



## Salesian Secondary College

### Intimate Care Policy

#### **Introduction**

Intimate care is a key area of a person's self-image and respect and as such is vital that it is practised in a sensitive manner. It is essential that the needs and the rights of the students and staff are protected and that the highest standards of best practice are ensured at all times in the area of intimate personal assistance.

#### **Definition of Intimate Care**

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a student, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body.

Direct contact involves physical contact between the student and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts.

**Indirect contact** involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the student to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care includes; dressing and undressing (underwear), support with using the toilet, changing of continence pads, washing intimate body parts, showering (if required) and menstrual care.

#### **Rationale**

The formulation of this policy is to give direction to staff with regard to supporting students in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also protecting the integrity of the staff involved.

#### **Scope of this Policy**

This policy applies to all staff involved in supporting students attending this school with regard to their intimate care needs. It does not apply to Personal Care i.e. tasks associated with outer appearance which is by nature less intrusive such as skin care, hair care, washing face, hands and teeth.

This policy recognises the absolute right of a parent / guardian to be present during intimate care or to opt to undertake the intimate care of their child themselves on the school site. In such a case, the parent / guardian's access to the site is through Reception.

## **1. Relationship to School Ethos**

This policy supports the school mission statement in providing appropriately to meet each child's individual needs. In keeping with Salesian Secondary College mission statement, students will be supported to become as independent as possible in managing their own intimate care needs.

## **2. Aims**

The aim of this policy is

- To give direction to staff with regard to supporting students in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also protecting the integrity of the staff member.
- To promote best practice throughout the school within the framework of the current policy.

## **3. Procedures**

### **1) Delivering Intimate Care**

- An intimate care plan will be drawn up for students who have significant support needs with regards to intimate care.
- The intimate care plan will be drawn up by a team of people including the student, the staff working with the student and, if relevant, a family member.
- The plan will identify:
  - Intimate Care tasks required by the pupil
  - Support needs to carry out each task
  - Resources required to carry out each task
  - Risk management in relation to each task

In drawing up the plan consideration should be given to the wishes of the individual concerned and where relevant the preferences of their parents/guardians.

Support needs should include the staff requirements to carry out each intimate care task. Staffing levels should be reviewed with the relevant staff and parents as the need arises during the course of the school year.

In a situation where a staff member is obliged to undertake intimate care assistance on his/her own, that staff member will notify another staff member before assisting the student that their assistance may be required.

- In case of a student requiring manual handling as part of meeting their intimate care needs, the manual handling procedure should be defined in the Pupils File.
- The intimate care plan should indicate that the students manual handling guidelines be followed with regard to the specific lift/transfer.
- The intimate care plan will detail procedures which maximise the dignity and privacy of the student.
- The plan should ensure that the student is involved to the greatest possible extent in preparation for and carrying out of the task.
- The intimate care plan should be reviewed as required

## **2) Maintaining the dignity and privacy of a student.**

- The staff member should be familiar with the student's particular needs and preferences as outlined in their intimate care plan.
- Intimate care should be undertaken in an environment where the student's privacy can be maintained; only those who are involved in helping with the care task should be present in the room.
- Persons on placement should NOT be involved in supporting pupils intimate care needs.
- The pupils intimate care needs should only be discussed in a private setting where confidentiality can be maintained.
- Before commencing an intimate care task, the staff member should explain to the pupil, using an appropriate method of communication, what they are about to do and how they will do it.
- Physical contact during intimate care assistance should be affirmative and supportive.
- Staff will check in advance that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on outings.

## **3) Ensuring the safety of the student and staff members.**

- The environment should support the implementation of the pupils Intimate Care Plan in a safe and dignified way.
- Staff members should ensure that they are fully trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual.
- Staff members should use protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks.

#### **4) Maintaining the integrity of the staff.**

- Staff members who are required to provide intimate care support to pupils attending Salesian Secondary College should ensure they are familiar with and comply with this policy.
- Management should ensure that any staff member who is required to provide intimate care is made aware of this policy and receives the appropriate advice/training prior to supporting a pupil in intimate care.
- Management should ensure that staff members carrying out intimate care fully understand the delicacy of the situation and the potential for misinterpretation.
- Management should ensure staff members involved in providing intimate care support are given the opportunity to advance their skills and expertise in the area.
- In a situation where lack of resources result in intimate care being delivered in a way which contravenes a pupils intimate care plan, the staff member concerned should inform the Principal/ Deputy Principal at the first opportunity.
- As a reasonable precaution and in keeping with best practice, a staff member will, where possible, make their intention and purpose known to another staff member, before commencing an intimate care task.
- In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member should report this concern immediately to the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

#### **5) Reporting.**

If, during the provision of intimate care assistance.....

- The pupil seems unusually sore, tender or bruised
- The pupil seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The pupil has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause

.....the staff member involved in the intimate care assistance should immediately report such incident to the Designated Liaison Person. The Children First Guidelines will be followed at all times.

#### **6) Roles and Responsibilities.**

The overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school rests with the Principal. This policy belongs to the Board of Management and it is the responsibility of the Board to delegate and support the Principal in its implementation. All staff have a responsibility to follow through on all the guidelines within the policy.

#### **7) Implementations and Review**

This policy will be implemented from the date of ratification and will be reviewed annually.

### **8) Evaluation**

School Management will accept feedback from staff, students and parents made through the proper use of the appropriate channels i.e staff meetings, student committees and PSAC. This feedback will inform periodic evaluation of the policy by management.

**This policy is incorporated into the body of school policy from the date of ratification.**

**Proposed date of review:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of ratification:** \_\_\_\_\_