Position Statement: The Thrive Approach

The Thrive Approach is a dynamic, developmental and trauma-sensitive approach to meeting the emotional and social needs of young people. With a systematic, research-led approach and common language, Thrive helps us to support those experiencing emotional dysregulation and to facilitate their return to physiological and emotional regulation, with the intention of helping the individual to learn new ways to self-regulate over time.

By using Thrive strategies and activities, and by employing common language and principles of the Approach, our College is better placed to maximise meaningful learner participation within individual and group sessions and minimise periods of absence from timetabled sessions due to episodes of dysregulation. This allows the learners to make the most of their time in College, whilst supporting their understanding of ways in which they can better cope with everyday social situations that may have historically made them feel worried, angry or unsafe.

The Thrive Approach draws on ground-breaking research in neuroscience, child development and attachment theory and is constantly evolving in line with what the research tells us about our brains, our bodies and our behaviours, as well as the ways in which we learn about ourselves and the world around us. Using this Approach, and attending regular training updates, allows Transition2 to remain at the forefront of knowledge and practise, being informed about the best possible ways to support the learning and development of our young adults.

All staff at Transition2 care about the wellbeing of our learners and the Thrive Approach offers us a way to help learners to feel more steady and ready for the opportunities on offer, allowing them to add value to their learning and to make even more progress in their transition to life as an active citizen in adulthood

Everyone has the right to ...
Feel **safe**
Feel **special**
Have their **needs met**

We've embraced thrive in our Setting

Transition2

Position Statement: The Thrive Approach, continued:

Some of the many benefits of the Thrive Approach include the opportunity for learners and colleagues to:

- Feel seen and heard … "Nothing about me without me"
- Become more thoughtful and self-aware
- Build resilience through the shared navigation of life experiences
- Form trusting, rewarding relationships as equals
- Have the chance to reflect on tricky things that happened, by "shining a light" on experiences
- Develop compassion and empathy in relation to the things that others may find difficult
- Become more confident and resourceful when it comes to self-regulation and self-management
- Become better at coping with the inevitable challenges, setbacks and disappointments of life

Some of the strategies we use can include the following methods of communication, for which staff have been trained:

- "Wondering in" to experiences and "shining a light" on behaviour at an appropriate later date in order to suggest ways in which a learner may have been feeling at the time of an escalated behaviour, to offer opportunities for meaningful self-reflection and to promote the development of thinking that can help to create a helpful and safer space between sensation (physical) / feeling (emotion) and action (behaviour)
- Positive, safe touch to promote co-regulation and soothing at times of dysregulation or distress; the provision of appropriate, safe touch has been shown by extensive neurobiological research and other empirical studies that identify safe touch as a positive contributor to healthy brain development, emotional regulation, mental health and pro-social skills.

Examples of effective use of positive, safe touch include:

- A gentle hand on a young person's shoulder to signal reassurance and presence during a moment of upset.
- Offering a high-five or fist bump to celebrate achievement or effort, reinforcing positive social connection.
- Using nurturing touch during appropriate activities, such as a supportive pat on the back during a group game or helping a young person zip up their coat if required.
- When used sensitively, these small but meaningful gestures contribute to a sense of safety, belonging, and trust – key foundations for emotional resilience and healthy relationships. Transition2 staff should always ensure that touch is *consensual, context-appropriate, and guided by professional boundaries*, with the young person's comfort and autonomy at the centre of every interaction.

Derby City Council

Transition2, October 2025