



# Personal Care Policy for Students with Additional Needs



## 1. General

### 1.1 Scope

This code was drawn up in consultation with all school partners. It applies to students of the school at the following times:

1. During school time, including before and after class and at break-times.
2. While representing the school.
3. While travelling to or from school using school transport.
4. While on school trips, tours, exchanges, field trips etc.
5. While supporting school teams or activities.
6. On any occasion when students are accompanied by school personnel.

### 1.2 Relationship to the school's mission and core values

The school's Mission Statement reads *Coachford College is a community. Together we share mutual respect in a positive environment. We develop individual potential in all fields.* The mission statement sets out the school's vision for positive relationships and the creation of a positive, safe and ordered environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement, with student wellbeing at its core.

As an inclusive post-primary school under the patronage of Cork Education and Training Board, strong emphasis is placed in this code on the ETB core values:

- Care
- Community
- Equality
- Excellence in Education
- Respect
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### **1.3 Context**

The Policy is informed by the requirements of the Children First Act, the Education Act (1998), Education (Welfare) Act (2000) and relevant legislation and guidance. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safety Statement, Wellbeing Plan, Whole School Guidance Plan, School Outings Policy, Anti-Bullying Bí Cineálta Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement/Risk Assessment, Additional Educational Needs Policy, Attendance Policy, School Uniform Policy, Dignity in the Workplace Charter, DEY, CETB, HSE, NSCE and other relevant guidance and legislation.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

2. To create a positive and safe environment for students and staff;
3. To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents;
3. To encourage students towards independence with the knowledge of being supported;
4. To help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens, and
5. To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school community are known and understood.

### **1.4 Rationale**

Coachford College is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and dignified environment for all students, including those who require assistance with personal care. Some students with additional educational or physical needs may require support with aspects of daily living such as feeding, toileting, changing, or showering.

This policy outlines procedures to ensure:

- The dignity, privacy and safety of students;
- The protection of students and staff;
- Consistency of practice across the school, and
- Compliance with relevant national guidance and safeguarding requirements.

It assists the school community to promote safe, positive, procedures to support wellbeing. It supports staff, students and parents/guardians to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. To this end, the Policy is seen as a working document, reflecting the voices of our students, staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management, as well as the legislative requirements to which the school is bound.

## **2. Guiding Principles**

All personal care support will be delivered in accordance with the following principles:

- Respect for the dignity and independence of the student;
- Promotion of maximum independence where possible;
- Care delivered in a safe, hygienic and respectful manner;
- Personal care delivered only by trained and authorised staff;
- Parental/guardian consent obtained in advance, and
- Adherence to child protection procedures.

## **3. Definition of Personal Care**

Personal care refers to tasks that students would normally carry out independently but require assistance with due to disability, medical condition, or additional educational needs.

These tasks may include:

- Feeding and assistance with eating/drinking;
- Toileting and continence care;
- Changing of clothes or continence products;
- Showering or washing where required;
- Assistance with mobility or positioning, and/or
- Personal hygiene such as hand washing or oral hygiene.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Board of Management**

The Board of Management will:

- Ensure the school has an appropriate Personal Care Policy, and
- Ensure safeguarding and risk management procedures are followed.

### **4.2 Principal**

The Principal will:

- Ensure procedures are implemented;
- Assign appropriately trained staff;
- Ensure parental consent and care plans are in place, and
- Ensure staff training where necessary.

### **4.3 Additional Educational Needs Team**

The AEN team will:

- Identify students requiring personal care;
- Support development of individual care plans, and
- Liaise with parents/guardians and external professionals, as deemed necessary.

SNAs may support students with personal care tasks as part of their role where necessary. SNAs will:

- Follow agreed care plans;
- Maintain student dignity and privacy;
- Report concerns to the Principal or Designated Liaison Person, and
- Maintain hygiene and safety procedures.

## **5. Student Support Plans**

The personal care needs of each relevant student will be outlined in their Student Support Plan, which will be agreed by the student, parent/guardian and relevant teacher. The outline will include:

- Nature of the care required;
- Level of assistance needed;
- Staff responsible;
- Equipment required;
- Hygiene procedures;
- Emergency procedures;
- Medical considerations, and
- Parent/guardian consent.

Plans will be developed in consultation with:

- Parents/guardians;
- Relevant professionals, and
- School staff.

Plans will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary.

## **6. Procedures for Personal Care**

### **6.1 Feeding**

Where a student requires assistance with feeding:

- Staff will follow guidance provided by parents or relevant health professionals.
- Students will be supported in a safe seated position.
- Special feeding equipment will be used where required.

- Staff will monitor for choking or distress.
- Students will be encouraged to feed themselves where possible.

## **6.2 Toileting and Changing**

Where assistance with toileting or changing is required:

- Care will take place in designated accessible toilets or changing areas.
- The student's privacy and dignity will be respected at all times.
- Gloves and appropriate hygiene procedures will be used.
- Soiled clothing will be placed in sealed bags and returned to parents where appropriate.
- At least two staff members will be aware that personal care is taking place where possible.

## **6.3 Showering**

Where showering is required:

- It will take place in designated accessible shower facilities.
- Procedures will be agreed with parents in advance.
- Staff will support the student in a respectful and professional manner.
- The student will be encouraged to manage tasks independently where possible.
- Appropriate privacy measures will be maintained.

## **7. Safeguarding and Child Protection**

All staff involved in personal care must:

- Follow school child protection procedures;
- Adhere to safeguarding guidance, and
- Report any concerns immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Personal care will always be carried out in a manner that protects both the student and the staff member.

## **8. Health and Safety**

The school will ensure:

- Access to appropriate hygiene equipment (gloves, wipes, disposal bags);
- Proper disposal of waste;
- Safe lifting procedures where required, and
- Risk assessments have been carried out as necessary.

Staff will receive guidance on infection control and manual handling where relevant.

## 9. Training

Staff providing personal care may receive training in areas such as:

- Manual handling;
- Feeding support;
- Infection control;
- Medical procedures (where applicable).

Training will be provided where possible and appropriate.

## 10. Communication with Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians will:

- Provide relevant medical and care information;
- Supply necessary personal items (e.g., continence products, spare clothing);
- Be consulted in developing care plans, and
- Be informed of any significant issues.

This Policy was adopted by the school's Board of Management on May 6th 2026.

It will be reviewed in consultation with all school partners annually and/or as deemed necessary.

It is available to all members of the school community. It will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Signed:



Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 06.05.2026



Principal

Date: 06.05.2026