

ST CLARE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



PERIOD DIGNITY POLICY
and
STATEMENT ON ARRANGEMENTS
OCT 2024

A.Quinn

Period Dignity Policy

Name of school: St Clare's Primary School, 323 Cupar Street, Belfast, BT13 2SE

Date of 1st publication: June 2022

Date of policy: Oct 2024

Members of staff responsible for drawing up policy: Miss Quinn (Key Contact), Mrs Bell (RE Coordinator), Mrs Welsh (SENCO), Mr Birt (Vice Principal), Mr O'Doherty (Principal), Mrs Corey (BOG teacher representative)

Description of Policy Formation and Consultation Process

The Period Dignity Scheme was approved in December 2020 by the NI Executive.

St Clare's Period Dignity Policy was drafted in consultation with the Principal Mr O'Doherty, Head of Key Stage 2 Mr Birt, Religious Education coordinator Mrs Bell, SENCO Mrs Welsh, staff and parents using CCEA guidance.

Member of staff responsible for leading the pilot – Miss Quinn (Key Contact)

Further Consultation:

Dissemination to staff: May 2024

- Discussion took place regarding which products should be available, where they should be kept and how they can be accessed (for both staff and children)

Informal chat with upper KS2 pupils: May 2024

- Girls are made aware that they can access period products in teachers' storerooms without having to ask
- (Staff agreed not to keep products in girls' toilets as a means of avoiding misuse of products)

Questionnaire to staff: October 2024

- Responses from staff regarding (i) ease of access to free period products, (ii) range of products to be made available, (iii) general awareness that period products are freely available, (iv) dignity, privacy and confidentiality

Legislation and Circulars

This policy was written taking into consideration 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
- Break the barriers: girls' experiences of menstruation in the UK, Londond, Plan International UK, 2018

Review and Dissemination of Policy

Date of review: June 2025

Reviewers: Period Dignity Key Contact Miss Quinn, Head of Key Stage 2 Mr Birt, RE Coordinator Mrs Bell
The Board of Governors to examine and ratify the school's Period Dignity Policy June 2025

Policy to be disseminated to staff – Sept 2025

Policy to be available to parents on request and on the school website

Policy and programme to be disseminated to pupils in P6 and P7 annually (Term 2)

CCEA Documents

- Period Dignity Policy Guidance 2021

Links across the school:

- RSE
- Pastoral Care
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Children
- Health and Wellbeing
- Personal Development
- Rights Respecting School
- Teaching and Learning
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- PE Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- FGM Policy

Role of the Key Contact:

- To consult with pupils, parents and staff with the regard to the Period Dignity Policy and Programme
- To devise and keep under review the Period Dignity Policy
- To develop a whole school approach to promote the importance of the Period Dignity Programme, which challenges negative views, negative language, stereotypes, inequality and stigma around periods
- To ensure pupils are informed about the programme
- To agree a series of lessons which will inform the pupils about puberty, reproductive system, menstrual cycle, period awareness and hygiene and therefore removing the associated fear, embarrassment and stigma surrounding periods
- To ensure programme is delivered to P6 and P7 children (via 'Love for Life' organisation)
- To be available to support and reassure parents and pupils
- To order and replenish period products as required
- To provide period products for school and home use
- Keep under review and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and programme of work

School ethos:

In St Clare's we create a caring, supportive and respectful environment for all. We are a nurturing school providing a high level of pastoral care in a safe and caring learning environment. As a staff we work as a team to ensure the children's emotional, physical and academic needs are being met.

The Period Dignity Policy will go hand in hand with the RSE and Pastoral Care policies, and will reflect the ethos of our school. It will consider the needs of SEN pupils and the diversity of cultural and religious pupils in the school.

Aims:

- Have a whole school approach to ensure that period dignity is a key area throughout the school
- Raise awareness by providing education about menstruation to upper KS2 pupils
- Inform parents of St Clare's Period Dignity Policy and the content of lessons in the programme
- Challenge negative views, language, stereotypes, gender inequality and stigma and myths around periods
- Change the language used when talking about periods
- Promote equality
- Consult with staff, parents and pupils with regard to the policy, procedures and lessons
- Help keep young people in school by providing support when a girl is menstruating
- Reduce anxiety and increase concentration in class by providing accessible period products
- Increase confidence to participate in sports or extra-curricular activities
- Promote physical and mental well-being
- Promote the availability of free period products, both during term-time and during school holidays for those in need
- Ensure that essential products are made available and accessible to pupils, staff and visitors
- Ensure pupils and staff are aware of the school's Period Dignity Key Contact
- Evaluate the impact of the period dignity programme through discussion with staff, pupils and parents

Objectives:

Period Dignity refers to the accessibility and availability of essential care needed to support a period, in conjunction with the removal/breaking of stigma and taboo around periods.

Education is a key factor in breaking stigma surrounding periods and promoting respect, understanding and open discussions about what people may experience when menstruating.

Whole-School Approach to Period Dignity:

- The policy and procedures will be agreed following consultation with staff, pupils and parents. An audit will be carried out every three years.
- The lessons and programme will be delivered in conjunction with the RSE programme.
- Lesson content will be agreed using resources from Love for Life's 'What's Inside?' & 'Choices and Changes' programmes and RSE Flourish Programme.
- Lessons will be delivered to pupils in P6 and P7.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the name and role of the Key Contact.

Products:

- Period products have been purchased via the Procurement Procedure organised by The Education Authority.
- Following consultation with pupils, period and hygiene products are available in KS2 classrooms. These will be stored by class teachers and replenished as required.
- Spare underwear will be stored by class teachers in KS2 classrooms.
- Sanitary towels will be provided for pupils; tampons are not recommended for use in primary schools.
- Sanitary bins are available in KS2 toilets.
- Period products will be sent home if required.
- Period products will be available to pupils over the school holidays, if requested.
- A range of period products (tampons, pads with various absorbencies) will be available in staff toilets in primary and nursery buildings.
- Clear signage in ladies' toilets to indicate that products on shelves are free to use

Teaching Arrangements:

- Parents pre-informed of lesson content
- Parental permission required – parents have the right to withdraw their child from the programme
- Some lessons will be delivered to girls only/boys only, and some lessons will include both boys and girls.
- Lessons will be delivered by representatives from 'Love for Life'
- One-to-one or small group lessons for SEN pupils if required
- Programme delivered in line with RSE lessons at a time agreed by staff

Teaching Materials:

Lessons will be created using a combination of 'Love for Life's 'What's Inside?' and 'Choices and Changes' programmes and RSE Flourish Programme.

Links across the Curriculum and to the Wider Life of the School:

The Period Dignity Programme will be taught mainly in conjunction with the school's RSE Programme and the Rights Respecting School; further curricular links include PDMU, ICT and WAU.

Managing Issues:

Staff will be observant for children who may be distressed or experiencing discomfort due to menstruation and care for them with discretion and sensitivity. Pupils will be reminded of the facilities and items available to them and given appropriate pastoral care support. Staff will liaise with parents regarding absences to discuss the individual needs of the child. Staff, pupils and parents will be supported by the Key Contact.

Professional Development of Staff:

- Key Contact to attend CCEA Period Dignity training programme
- The Key Contact will disseminate training to all staff to develop a whole school approach to improve their understanding of the period dignity policy, period poverty and the associated language and resources.