

# Carrick Primary School



## Period Dignity Policy

November 2023

## **Carrick Primary School**

### **Vision Statement**

Forward Together: “Ar aghaidh le chéile”.

### **Mission Statement**

In Carrick Primary School we aim to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment, in which to realise and celebrate the academic and non-academic potential of all our pupils. We expect our pupils to work hard and encourage parents to assist us in laying the important foundations for future learning.

### **Aims**

#### **In our school we aim to:**

- Develop and strengthen each pupil’s understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school;
- Create a safe, enjoyable learning environment in which effective learning is facilitated and quality teaching is provided;
- Implement all aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- Help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning;
- Value, respect and nurture every child in our care;
- Encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another;
- Equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society;
- Endorse the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child and work towards the implementation of policies and practices which reflect the Convention;
- Involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

## **Period Dignity Policy**

### **Aims of the Period Dignity Policy**

This policy will address the importance of accessibility and availability of essential care in Carrick Primary School.

We aim to ensure that:

- Pupils are provided with facts about menstruation;
- Children are given a comprehensive understanding of menstrual wellness, and how this impacts upon physical and emotional wellbeing;
- We educate children in relation to the essential facts about menstrual hygiene and how to deal with related situations;
- Negative attitudes, myths and stereotypes are challenged.

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

- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 ([www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk));
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) ([www.unicef.org.uk](http://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](http://www.deni.gov.uk));
- Menstrual Well-being in the RSE Curriculum <https://ccea.org.uk/learningresources/relationships-and-sexuality-educationrse/menstrual-wellbeing>.

The policy will be reviewed in November 2026 by staff, pupils, Governors, parents, the Period Dignity Key Contact (Dr A Cassidy), and the Period Dignity Committee.

### **Our Ethos**

The members of staff in Carrick Primary School are highly committed to the care and well-being of each child. They have a deep sense of pride in our school and community and work together to contribute to the holistic development of all children entrusted to our care. We seek to provide a safe environment to break the stigma surrounding periods and to promote respect, understanding and open discussions about what girls 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;
- Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy;
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy;
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) Policy;
- Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- First Aid Policy;
- Relevant Education Authority guidance and risk assessments for accidents and sickness.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

The Period Dignity programme is a whole school initiative, involving pupils, parents, staff and Governors. The policy is available on our school website and paper copies are also available on request from reception. External agents visit the school each year to speak to the children about transition, growing up and puberty. This visit includes separate sessions with the boys and girls in P6 and P7, which includes specific information for girls in relation to menstruation. Parents are asked for permission for their child to attend these sessions and can request a copy of the booklet used for the boys' and/or the girls' information and discussion sessions.

The Board of Governors is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Period Dignity Policy as it reviews all the relevant policies and liaises with key members of staff and with the relevant authorities. Members of the Board of Governors are also welcome to attend any of the workshops in relation to this subject.

Dr A Cassidy is the Period Dignity Key Contact. She works closely with all staff members and with external agencies to ensure a whole school approach is implemented.

## **Whole-School Approach to Period Dignity:**

RSE is taught throughout the school in every Key Stage as part of PDMU and Religion Lessons, using cross curricular themes, practical activities, Circle Time, group/partner work and assemblies.

Our aim is to ensure age-appropriate, sensitive and relevant information on puberty is provided for both boys and girls, regardless of ethnicity, culture or religion. 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 pupils' knowledge, confidence and well-being. As part of these activities, children may discuss, ask questions and make decisions to equip them for real situations.

By providing appropriate period dignity education, we will draw children's attention to the free period products which are provided in school, in the P5-7 girls' toilets, the P5-7 disabled toilet and the toilet adjacent to the dining hall. Children will be encouraged to make use of these free period products, where needed. The Period Dignity Committee, which includes the Period Dignity Key Contact (Dr A Cassidy) and the female School Councillors, will maintain a stock of period products.

Teaching staff evaluate their lessons and pupils will have an opportunity to give feedback on their learning and to ask questions throughout any sessions dealing with Period Dignity or puberty. Girls will be encouraged to discuss the availability of period products and the appropriateness of the period products in school, if necessary. Lessons on this topic will be monitored and reviewed by Dr A Cassidy.

Primary 5-7 girls will be informed of the period dignity scheme and the items available to them in school each September. They are advised that they can approach Dr A Cassidy – (Period Dignity Key Contact) or Mrs C Kelly (Pastoral Care Coordinator) or any member of staff, in whom they could confide, if they wish to discuss any issues in relation to Period Dignity.

Sanitary towels will always be available in specific bathrooms (KS2 Girls' Toilets/KS2 Disabled Toilet/Toilet adjacent to the Dining Hall). They will also be kept in the Principal's office and will be available for girls at all times. The girls' toilets also has a designated cubicle for pupils, which contains a waste container, which is suitable for sanitary products. The KS2 disabled toilet and the toilet adjacent to the dining hall also have appropriate waste containers.

## **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, Religion and RSE curriculum, with links, where appropriate, to ICT, WAU and Literacy.

The emotional health and well-being of pupils is a key priority in our School Development Plan.

The period dignity programme complements our Pastoral Care Programme and the Rights Respecting Programme as we focus on mutual respect and the rights of the child. RSE, PDMU and Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) lessons are centred around growth and understanding and aim to develop children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and others.

## **Managing Issues**

Staff will encourage positive behaviour in relation to the period dignity products. They will be vigilant for any children who are distressed or experiencing discomfort due to menstruation. Children will be treated with care and sensitivity and will be encouraged to ask for help and assistance when needed. Pupils will be given support and period products will always be available. Staff will work alongside parents, to ensure that absences are not caused by children unable to manage periods or lacking confidence with their own intimate care. Parents will be kept informed about any issues that arise.

## **Review of Policy**

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and Governors. It reflects the guidance laid out by CCEA.

The policy will be monitored and reviewed every three years (or sooner if required), in consultation with the pupils, staff, parents and Governors.

Signed: **Mr G Murdock** (Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Signed: **Dr A Cassidy** (Principal/Period Dignity Key Contact)

Date: November 2023

Review Date: November 2026

Addressing Period Dignity in Carrick Primary School  
School Procedures

- There is a box of products in the KS2 Girls' Bathrooms, in the KS2 Disabled Toilet and in the toilet adjacent to the Dining Hall. All Key Stage 2 girls are informed about this.
- The Period Dignity Committee, which includes the Period Dignity Key Contact (Dr A Cassidy) and the female School Councillors, maintain the stock of period products.
- The school's Period Dignity Committee has been consulted with, in relation to the Period Dignity Policy, the provision of products and the type of products provided.