

Intimate Care Policy

A. PURPOSE

Instituto Thomas Jefferson Zona Esmeralda expects all collaborators within the School to recognise the actions to be taken when a student presents a need for intimate care.

We recognise that the protection of our students is of the utmost importance within our School. Students are often in the best position to identify risk situations and to seek help for themselves or for other students.

1. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Instituto Thomas Jefferson Zona Esmeralda aims to:

- Provide a safe and positive environment that promotes student growth and learning.
- Outline the systems and procedures in place to ensure that students are safe within the School.
- Raise awareness among all collaborators and parents regarding matters related to Intimate Care.
- Ensure effective communication between collaborators and parents in relation to Intimate Care situations.
- Establish effective procedures for collaborators who may be involved in situations related to Intimate Care.
- Be clear with all parties involved, including students, parents, and guardians, regarding the Intimate Care Policy.

Student: Any learner enrolled at Instituto Thomas Jefferson Zona Esmeralda, regardless of age, as well as visiting minors.

Collaborator: Any individual employed by Instituto Thomas Jefferson Zona Esmeralda, regardless of their position or role.

A. SCOPE

The Intimate Care Policy shall be endorsed and signed by the General Director. This policy shall be adopted across all levels of the organisation.

B. DEFINITIONS

Intimate Care refers to any activity required for the personal care and intimate hygiene of a child, including but not limited to:

- Washing and personal hygiene
- Dressing and undressing
- Supervision of a child while washing or carrying out personal hygiene
- Supervision of a child who is experiencing pain or discomfort in an intimate area.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

- Safeguard the rights of the child.
- Ensure that all children who require intimate care are treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity, in a manner that promotes their wellbeing.
- Protect the child's personal privacy.
- Protect the adults who are required to support children with intimate care needs.
- Raise awareness and provide clear guidance on appropriate actions when it is necessary to assist a student with intimate care.
- Inform parents about how intimate care is provided within the School.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns regarding intimate care practices.

D. PROCEDURES

All collaborators involved in any form of intimate care must be aware of the potential risk of allegations of poor practice. Therefore, all possible precautions must be taken to minimise this risk. These protective measures include:

- Whenever intimate care is provided, a second collaborator must be nearby. If the child is changing or washing independently, the door may be closed but must not be locked. If assistance from a collaborator is required, the door must remain open.
- Where possible, the child should be allowed to give verbal consent to the person assisting them.
- Where possible, the child should be allowed to choose the sequence of care.
- Staff must remain attentive to the student's reactions and report to a member of the Medical Services Team and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead any behaviour, symptoms, or physical signs observed during the intimate care process that appear unusual or concerning.
- When a student needs to change clothes, wash, or carry out personal hygiene due to having become wet in the bathroom, soiled, having vomited, or experiencing incontinence, the responsible collaborator will ask the student to undress and dress independently in a space that respects their privacy, while supervising to ensure that the student dresses and cleans themselves appropriately.
- When a student does not know how, or is unable, to wash and/or change independently, the responsible collaborator must inform a colleague that they are going to assist the child with undressing, dressing, and/or washing.
- Upon completion, staff must ensure that soiled clothing is placed in a bag and returned to the parents, informing them of the reason for the change of clothing.
- Whenever a situation arises in which a student requires washing and/or a change of clothing, the class teacher, Grade Leader, and/or a member of the Medical Services Team must inform parents by telephone and/or email.

These guidelines may vary depending on the age and response of the child. For older students, it is also important to provide reassurance and comfort while maximising their privacy. At all times, regardless of age, the following must be ensured:

- Treat the child with dignity and respect and guarantee their privacy at all times.
- Protect the child's self-esteem and body image. Positive self-esteem and body awareness are protective factors against potential situations of abuse. No comments should be made about the child's physical appearance.
- If the child is fully dependent, explain what is going to happen and, where possible, offer choices.
- Be aware of your own limitations and only carry out activities that you understand and feel competent and confident performing. Do not hesitate to ask questions or seek support if you are unsure how to proceed.

- Inform a member of the Personalised Education Department and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as well as the parents, of any concerns that may arise during the intimate care process.
- If, accidentally, during the provision of intimate care a child is injured or a situation arises that could be misinterpreted, reassure the child, ensure their safety, and report the incident in writing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Reviewed by:
Charles John Kelly General Director
Elsa Islas Molinar Designated Safeguarding Lead