

Good Shepherd Primary & Nursery School

Period Dignity Policy



UNCRC Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy.

Signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors: _____

Date: _____

Aims of the Policy:

This policy will address the importance of accessibility and availability of essential care in Good Shepherd Primary & Nursery School. We aim to ensure that

- Pupils are provided with facts about menstruation as part of our RSE curriculum
- Children are given a comprehensive understanding of menstrual wellness, and how this impacts physical and emotional wellbeing
- We educate children about menstrual hygiene – essential facts and how to deal with related situations
- Negative attitudes, myths and stereotypes are challenged
- Children are provided with sanitary products if needed

This policy has been developed in line with the following guidance:

- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 www.legislation.gov.uk
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (www.unicef.org.uk)
- Every School a Good School,
- Together Towards Improvement and Community Relations,
- Equality and Diversity in Education Policy (www.deni.gov.uk)
- Menstrual Well-being in the RSE Curriculum
- <https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse/menstrual-wellbeing>

School Ethos, Values and Aims.

Good Shepherd Primary & Nursery School is a Rights Respecting School. We aim to nurture close links and support for our pupils, parents, staff and local community. As a Catholic school, we promote faith, high academic achievement and lifelong learning.

We are firmly committed to:

- Creating a happy, caring, stimulating and secure environment for each child
- Developing in each child, Christian values, self-esteem and respect for others
- Promoting our school as a provider of quality education, with the co-operation of the wider community
- Developing enquiring minds and a sense of curiosity
- Nurturing talents, skills and interests
- Developing the academic, physical, social, moral and emotional abilities of each child so that each child can reach his/her potential
- Ensuring the inclusion of all pupils
- Always striving for better

We ensure that each child will achieve success through experiencing:

- A broad, balanced and challenging curriculum
- A stimulating learning environment

- A varied programme of extra-curricular activities and school visits
- An ethos that is supportive, encouraging and friendly
- An effective partnership between school, home and the wider community
- A variety of teaching approaches and strategies to meet the needs and learning styles of pupils
- Access to a range of varied and up-to-date resources

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- Ongoing self-evaluation to ensure our vision is achieved
- Working collaboratively with all our stakeholders

Vision

Our Vision at Good Shepherd Primary & Nursery School is for the outstanding provision for each and every child in order for them to reach their full potential. This is delivered through a child-centred Catholic ethos. Our provision focuses on the learning of all our pupils, staff, parents and wider community and, as a Catholic school, we promote faith, high academic achievement and learning for life.

As a Catholic School, we endeavour to promote a living faith and to create a secure environment which enriches and complements the love and care experienced at home. Staff work individually and collectively to support each other and to create conditions which foster learning, self-discipline and respect for others. We welcome children from all denominations and those from none as well as pupils from all cultures and traditions. We treat all members of our school community fairly and equally. Our school is characterised by a spirit of compassion and understanding and we aim to promote the dignity and well-being of all.

Mission Statement and Aims (Ethos)

Our mission is to provide an exciting and stimulating experience for all our children. Their journey through our school will be happy and filled with genuine, deep learning. We are and will always be committed to improvement and its incumbent upon all of us to be life-long learners, to keep abreast of new ideas, innovations in education, continually challenging expectation and to develop personally as a result.

This mission will be pursued in a culture of mutual openness and trust, high emotional intelligence and a deep spiritual commitment to our principles, values and to all of the children and community which we serve. In doing so, we accept the need to challenge and be challenged, to initiate change and to move ourselves culturally towards visionary excellence. We ask that all who use our school enjoy the experience, assist in our mission, learn and improve as a consequence.

In Good Shepherd Primary & Nursery School., we are aware of the role that the school has in promoting the life of each child in our care and this involves more than academic considerations. As a Catholic school, we seek to reflect the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and local community. We welcome children from all denominations and are inclusive of all. This involves everyone connected with life in our school, (pupils, teachers, supervisors, learning support assistants, our parents, our governors, our church community and clergy as well as other groups and organisations within our locality).

Our school motto is “~ Learn ~ Believe ~ Respect ~ Achieve ~”

We seek to provide a safe environment to break the stigma surrounding periods and promoting respect, understanding and open discussions about what people may experience when menstruating. Period Dignity is an integral part of the development of our pupils in line with the following Pastoral and Safeguarding policies:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
- Intimate Care policy
- Pastoral Care policy (currently in development stage)
- RSE Policy (currently under review)
- SEN Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy

Roles and responsibilities:

The Period dignity program is a whole school initiative, involving pupils, parents, teaching staff and Governors. The policy is available to parents on our school website and paper copies are also available from the school office. Parents are given information about period dignity and the sanitary items available for pupils in school through the school website and during any consultation opportunities which may arise. They are also provided with helpful links to support conversations they may have at home with their children.

The Board of Governors are responsible for overseeing the implementation of Period Dignity as they review all relevant policies and liaise with key members of staff.

Mrs S. McCafferty (Principal & DDTCP) is the Period Dignity Key Contact. She works closely with Mrs Harley (VP & DTCP) and Mrs P. Houston (KS2 leader) along with Mrs Forbes (P7 teacher & SLT member) and all staff members to ensure a whole school approach.

Whole-school approach to period dignity:

RSE is taught throughout the school in every key stage as part of PDMU using cross curricular themes, practical activities and group/partner work. Information about menstruation are taught in gender groups by Primary 7 teachers. Our aim is to ensure equality and information for all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture and religion in a sensitive manner. Lessons will be differentiated to accommodate SEN pupils where appropriate. These activities will address the stigma and myths around periods and create an atmosphere of positivity and open communication in order to increase pupil's knowledge, confidence and well-being. The children will be challenged to discuss, ask questions and make decisions to equip them for real situations. By providing a comprehensive period dignity education, we will encourage pupils to make use of the free period products provided in school, rather than wearing poor quality or unhygienic products.

Teaching staff evaluate the RSE scheme planned and pupils have an opportunity to give feedback on their learning throughout the sessions and the availability of period products in school. This specific aspect will also be monitored and reviewed by Mrs Forbes.

Children are informed of the period dignity scheme and the items available to them in school where appropriate. They are advised of the teachers they should approach if they have any issues (Mrs Forbes/ their own teacher or Mrs S. McCafferty). The products are ordered after consultation with staff and pupils to ensure suitable items are purchased. A range of sanitary towels are available for girls in Mrs Forbes store. The products are stored and replenished by these members of staff when necessary, checking expiry dates on a termly basis.

Links across the curriculum and to the wider life of the school

The understanding and knowledge of period dignity and menstrual well-being will be taught mainly through our PDMU and RSE curriculum, with links to ICT, WAU and Literacy. The emotional health and well-being of pupils is a key priority as a whole school focus.

Managing Issues

Staff will be vigilant for any children who are distressed or experiencing discomfort due to menstruation. Children will be treated with care and sensitivity. Pupils will be given support and the store will always be well stocked up with towels. At any time that a pupil is distressed or soiled, a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. Staff will work alongside parents, to ensure that absences are not caused by children unable to manage periods or lacking confidence. Parents will be informed of any issues that arise. We welcome parents to communicate with their child's class teacher to inform them if their child is experiencing menstruation discomfort.

This policy will be under review in light of any further guidance.