



**Newall Green  
Primary School**

*Aiming High To Reach Our Goals*

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# The Calming Space Policy 2024

| Document Control          |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Title                     | The Calming Space Policy  |
| Date                      | 19 July 2024  |
| Supersedes                | The Calming Space Policy 2023   |
| Amendments                | Includes different spaces that are used (sensory, zones) and what is in these and why they may be removed. Updated the The Calming Space log. |
| Links with other Policies | To be read alongside our Positive Handling Policy   |

**Approved by:** Trustees

**Date:** 15.10.24

**Last reviewed on:** July 2024

**Next review due by:** July 2025

## **Aim**

As a Rights Respecting School we are committed to ensuring that all pupils within the setting have the right environment for them to learn. We know that all pupils learn best when they are calm and relaxed. Not all children learn in the same way and for some there will be times when a child may require access to a quiet and calm space so that they have an opportunity to regain control of their feelings and emotions throughout the school day.

Importantly however, a Calming Space is not contingent on the pupil being placed in the specific Calming Space room. Sometimes the pupil may:

- remove themselves from the task or activity in the classroom,
- request time out from the classroom in the corridor, or on the playground/outdoor area

## **School approach**

Staff within 'The Hive' will provide a safe space for children to calm and relax to self-regulate their emotions. A calming Space is a sensory-controlled calming area. The purpose of a calming Space is not to exclude or punish, rather, it is a space designed to help the pupil to calm down and to begin to use self-regulation skills. The rooms are not designed to provide an occasion for positive handling or to be used as sanctions.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Body will;**

1. Ensure this Policy is implemented by the Senior Leadership Team and Alternative Provision (The Hive) and Resourced Provision (The Acorn Room) staff.
2. Ensure that there is sufficient funding available to provide the necessary training for the staff so that they understand the principles of Nurture and the importance of a calm Space within this process.

### **The Head Teacher will;**

1. Oversee the effective implementation of the policy including communicating the policy to pupils, staff, parents, carers and the wider community.
2. appoint a member of SLT to assume day to day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this policy, for monitoring outcomes and for liaising with the link governor as appropriate;

### **Staff within The Hive & The Acorn Room will;**

1. Provide the safe space for pupils to use.
2. Use positive language when discussing the safe space and planned scripts for the prompting of a child to access the calming space.
3. Write pupil's individual behaviour support plans in conjunction with the child and their parent. Identifying the planned script within the plan.
4. Complete risk-assessments for each pupil in anticipation of a 'Team Teach' hold being required.

### **Parents & Children will;**

1. Identify any triggers that can cause a child to become dysregulated and identify these within the learning plan.
2. Agree a script that can be used either by the child or member of staff to encourage a calming moment to self-regulate.
3. Agree the plan & sign to verify the agreement.

It is anticipated that over time pupils will come to recognise the therapeutic and safe setting that the calming space provides and will take themselves there to calm and self-regulate their emotions so that they can then return safely to their classroom activity.

### **Positive handling and the use of the calming space**

In optimum circumstances the pupil will choose to access the calming space, sometimes with a prompt from staff using an agreed script. At Newall Green we do all we can to manage behaviour positively. In some circumstances when the pupil is unable to make this informed choice, staff may be required to accompany the pupil to the calming space using agreed Team Teach strategies.

In these circumstances, the calming spaces should only be used after in-class strategies have failed to calm the pupil. A decision to use physical intervention to support the pupil in accessing the calming space is based upon a dynamic risk assessment and carried out by those staff trained to Team Teach.

The use of force is likely to be legally defensible when it is required to prevent:

- self-harming
- injury to other child or young person, staff or teachers
- damage to property
- an offence being committed

In these instances, the calming space can be used as a means of:

- a) helping the pupil to manage their own emotional state – to deescalate and regain control in a safe way;
- b) reducing the danger to staff/pupils and or removing the disruptive behaviour from the body of the school;
- c) reducing the need for prolonged use of physical intervention.

### **The Calming Space**

The areas identified as calming spaces within Newall Green Primary School are areas that are within the vicinity of the teaching areas. Within the Hive there are 3 rooms that we use – a sensory based room (within this room light, sound and other sensory inputs can be controlled), a calm room (the lights are brighter in this room and can't be changed, however there are reminders of calming techniques on the wall) and the Zones room (different areas to help the children change zone with links to sensory circuits). There is also a calming space available on the KS2 corridor near the Assistant Heads' office. There is also a sensory room in the Acorn Resource provision. They are places of safety and are set up to create a calming environment for the children. Within each area there are;

1. Cushions
2. Bean bags
3. Soft play blocks
4. Blankets
5. Low lighting (where possible)
6. optional sensory lighting and calming music (where possible)
7. Areas may have a door but staff must be able to see the child or young person at all times.

Children may choose however not to have these resources, or if they are not being used safely they may be temporarily removed.

### **Introducing children who are new to the setting to 'The Calming Space'**

Staff within the setting will teach the children to use the calming space using the following process;

1. Introduce the calming space in a positive, proactive way that helps the pupil to understand the benefits that can come from its usage. The pupil will be encouraged to spend time in there, whilst calm and receptive so a positive feeling is associated with being in the calming space.
2. Explain or model to the pupil that the room can be used when she/he becomes aware that she/he is starting to get upset, get worried or get angry.
3. Explain or model that the calming space will be for them when they are in it.
4. Staff should avoid entering the calming space unless absolutely necessary, i.e. to keep the pupil safe, or unless the pupil has asked or indicated the adult should join them in the room.
5. The best outcome of using the calming space is when a pupil learns how to 'self-regulate' independently and is able to calm her/himself down.
6. The calming space needs to be used with a calm and positive approach in order to help reduce anxiety. This means using a planned and sensitive manner; to help the pupil move towards the room, during and after they have spent time there.
7. It is important to explain that sometimes a member of staff will suggest that 'this is a good time to use the calming space' or the pupil themselves may feel that 'this is a good time to use the calming space'.
8. The calming space will be used only for the minimum period of time necessary for the pupil to regain enough composure to be able to return safely to their classroom setting.

### **Procedure for the use of The Calming Space:**

1. When a member of staff notices that a pupil is becoming anxious or agitated, the pupil should be given reasonable opportunity to calm using the strategies detailed in the pupil's My Personal Plan /SEMH Plan/Individual Support Plan to prevent physical interventions.
2. If the pupil's behaviour continues to cause concern and is reaching a point where they are affecting other pupils and/or they become a danger to themselves, other pupils or staff, the pupil should be prompted to make 'the right choice' and comply with requests from staff.
3. Other staff should be alerted for support as appropriate.

4. In optimum circumstances, the pupil will agree and take themselves to the calming Space. If the pupil continues not to comply, staff should suggest 'this is a good time to use the calming space'.
5. If the pupil continues not to comply and, subject to a dynamic risk assessment, staff may consider it necessary to escort the child or young person to the calming space using an approved physical intervention in line with school policy and the law.
6. Once in the calming space, staff involved should try to resolve the situation satisfactorily with the pupil spending the minimum time necessary in the calming space. Staff will also engage in 'change of face' where necessary.
7. When the calming space has been used, the incident is recorded in the appropriate log.
8. While a pupil is in the calming space, senior staff should ensure that appropriate staffing is available to support the pupil.

If a pupil tries to leave the calming space before they are calm, staff should use low and slow responses to direct the pupil to stay.

In extreme cases when the pupil is very distressed and unable to process requests and is a danger to the safety of staff, staff may need to implement a dynamic risk assessment (please also refer to the school's Positive Handling Policy) and hold the door closed.

**The pupil will never be locked in the calming space – none of the doors have locks on them, and the spaces in the Hive all open outwards.**

#### Monitoring

Staff record each incident of Positive handling using the Team Teach approach using the electronic recording system CPOMs.

If a child is distressed and Positive handling is being used as a regular requirement it must be included in the pupil's individual behaviour support plan/ Individual Support Plan to prevent physical interventions.

In the event of a serious incident, the teacher in charge will ensure that the pupil's parent/carer is contacted by telephone.

Any decision about the establishment of strategies used in conjunction with the calming space been taken after consultation with the advisors and the Bridgelea Outreach Team.

#### Review

The school will review this policy annually and will ensure that the views of all interested parties are sought in relation to the ongoing development and review of this policy.



## Individual Support Plan to prevent Physical Intervention

|            |  |        |  |                |  |
|------------|--|--------|--|----------------|--|
| Pupil Name |  | DOB    |  | Date Completed |  |
| Teacher    |  | Parent |  | Date of review |  |

|  | What might we see and hear? | What adults think this means | Strategies to support myself: | Strategies staff could use: | Scripts:   |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Stage 0 - Baseline Behaviours</b><br>Positive behaviour support/primary strategies that work: |                             |                              |                               |                             | "you have X minutes left – then we will..."  |
| <b>Stage 1 - Anxiety Behaviours</b><br>Secondary strategies – Support:                           |                             |                              |                               |                             | " Name, instruction, thankyou"<br>"Thank you for following instructions"<br>"Did you mean..."<br>"Work and then... for reward time"<br>"Well done for respecting their/our/your right to..." |
| <b>Stage 2 - Defensive behaviours</b><br>Secondary strategies – Support and choices:             |                             |                              |                               |                             | "This...and then..." (remind him of what he has chosen for reward time)<br>"Name ,20 seconds thank you"  |
| <b>Stage 3 - Crisis Behaviours</b><br>Tertiary strategies – Support and risk reduction:          |                             |                              |                               |                             | "Name, safe space, thank you."<br>Use as little language as possible as this can cause him to flare up more.   |
| <b>Stage 4 - Recovery Behaviours</b><br>Support strategies:                                      |                             |                              |                               |                             | " Name I understand you are ..."<br>"Name, the adults are here to keep you all safe"<br>"well done for ..."  |





## Post Incident Learning / Debrief document

|            |  |              |  |                   |  |                |  |
|------------|--|--------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------|--|
| Pupil Name |  | Staff member |  | Date of incident: |  | Date Completed |  |
|------------|--|--------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------|--|

### Checklist –

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Where is the debrief taking place?<br>e.g. quiet room, walk outside, garden   |  |  |
| Who is going to be completing the debrief?<br>e.g. keyworker, counsellor, teacher who has a good relationship                 |  |  |
| When is the debrief going to take place?<br>e.g. in the morning while fresh, at lunch time away from other classmates         |  |  |
| What do you need to ensure communication is as easy as possible?<br>e.g. PECs, ACD, sketch paper, crayons                     |  |  |
| Is there anything the individual needs to help them feel as comfortable as possible?<br>e.g. drink, fidget spinner, comforter |  |  |
| Is the individual ready to participate in a conversation?   |  |  |

### Learning –

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| I'm here to listen. Tell me what happened from your perspective.  |  |  |
| How did you feel?   |  |  |
| How do you think other people were feeling?   |  |  |
| What did you do?  |  |  |
| What should happen in the future? What could we do to help you feel ok next time? What else might help? |  |  |
| What went well so we can remember for next time?  |  |  |
| Anything else?  |  |  |

**Post Incident Learning / Debrief document**

|            |  |              |  |                   |  |                |  |
|------------|--|--------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------|--|
| Pupil Name |  | Staff member |  | Date of incident: |  | Date Completed |  |
|------------|--|--------------|--|-------------------|--|----------------|--|