

Intimate Care Policy

Mahindra International School- Internal Procedure

Updated: June 2024

Version: 3.0

Next update: 2025-26

Introduction

MIS is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of learners will undertake their duties in a professional manner and be respectful at all times. The staff will receive annual updates and training in terms of POCSO and other Indian Laws regarding child safeguarding. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding how to interact with learners at MIS have been developed to safeguard both the learners and the staff. They apply to everyone involved in the intimate care of children, including medical staff.

No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain.

Please note: The term parent/s is used to refer to parents, carers or legal guardians

Aims

The aims of this document:

- To provide reassurance to staff and parent/s
- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of the learners
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into account

Principles

- Every child has the right to feel safe and secure
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual
- Every child has the right to remain healthy
- Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs
- Every child has the right to be consulted in their own intimate care as far as possible depending on age and the circumstances
- Every child has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs
- Every child (and parent) has the right to information and procedures for any complaint or queries they may have regarding intimate care

Intimate Care Policy

The Intimate Care policy has been developed in line with the *International Intimate Care Policies and Guidelines Regarding Children*.

Intimate care is any care that includes the following:

- Providing first aid
- Providing comfort to an upset or distressed child
- Assisting a child with a **specific medical procedure** and who is not able to do this independently
- Assisting a child to change their own clothes
- Changing and/or washing a child who has soiled themselves (mainly in Early Years or Primary)
- Assisting with toilet needs (Early Years)
- Supervising a child involved in their own intimate self-care routine as needed (Early Years and lower Primary)
- The secondary students are responsible to deal with their own needs but can seek assistance from the Nurse for emergencies in terms of :
 - Place to wash and change
 - Set of PE uniform to change into
 - Soap, towel etc. to carry out their own washing
 - Rinsing out their own clothes before packing them to take home
 - Disposal of own clothes or the provision of a bag to take them home to be washed fully
 - Sanitary towels

Parents have the responsibility to inform the school in writing of any known intimate care needs for their child beyond simple toileting procedure in the early years.

Our Approach to Good Practice

The child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance. Staff who provide intimate care are trained by a professional to do so (including Child Protection, POCSO and Moving and Handling) are fully aware of current practice guidelines.

The school nurse will run regular updates for the maids involved in the care of the early year's students. This will include the health and safety concerns for the maids i.e. the need to wear gloves.

A student should be given privacy to care of their own intimate care after soiling themselves but may request help.

If a maid or teacher becomes aware of an odor the child should discreetly be taken to the bathroom to change /wash and if necessary help given (mainly below P1)

Any staff member offering support must be responsive to any distress shown

Wherever possible staff who are involved in the intimate care of children will usually be involved with the delivery of appropriate and inappropriate touch and sex education to the children in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.

Children will always be encouraged to independently handle their own intimate care needs when and wherever possible.

No member of staff will be in a locked bathroom with any child at any given time. ALT and student support personnel will, from time to time, spot check bathrooms.

Any member of staff who has concerns regarding the conduct of fellow staff member should report it to the Child Protection Officer (CPO).

Any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling notice on a child and not accounted for by a known injury or if the child is reluctant to disclose how the injury occurred should be reported to the CPO

Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up by Student Support Services and the Medical Team for individual children, as appropriate, to reflect the individual needs. 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 trained adult, unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons will be clearly documented.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's intimate care plan. The needs and wishes of the child and parents will be taken into account, wherever possible, within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

Comforting upset and distressed students

In Early Years and Primary this will be more frequent and will often involve the need for physical contact. This should be kept to the minimum required and at no time should it be considered intimate.

- Children should be asked if they require "a hug" and consent given
- Children should learn to ask adults if they can hug them

Any adult who is uncomfortable with the touch of a child should gently but firmly discourage it up to PYP 2. For PYP 3 upwards the staff members should firmly state it is inappropriate and makes them uncomfortable.

Swimming

There must be a level of supervision, but children should be afforded privacy too. For PYP 3 upwards any intention to enter the changing room should be announced clearly by the teacher/TA

Residential trips

From PYP 3 upwards the students are involved in residential trips, and these are seen as a valuable and integral part of our curriculum. These may involve specific intimate care procedures.

- A level of supervision for showering is needed to ensure the health and safety of the students – again any intention to enter a bathroom must be announced
- No contact with students who are undressed to shower
- Adults may not change or shower in the same space and at the same time as the students

Communicating the policy and procedure with Parents

Early years students will need help with toileting and parents will be made aware via the policy that the maids will do this on a day-to-day basis. In the case of illness, they will understand that the school nurse or doctor may be involved

Primary students will be asked to wash themselves in case of a toileting accident by the teacher, TA or school medical personnel. If they are too unwell to do this help can be given and again parents will be made aware of this via the policy.

As the child may not be familiar with the maids they should not be asked to deal with Primary aged students (PYP1 to PYP 5)

Partnership with parents is an important principle in any school and is particularly necessary in relation to children needing intimate care protocols.

Much of the information required to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible for the child should be given by the parents, including knowledge and understanding of any religious/cultural sensitivities.

Prior permission must be obtained from parents before Intimate care procedures are carried out (see appendix 7). Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with staff to ensure their child's needs are identified, understood and met. This will include involvement with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Health Care Plans and any other plans which identify the need for intimate care. Exchanging information with parents is essential through face-to-face contact, telephone or written correspondence.

Writing an Intimate Care Plan for Children Identified with specific needs.

Where a routine/ regular procedure is required an intimate care plan should be agreed in discussion with the child, school staff, parents and relevant health personnel before enrolment. The plan should be signed by all who contribute and reviewed on an agreed basis.

Pupil Voice

The school will use the appropriate terminology for private parts of the body and functions to be used by staff. We use medical/scientific terminology.

Determining a child's wishes by observation or speaking to them to explain what will happen etc. is essential and responding to their reactions to intimate care. Where there is any doubt that a child is able to make an informed choice on these issues, the child's parents/carers are usually in the best position to act as advocates.

It is the responsibility of all staff caring for a child to ensure they are aware of the child's method and level of communication. Communication methods may include words, signs, symbols, body movements and eye pointing.

Staff Professional Development

- Staff will receive training in working practices which comply with Health & Safety. This will be carried out by the school nurse and/or CPO?
- All staff will receive Safeguarding/Child Protection training as part of Whole School Training.
- All Early Years and Primary staff will be trained to speak and handle students in an age-appropriate manner

- Staff will 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.
- Staff will receive Moving and Handling training where appropriate.
- Newly appointed staff, including support staff will be closely supervised until completion of a successful probationary period and the completion of POCSO training.
- The school will keep a dated record of all training undertaken.
- Staff must understand and respect the needs of children from different racial and cultural backgrounds and specialist advice is to be sought when necessary

In addition, identified staff members should be able to;

- Access other procedures and policies regarding the welfare of the child e.g. Child Protection Policy
- Communicate with and involve the child in the intimate care process
- Offer choices, wherever possible
- Develop, where possible, greater independence with the procedure of intimate care.

The Protection of Children

The School's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to.

While carrying out any intimate care for students, if a member of staff has any concerns about changes in a child's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. they will immediately report concerns to the designated CPO. In the case of maids observing this they would inform the class teacher or medical personnel who then must inform the CPO.

The CPO will then follow the MIS reporting flow chart and further advice will be sought from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Vulnerability to Abuse

Children should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth. It is essential that all staff are familiar with the school's Child Protection policy and procedures.

If a child is hurt accidentally, he or she should be immediately reassured and the adult should check that they are safe and the incident reported immediately to the designated line manager.

Relevant Policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other School policies:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Parent Student Handbook in Primary
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying policy

Appendix

Record of intimate care intervention for Grade 3 upwards	
Child's Name:	
Name of support staff involved:	
Date:	
Time:	
Procedure:	
Further comments:	
Signature(s):	

Independence Plan – Early Years	
Child's Name:	
DOB:	
Date of Plan:	
Name of support staff involved:	
I can do:	
I will try to do:	
Review date:	
Parents/Carer:	
Child (if appropriate):	
Personal Assistant:	
Case Manager:	

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CHILD AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT	
Child's Name:	
DOB:	
Personal Assistant's Name:	
Date of Agreement:	
<p>Personal Assistant</p> <p>As the Personal Assistant helping you in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I am the identified person, I will stop what I am doing to help you • I will avoid all unnecessary delays • I will treat you with respect and ensure privacy and dignity at all times • I will ask permission before touching you or your clothing • I will check that you are as comfortable as possible, both physically and emotionally • If I am working with a colleague to help you, I will ensure that we talk in a way that does not embarrass you • I will look and listen carefully if there is something you would like to change about your Toilet Management Plan. 	
<p>Child</p> <p>As the child who requires help in the toilet you can expect me to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will try, whenever possible to let you know a few minutes in advance, that I am going to need the toilet, so that you can make yourself available and be prepared to help me • I will try to use the toilet at break time or at the agreed times • I will tell you if I want you to stay in the room or stay with me in the toilet. • I will tell you straight away if you are doing anything that makes me feel uncomfortable or embarrassed • I may talk to other trusted people about how you help me. They too will let you know what I would like to change 	
We will review this agreement on:	
Child (if appropriate):	
Parent/Carer:	
Personal Assistant:	