



St Hugh's Communication & Interaction Specialist College



Working together for Success

Hydrotherapy Policy

This policy is designed to be read by all staff and students of St Hugh's

Hydrotherapy Policy

Hydrotherapy activities should be enjoyable for everybody. However, there is an element of danger associated with the activity and there are specific risks which have to be assessed. It is essential that staff follow the guidelines as outlined in this policy. If you have any queries, please contact Bridget Coy (Assistant Headteacher)

ALARM - If you experience any difficulties when you are using the pool, pull the red alarm cord in the toilet area and do not switch off the alarm before help arrives.

Management

- The designated member of staff has responsibility for providing staff direction about the conduct of hydrotherapy and ensuring the guidelines are strictly followed.
- The school caretaker has a schedule for maintenance of the pool and maintaining overall hygiene of the pool area. She has the authority to close the pool down if she is not satisfied with the operation of the plant, the quality of water, and climatic control in the pool area. Any queries about the condition of the pool should be addressed to the caretaker or the business manager.
- The actual conduct of the hydrotherapy session is the responsibility of the relevant teacher/level 3 teaching assistant or Education Healthcare assistant but **all** staff have a responsibility for ensuring that they and the students remain healthy and safe.

Hygiene

- Faeces or vomit must be removed immediately, if possible, using the fine mesh net in the pool area. Any fouling of the pool must be reported straightaway to the School Office, Bridget Coy or to the school caretaker and the pool closed until appropriately treated.
- If required, protection against incontinence should be worn under swimsuits.
- Any person with open wounds should have these covered and sealed. In the case of a student with an open wound, parental permission would need to be sought to use a waterproof dressing. If permission is not given then the student will not be able to go in the pool.
- Students with a gastrostomy are fine to go in the pool.
- Students with a tracheostomy will have a special waterproof dressing applied.
- Nobody (staff or student) with a known infection or disease should enter the pool area. Obvious reasons for excluding persons are: Impetigo, Ringworm, Lice, Scabies, Unidentified skin rash, Ear infections and Urinary/bladder infections. This list is not exhaustive and medical advice should be sought if there are any concerns.
- Female students who are menstruating should not go in the pool; this is dependent upon the hygiene products which are being used.
- If a student/staff member has shown signs of being unwell beforehand,

eg. raised temperature, abnormally loose stools, vomiting, headaches, or a streaming cold, they should not participate in a hydrotherapy session.

- All known instances of students urinating or bleeding in the water should be reported.
- All persons with long hair should tie or have it tied back to avoid the risk of entrapment when in the pool.
- It is recommended that students do not wear jewellery when using the pool. This reduces the risk of snagging whilst they are being changed or physically handled and also helps to maintain the overall cleanliness of the pool.
- Students should be discouraged from deliberately drinking the pool water.

Keeping Warm

- The pool doors must be kept closed when the pool is in use with the 'in use' sign and the 'do not disturb' sign displayed on the door.
- Students should be changed promptly after coming out of the pool and their hair should be dried thoroughly on return to the classroom.

Staff

- All staff will be required to read through the policy and must adhere to the guidelines within it.
- Staff working in the pool should always wear a t-shirt over their costume and should remove all jewellery with the exception of wedding bands.
- It is considered good practice that staff working on the side of the pool i.e. not in the water; wear shorts and t-shirt due to the intense nature of the work within the pool area.

Cleanliness

- Outdoor shoes must not be worn in the pool area, shoe covers are available if staff prefer to wear them.
- Sweep down the drain any surplus water lying on the floor after the session.
- Replace the pool cover carefully pulling it gently to avoid tearing the cover.
- Contenance products should be placed in a bag and put into the yellow bag in the large changing area
- The changing areas should be left in a tidy state with all laundry removed at the end of each session
- Teaching assistants are responsible for collecting wet towels etc and taking them to the laundry. It will then be dealt with by the personal care team.

Health Risks

- The water is maintained at a temperature of 34/35 degrees centigrade and exerts pressure on the body at that temperature. This results in complex effects on blood

pressure, breathing, and the workings of the heart and other organs even in very fit people. Immersion in water to the neck and shoulders also limits a person's capacity to sweat and cool down by normal means. There is no lasting health risk to any pool users as long as the following rules are observed:

- Summon assistance immediately if you feel faint or if a student shows physical signs of bodily stress; if in doubt pull the alarm chord.
- Do not allow students to remain more than 20 minutes in the water
- Do not allow adults to remain in the water for more than 60 minutes continuously
- Individual medical care plans and any emergency medication should be taken into the pool for the duration of the individuals student's session.
- People at the pool side should also take care because the air temperature is almost as high as the water temperature. (This cuts down on condensation)
- After a session in the pool, staff should ensure they have a drink and a 15 minute rest period to restore normal bodily functions.
- All students should be offered a drink on return to the classroom.

Safety

- The pool has the capacity to hold up to 6 people in one hour. To allow a comfortable range of activities, a maximum of 4 people will be allowed at any one time.
- There will always be a minimum of 1 adult in the pool who is appropriately trained and 1 teaching assistant on the pool side.
- The pool door is controlled via an electronic lock system on the outside and a green push button on the inside. This ensures that only school staff are able to access the pool and community groups will be supported by the office staff to gain access.
- The hoist must be used as appropriate; manual handling care plans and personal care plans should be adhered to at all times. Specialist slings should be used for all students; after use they should be hung up to dry ready for the next group.
- The floatation equipment should be used as advised by Physiotherapy staff and should be appropriately dried before being stored.
- The adult will remain in the pool until all students have left the water.
- All staff participating in hydrotherapy sessions must be familiar with medical care plans for specific students so they are familiar with the correct procedures in case of accidents/seizures.

Community Groups

- All outside users must comply with the guidelines within this policy and ensure that the pool area is left tidy at the end of the session. If groups have concerns about the cleanliness of the pool, they should report them immediately.
- Any problems or concerns regarding the pool should be reported to Judy Smith (Caretaker), School Office or Bridget Coy (Teacher).

- Community Users must have their own first aid cover in place although school staff may be available in case of an emergency situation
- Outside users should also provide their own person specific bathing slings.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

1. On the collapse of a student in the pool, the following procedure must be followed:

- The alarm activated and staff organised by the senior member of staff in the pool area
- The student in the pool to be evacuated by the fastest and safest method
- If the student is conscious and safe, the hoist may be used
- If the student is unconscious; consult care plan, maintain the airway and remove student from the pool in the safest, quickest way.
- A minimum of 2 adults must be in the pool - 3 adults on the pool side
- The senior staff member in the pool will give command *'ready, steady, move'*
- The student will then be moved onto the pool wall
- Using the 3 adults on the side, the command *'ready, steady, move'* will be given by a nominated leader (head end) and the student will be moved onto the changing bed at the pool side
- The medical care plan will then be followed by appropriately trained staff

Please enter the incident in the Accident Book in the office and inform a member of Senior Leadership Team.

2. In the case of a fire alarm/gas leak, the following procedure must be followed:

- Student to be evacuated using the fastest and safest method e.g. using the hoist or doing an assisted lift onto the pool side.
- Student to be placed in their wheelchair or encouraged to walk.
- Wrap student in a towel and a space blanket.
- Adults should wear a bathrobe/space blanket
- Exit the pool and make your way to the nearest fire exit
e.g. turn right out of pool door and leave the school via the car park then walk round to collection point on playground or turn left out of pool and follow the fire exit signs to the nearest exit then walk round to collection point on playground
- Staff should ensure that any emergency medication is taken outside with the student
- Ensure all staff and students are accounted for on the relevant registers
- Community groups should ensure they are checked in with the office staff and the 'signing in' book.

