



Thriftwood

Specialising in Business & Enterprise

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# Intimate Care Policy

December 2018

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**Thriftwood Academy is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Thriftwood School and College recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.**

## **OUR APPROACH TO BEST PRACTICE**

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times; the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are trained to do so (including Child Protection and Health and Safety training in lifting and moving) and are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from physiotherapist/occupational therapist as required.

Staff will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Wherever possible, staff who are involved in the intimate care of children/young people will

not usually be involved with the delivery of sex education to the children/young people in their care as an additional safeguard to both staff and children/young people involved.

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for him/herself as he/she can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up for particular children as appropriate to suit the circumstances of the child.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible, one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis; ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will take turns in providing care. This will ensure, as far as possible, that over-familiar relationships are discouraged from developing, whilst at the same time guarding against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Wherever possible, staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence for example, female staff supporting boys as no male staff are available.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers on a regular basis and recorded on the child's Individual Health Care Plan. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

## **THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018) and the SET Child Procedures (October 2018) will be adhered to.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation e.g. marks, bruises, soreness, etc. she/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated person for child protection.

If a child becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular member of staff, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents/carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of this process in order to reach a resolution. Staffing schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved so that the child's needs remain paramount. Further advice will be taken from outside agencies if necessary.

If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures and SET Procedures for details).

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2018), DfE

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/741314/Keeping\\_Children\\_Safe\\_in\\_Education\\_3\\_September\\_2018\\_14.09.18.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf)

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’, Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures (2018)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729914/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf)

‘SET Child Protection Procedures’ <http://www.escb.co.uk/media/1670/set-procedures-oct-2018-updated.pdf>

## **CHANGING OF CLOTHING**

The following guidelines outline our procedures but we will also seek to make age-appropriate responses. If something occurs that requires a child to change their underwear / clothes:

- The child will be given the opportunity to change his / her underwear in private and carry out this process themselves.
- School will have a supply of wipes, clean underwear and spare uniform for this purpose.
- When a child has a toilet programme and / or is wearing nappies, the staff will support the pupil to be as independent as possible in their self-care. If a child is not able to complete this task unaided (because of a disability or due to their developmental stage), school staff will support the pupil and ensure another member of staff is present or in the vicinity and is aware of the task being undertaken.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

The expectation is that staff will work with a ‘limited touch’ and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil’s needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age and stage of development. There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil’s distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress.

Some children (for example those with a physical disability) may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of ‘limited touch’ will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child.

## **RESTRAINT**

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, or others or property.

In such cases only the minimum force necessary will be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control.

In all cases of restraint the incident is documented and reported. All staff are fully aware of the Thriftwood's "Promoting behaviour for learning including positive handling" policy, which complies with National Guidance.

## **FIRST AID**

When administering first aid staff should ensure that another adult is present if contact of a more intimate nature is required (e.g. removal of items of clothing to administer first aid to a particular part of the body).

## **SHOWERS / CHANGING ROOMS**

When a child is changing (for PE, swimming or another activity) or taking a shower, they are entitled to respect and privacy. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to health and safety considerations. Adults will only support a child if necessary and will talk a child through the process of showering or changing without the need of observation (i.e. from outside the changing / shower room door).

## **OUT OF SCHOOL TRIPS**

The standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school. Staff involved in such activities are familiar with the Thriftwood's Policy and all LEA Guidance regarding out of school activities.