

OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL



Calming Room Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator

November 2024	November 2025	Mrs M Brown Mr C Warner Mrs D York
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Principal:	Mrs M F Brown	Date:	September 2024
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Purpose

Overstone Park School is dedicated to fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment where students feel supported in managing their emotional and behavioural needs. As part of this commitment, the Calming Therapy Room serves as a structured resource to help students regulate their emotions in a safe and supportive setting. This policy is designed to outline the aims, processes, and integration of the Calming Therapy Room into the school's overall approach to behaviour management, as outlined in the Behaviour Policy. For more information on the school's general approach to behaviour, please refer to the Behaviour Policy.

This policy aligns with the Educational School Standards and Independent School Standards, ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks while maintaining a student-centred approach to emotional wellbeing. The room is part of a holistic strategy to address behaviour issues constructively, focusing on prevention, intervention, and restoration.

Aims of the Calming Therapy Room

The primary aims of the Calming Therapy Room are to:

1. Provide a supportive environment: Offer students a safe space to process their emotions and develop self-regulation skills.
2. Promote positive behaviour management: Act as an intermediary step in addressing behaviour challenges without resorting to punitive measures.
3. Minimise disruptions: Reduce classroom interruptions by addressing individual needs in a designated space.
4. Encourage reflective practices: Help students understand and address the root causes of their behaviour, promoting long-term improvement.
5. Support inclusion: Ensure that all students, including those with special educational needs, have access to appropriate emotional support.

By integrating these aims with the overarching Behaviour Policy, the Calming Therapy Room contributes to a consistent, school-wide approach to managing behaviour and promoting emotional wellbeing.

Access and Usage

The Calming Therapy Room is designed as a resource for students requiring additional support to manage emotional or behavioural challenges. Its usage is guided by a structured process to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Eligibility

- All students are eligible to use the Calming Therapy Room when experiencing emotional distress or difficulty regulating their behaviour.
- Students with an identified need, such as those with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), behaviour plans, or additional learning needs, may have scheduled access as part of their support framework.

Referral Process

- **Teacher-Led Referral:** Teachers or support staff may refer a student to the room when they observe signs of distress, escalating behaviour, or a need for emotional regulation.
- **Pre-Planned Access:** For students with recurring needs, access to the room will be included in their personalised behaviour or support plan. Parents and guardians will be informed of this arrangement.
- **Student-Initiated Use:** Where appropriate, students may request to use the room, fostering independence in managing their emotions.

Time Limits and Monitoring

- Students will typically use the room for a maximum of 20 minutes to encourage effective self-regulation without prolonged removal from learning.
- Staff members will monitor time spent in the room and provide gentle prompts to transition back to regular activities when appropriate.
- Extended use of the room may be approved on a case-by-case basis, particularly for students with specific needs outlined in their support plans.

Structure and Supervision

Environment

The Calming Therapy Room is intentionally designed to be a welcoming, calming space that encourages relaxation and self-reflection. Key features include:

- Sensory tools such as weighted blankets, stress balls, and fidget items.
- Comfortable seating, such as bean bags or soft chairs.
- Neutral, soothing décor with muted colors to minimize overstimulation.
- Quiet zones with mindfulness activities or reflective journals.

Supervision

- The room will be supervised by trained staff who understand the principles of de-escalation, emotional regulation, and restorative practices.
- Supervisors will maintain a balance between providing support and allowing students the autonomy to self-regulate.

Activities

While in the room, students may:

- Engage in guided breathing or mindfulness exercises.
- Use sensory tools to release tension and refocus.
- Reflect on their emotions through journaling or structured worksheets.
- Participate in brief one-on-one conversations with staff to discuss their feelings and plan next steps.

The room is not a punitive space; its purpose is to empower students to take responsibility for their emotions and behaviour in a constructive way.

Integration with the Behaviour Policy

The Calming Therapy Room is an integral part of Overstone Park School's approach to behaviour management, as outlined in the Behaviour Policy. It serves as a proactive, supportive resource that aligns with the school's commitment to restorative practices.

Prevention

The room helps prevent behavioural incidents by providing students with an opportunity to de-escalate before their emotions lead to disruptive actions. Teachers and staff are encouraged to identify early warning signs of distress and guide students to the room as a preventive measure.

Intervention

In situations where behaviour has already escalated, the room serves as an intermediate step between classroom-based strategies (e.g., verbal reminders, redirection) and more formal interventions (e.g., parent meetings, suspensions).

Restoration

The room supports the restorative practices outlined in the Behaviour Policy by creating space for reflection and conversation. After using the room, students will:

- Participate in a debrief with staff to discuss what triggered their behavior.
- Reflect on how their actions may have impacted others.
- Plan strategies for managing similar situations in the future.

Staff members will document these reflections and incorporate them into ongoing behaviour management plans, ensuring consistency and accountability.

For detailed information on the school's broader behaviour management strategies, please see the Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Usage Log

A log will be maintained to track:

- Frequency of use by individual students.
- Reasons for referral.
- Time spent in the room.
- Outcomes of reflective conversations.

This data will be reviewed regularly to identify patterns, assess the room's effectiveness, and ensure it meets students' needs.

Impact Assessment

The leadership team will evaluate the room's impact on overall behaviour trends, classroom dynamics, and individual student progress. This assessment will inform any necessary adjustments to the room's operation or the Behaviour Policy.

Feedback

Feedback will be collected from students, parents, and staff to ensure the room remains a valuable resource. Suggestions for improvement will be incorporated into regular policy reviews.

Safeguarding Considerations

As part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities, staff will remain vigilant for any signs of underlying issues, such as bullying, trauma, or unmet emotional needs. If concerns arise, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures, ensuring appropriate support is provided.

Alignment with Educational and Independent School Standards

The implementation of the Calming Therapy Room supports the school's compliance with the Educational School Standards and Independent School Standards, particularly in the areas of:

- Promoting student welfare.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Addressing the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline.

By prioritising emotional regulation and restorative practices, the room contributes to a culture of respect, inclusion, and personal growth.

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually by the leadership team, in consultation with staff, students, and parents. Updates will be informed by usage data, feedback, and changes to regulatory standards.

Conclusion

The Calming Therapy Room at Overstone Park School is a cornerstone of the school's approach to promoting emotional wellbeing and managing behaviour. It reflects the school's commitment to proactive, restorative practices that prioritise student growth and inclusion. By providing a dedicated space for reflection and self-regulation, the room supports the aims of the Behaviour Policy and ensures that all students have the opportunity to thrive in a positive learning environment.

For more details on the school's overall behaviour management approach, please refer to the Behaviour Policy.