

ASHGATE CROFT SCHOOL

CALM ROOM POLICY



Approved by Full Governors: 14th May 2019

Minute No.: 38/19

Ethos

The term “Calm Room” refers to any space with the door closed that provides safety for the pupil, staff and other pupils. The Calm Room can have many functions for our students. Some use it as a quiet place and will use it often to manage their own anxieties and behaviour, either with or independent of staff involvement at other times it may be used for seclusion.

It is a risk assessed, personalised and structured (reported, recorded and reviewed) strategy. It is used in the child’s best interests, with the aim of preventing the risk of significant harm to themselves or others and/or to reduce levels of anxiety. Although there is no published evidence that it improves/teaches behaviour self-regulation/self-calming, within school, we have observed evidence that it does for a number of pupils (see evidence on CARESYS/IRIS).

Where a pupil uses a Calm Room and the door is closed they will be continually monitored by at least one member of staff. The time that the pupil is inside the Calm Room must be recorded on the appropriate section of the ABC sheet (see appendix for further guidance).

The use of the Calm Room will be described in full within the pupil’s Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP). Individual Behaviour Plan and Risk Assessments must be reviewed in the light of any unplanned use of Calm Room. A copy of this policy will be attached to the pupil’s IBP, including the copy that is sent home.

Rationale

At this school, pupils have a range of learning difficulties which affect their behaviour. Some pupils have significant and specific behaviour problems. They do not always respond in a predictable way because of their learning difficulties.

Staff and children have the right to feel safe and secure at school. The best interests of the child will override and inform any actions undertaken by staff to modify inappropriate behaviour. Actions must be proportionate, reasonable and necessary.

Legal Considerations

The 2010 Guidance, referring to the 2002 Guidance principles states:

The use of seclusion (where a person is forced to spend time on their own against their will) is a form of physical intervention and should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. The right to liberty is protected by criminal and civil law and seclusion outside the Mental Health Act should always be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil.

The use of seclusion must be seen as restrictive physical intervention. It is only used as part of a holistic broad approach to the management of extreme challenging behaviour. The inappropriate use of seclusion may be unlawful, as will any unreasonable use of force where there is no legal justification. Therefore, seclusion should only be used when:

- It is in the best interests of the person being secluded – and never for ease of management.
- It is in the least restrictive response and its use is proportional to the level of risk presented.
- It is used for the minimum period of time to restore safety.
- Other strategies such as de-escalation have been used or are considered to be inappropriate in the circumstances.

Seclusion must not be used with any intent to punish or teach the person any new behaviours – its use must be as a responsive strategy aimed at managing the presenting behaviour at that time.

Planning and Safeguards for the Use of the Calm Room

If seclusion is considered to be appropriate, the following issues must be addressed before use:

- Any use of seclusion must be in the context of the appropriate local policy and all those involved should have a thorough understanding of this policy.
- The agreement to the use of seclusion for an individual should be part of a detailed Behaviour Support (functional analysis, IBP, RAs) which identifies the reasons for an individual's behaviour and provides a holistic graded approach to the risks and management of challenging behaviour. The plan should involve and be agreed by everyone involved with the pupil.
- Good practice emphasises the involvement of the individual and their family in the consideration and planning of the use of seclusion.
- Staff involved will be PROACT SCIPr UK trained.
- Staff will need to be trained in the use of seclusion for the individual concerned within the wider context of a holistic approach to behaviour support and in the use of monitoring, recording and reviewing processes.
- When an incident arises, staff should consider the balance of risks between managing the situation where it is happening and withdrawing with everyone to create a calming area, compared with moving the pupil to a Calm Room, possibly with a physical intervention, and then withdrawing.
- Staff, need to be aware of the possible effects of using the calm room, which may include post-traumatic stress disorder.

Recording and Reporting the Use of Seclusion and Calm Room

All incidents must be:

- Monitored and recorded on the ABC forms in IRIS.
- Reported to parents/carers at least by the end of the day, when the Calm Room has been used, this is recorded on the ABC.
- Reported to the Local Authority (when pupil has not chosen to use the calm room).

Reviewing the use of seclusion and Calm Room

The review should assess each use of a safe space and seclusion and record whether:

- The use of seclusion is an effective response and how this compares with other possible responses or strategies.
- It offers a lower level of intrusion than other possible responses or interventions.
- It offers improved safety for the secluded person and those around them.
- It helps the person to calm and return to base-line behaviour as or more effectively than other responses or strategies
- It decreases the probability of the same behaviour occurring in the future when taken in the context of the pupil's Individual Behaviour Plan.
- Individual Behaviour Plans are reviewed every term, reviewing the use of Calm Rooms must be part of Behaviour Management review.

Signed:

Governor: Date:

Headteacher: Date:

These guidelines will be reviewed annually.

Appendix

- Use of calm room

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents and guidelines:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Training Records
- Risk Assessments
- Individual Behaviour Plans
- Restraint Reduction Plan
- BILD Code of Practice – edition 4
- Physical Intervention (restraint)
- Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy
- Functional Analysis
- Positive environmental checklist
- Gateways – proactive management
- Behaviour Support Planning Tool
- Behaviour Support Tool Kit
- DCC Guideline on restrictive physical intervention – Dec. 2011 (Includes reference to all relevant Government documentation)
- Confidential Reporting Code

Appendix

USE OF CALM ROOM

- Staff should monitor the pupil at all times, this may be with the member of staff inside the calm room or from outside.
- Interior of calm rooms must be visible at all times from outside.
- Staff should monitor the time for the use of the calm room.
- If calm room doors are closed, they should not be locked or held.
- The Headteacher and Governing Board will not support the restriction of a pupil's right to freely leave a calm room, unless there is an immediate danger of harm to the pupil or others. Such restriction will be treated as a physical restraint by the member(s) of staff.
- Any restriction of a pupil's freedom to leave a calm room should be continuously reviewed and should cease immediately when the danger to the pupil or others is sufficiently reduced. Each use of a calm room should be decided according to the current situation and should never become a routine activity. A restrictive physical (restraint) record of incident will be completed and sent to CAYA.
- Follow guidance on pupil's IBP to assess the pupil's levels of arousal.
- Staff need to assess the pupil's level of arousal and stay with them until they are ready to return to their routine ensuring they are told what is happening next.