equipment to ensure same; hoists, disposable aprons and gloves etc.

All staff providing intimate care are expected to adhere to 'best practice' as outlined in this policy.

Parents/Guardians/Carers

It is expected that parents/guardians/carers will notify the school, on enrolment, of any toileting needs and more specifically intimate care needs as defined above.

It is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians/Carers to supply the school with resources to carry out toileting and intimate care needs of their child.

Best Practice:

In order to ensure the dignity of the student and to ensure safeguarding measures are implemented it is recognised by the Board of Management of Adamstown Community College that the following procedures are to be used to promote best practice when providing

intimate care needs.

Students who require regular assistance with intimate care have written Care Plans or Health Care Plans agreed by staff, parents/carers and any other professionals actively involved. Ideally the plan should be agreed at a meeting at which all key staff and the student are present where possible/appropriate. Any historical concerns (such as past abuse) should be taken into account. The plan should be reviewed as necessary, but at least annually, and at any time of change of circumstances, e.g. for residential trips or staff changes (where the staff member concerned is providing intimate care). They should also take into account procedures for educational visits/day trips. Other items to be included in the care plan are:

- Specific Care Need
- Number of staff required to meet the needs of the student
- Identification of the staff members involved
- Additional equipment required
- Child's preferred means of communication to include agreed terminology for body parts and bodily functions.
- Child's level of ability
- Cultural and/or religious sensitivities
- Signature of Relevant Staff Member
- Signature of Parent
- Date of Care Plan

Where a care plan is not in place, parents/guardians/carers will be informed the same day by school management or the SEN Co-ordinator if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). Accurate records should be kept when a child requires assistance with intimate care; these can be brief but should as a minimum, include full date, times and any comments such as changes in the child's behaviour. It should be clear who was present in every case.

Where children may require ongoing support for their intimate care needs such as toileting, parents will be asked to sign a consent form at the beginning of the school year.

All students will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual student to do as much for his/herself as possible.

There must be careful communication with each student who needs help with intimate care in line with their preferred means of communication (verbal, symbolic, etc) to discuss their needs and preferences. Where the student is of an appropriate age and level of understanding permission should be sought before starting an intimate procedure.

Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the student personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate with all children in a way that reflects their ages. SEN advice suggests that reducing the numbers of staff involved goes some way to preserving the child's privacy and dignity. Wherever possible, the student's wishes and feelings should be sought and considered.

Adults who assist students with intimate care must be employees of the ETB and therefore have the expected range of recruitment checks. E.g. Garda Vetting. Sensitive information will

be shared only with those who need to know.

Under no circumstances will a member of staff use a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.

Medical Procedures

Students who have a disability and have additional needs may require assistance with invasive or non-invasive medical procedures such as the administration of rectal medication, managing catheters or colostomy bags. These procedures will be discussed with parents/guardians/carers, documented in the health care plan and will only be carried out by staff who have been trained to do so.

It is particularly important that these staff should follow appropriate infection control guidelines and ensure that any medical items are disposed of correctly.

Any members of staff who administer first aid should be appropriately trained. If an examination of a child is required in an emergency aid situation it is advisable to have another adult present, with due regard to the child's privacy and dignity.

Child Protection

The Board of Management and staff of Adamstown Community College recognises that students with additional needs and who are disabled are particularly vulnerable to all types of abuse. Therefore, the school's child protection procedures will be strictly adhered to.

If a student becomes unusually distressed or very unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, this should be reported to the school management.

This policy has been adopted by the Board of Management of Adamstown Community College.