



Growth Through Understanding

## Personal Care Policy Thomas Bewick School

### **Rationale**

A large majority of children in Thomas Bewick School will require support from the staff team with their personal care either due to their age or to their autism and the degree of developmental delay and learning difficulties.

Personal care is support of an intimate nature which will usually involve personal hygiene needs such as toileting and dressing; it may also involve eating and drinking. It may also involve the administration of medication or a specialised procedure specific to the health needs of a pupil. In the case of a specialised procedure only a staff member suitably trained and assessed to be competent should carry out the procedure.

Staff providing Personal Care must be aware of the need to adhere to the highest standard of safeguarding practice in order to minimise the risks for both pupils and themselves. It is important that staff are supported in their understanding of their role so that they may feel confident in their practice.

### **Aims**

To safeguard the dignity, rights and well-being of the pupils  
To ensure that pupils have a consistently high standard of personal care  
To provide guidance and reassurance to staff  
To ensure that parents are involved in supporting the school to deliver best practice in meeting the personal care needs of their children

### **Principles**

Every pupil has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting his or her needs  
Every pupil has the right to feel safe and secure and be treated as an individual  
Every pupil has the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs

### **Approach To Best Practice**

All staff will be trained in Safeguarding Procedures; the headteacher is the school's designated person for safeguarding with the Deputy headteacher,

Assistant headteacher and senior Residential Child Care Officer as deputies; they are available at all times to support staff in their roles regarding personal care.

Staff new to the school will be supported in their practice by the class team they are working within and particularly the class teacher who will oversee the personal care needs of the pupils in his/her class.

Staff in school, including agency staff, should be familiar with the school's Safeguarding, Personal Care, Medication and Health and Safety policies.

Personal Care guidance on individual pupils should be given by the teacher or members of the class team to support new staff in assuming a personal care role. If there are any concerns raised, these should be brought to the attention of a member of the Leadership Team.

Staff should report any safeguarding or health and safety concerns to the designated persons noted above.

Staff should work in a reassuring, supportive and focussed manner with the pupil.

Staff should as far as possible allow the pupil to care for himself/herself to encourage progression towards independence and enhance self-esteem.

The school should provide facilities and staff support appropriate to the pupil's age and individual needs.

Staff should show awareness of and be responsive to the pupil's reactions and verbal or non-verbal communication. They should support communication with the pupil through his/her preferred communication system ie PECS, symbol, signing, photograph, object.

Staff should ensure the pupil is comfortable with the staff member attending to their needs.

Staff should have an understanding of parental and cultural preferences and take account of these. They should maintain confidentiality and dignity for the parent/carer.

### **Challenging circumstances**

The school's ethos is one of open and reflective practice. Staff should try at all times to take account of the best practice guidance outlined above and use the individual management techniques that are generally used by the class team. However it is recognised that working with pupils with autism can place staff in very challenging circumstances; staff should follow agreed procedures where possible and seek further support from colleagues as demanded by

circumstances. They should also make colleagues aware of the personal care duties they are involved in and where they will be.

### **Reporting Concerns**

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern regarding practice or risks to pupils to the attention of the Leadership Team.

The school has adopted the Local Authority 'Whistle Blowing' policy by which staff can voice their concerns in good faith, without fear of repercussion. This policy is accessible to all staff on the Teachers' drive of the school network.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the headteacher will work with the Local Authority's Lead Officer for Safeguarding in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures for the protection of the pupil and the member of staff concerned.

Audrey Lindley  
May 2011