



## Calm Central Policy

### **Mission Statement**

We believe that emotional functioning can affect a child's ability to access education fully. We believe that by providing a therapeutic environment, relationships and activities we can offer a child the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Gwlady's Street CP & Nursery School

Lead Member of Staff:

Keyworkers:

Date:

## **Philosophy behind Calm Central**

Calm Central combines therapeutic, nurturing and educational approaches.

The emotional brain develops in response to the nurturing a child receives. Children use play to work through any issues and experiences that may be preoccupying them and/or causing them emotional worry. By providing children with the opportunity to participate in transformative play they are enabled to cope better with life circumstances and therefore to access school more effectively.

Research on Emotional Literacy shows that it is the level of emotional skills that determine our success in life (professional and personal). It also shows that these skills can be taught. Therefore, by focussed teaching of emotional skills we equip children for life, increasing their chances of experiencing well-being and fulfillment.

By combining these approaches we both address children's underlying emotional needs, and teach them the skills they need for life. Where this is provided early enough we can prevent the development of more serious social and emotional difficulties, and enable our pupils to become successful and productive.

## **Overview**

Calm Central is part of a whole school approach (see Appendix 1) and will only be fully effective as such. It aims to meet the needs of children to support socially and emotionally. It is a specially allocated and developed room with a specific focus. Calm Central has an allocated staff who, have an understanding of therapeutic approaches. Calm Central delivers a tailored programme that merges educational and therapeutic approaches.

This combination of approaches has been shown to improve emotional development, learning and behaviour by:

- ◆ Raising self esteem
- ◆ Increasing confidence
- ◆ Improving emotional control
- ◆ Improving peer relationships
- ◆ Reducing attention seeking behaviour
- ◆ Improving concentration
- ◆ Improving progress in work.

## Aims and Objectives

### **Aims:**

- To enable children to cope better with/overcome social and emotional barriers.
- To enable children to reach their full potential
- To equip children with the skills needed to take responsibility for their personal development, and learning.

### **Objectives:**

- To identify children who will benefit from this provision and those who need referring on for more specialist assessment and support.
- To provide a creative and supportive environment within which children can explore ways in which they can reach their full potential.
- To deliver small group work programmes
- To work towards continuation between the learning environments (Calm Central and school).
- To monitor the effectiveness of the intervention.

## The Environment

The environment within Calm Central is an important part of the approach. Calm Central is part of the school and offers a comfortable and nurturing environment.

Calm Central has a small, enclosed space that creates a feeling of safety for the children. It also helps them connect with their physical senses. This space has fabrics of different textures, special lighting. Relaxing background music is played in Calm Central.

Calm Central also has the following elements within it:

- Tables to work at
- Space to sit in a circle
- A reading area
- Display boards for the children's emotional literacy work

Calm Central has the following resources within it:

- Books that address social and emotional themes (fiction and non-fiction)
- Emotional literacy support
- Sand tray and toys (vehicles, people, animal families, dinosaurs, shells, pebbles, fantasy figures)
- Dolls house and people
- Puppets

- Home play (dolls and clothes, toy food, cups and plates, dressing up clothes)
- Construction (e.g. lego, building blocks)
- Art materials including clay/play dough
- Musical instruments
- Cups and plates for the group to eat together

### **Levels of responsibility**

**To maximise the effectiveness of the Calm Central, the Lead needs to take on a distinct social and emotional support role in school.**

- To work with the Lead and school staff to identify children for referral to Calm Central
- To work with Sendco and Teachers to identify children for referral.
- To liaise with parents and other professions involved with the child if required.
- To deliver child-led transformative play sessions
- To plan and deliver small group interventions including circle time, emotional literacy and transformative play
- To record significant information and progress from these sessions
- To review progress of individuals and groups
- To pass on relevant information to DSL when appropriate
- To work with Sendco to identify appropriate referral and monitoring systems
- To work with Sendco and school staff to monitor effectiveness of intervention
- To work with other school staff to link work in Calm Central with the rest of school e.g. feeding back observations about child's abilities, difficulties and patterns of behaviour.
- To set up and maintain the room: ordering and organising resources, displaying work
- Staff in Calm Central to attend and actively participate in supervision (see below)

**A list of competencies are also provided in Appendix 2. These refer specifically to the 1:1 transformative play sessions and have been produced in conjunction with Play Therapy UK.**

**Calm Central staff are expected to work within an ethical framework based on The Ethical Framework for Play Therapy UK. This can be found in Appendix 3**

### **Line-management**

Staff in Calm Central are line-managed by the Lead. Regular meetings take place to discuss referrals (see below), to identify appropriate interventions, to monitor and evaluate progress and to identify and resolve practical issues around the running of Calm Central. Staff will report safeguarding concerns to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Supervision**

It is beneficial for the Lead to be a therapist who is trained to deliver supervision. This is a requirement for therapeutic work as outlined in the Competencies and Ethical Framework. In line with recommendations from the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists and from Play Therapy UK, Calm Central staff should receive supervision each month. The contract between supervisor and supervisee can be seen in Appendix 4.

Supervision offers the following:

- A chance to off-load and to explore the impact of the work on themselves as therapeutic work is very emotionally demanding.
- Help in identifying when a Calm Central staff member is working beyond their capabilities, and when this is the case, to identify alternative solutions and further referral routes.
- Help in identifying when concerns need to be passed onto the identified DSL.
- An opportunity to discuss particular children/groups and explore alternative approaches with someone therapeutically trained.
- A chance to develop understanding and skills.
- A chance to explore the impact of their own issues on their work

### **Referral Procedures**

#### **Criteria for referral:**

Any child who is not fully accessing school sessions for emotional reasons can be referred. Difficulties may include the following:

- Poor self-awareness/ self-management
- Difficulty controlling emotions/ anger management
- Withdrawal
- Under-achievement
- Poor attendance/ time keeping
- Friendship difficulties
- Experiencing/having experienced traumatic circumstances

Calm Central provides interventions for both children with externalising behaviours (e.g. disruptive) and those with internalising behaviours (e.g. withdrawn). It is important that a large proportion of the places is allocated to early intervention to prevent children from developing more severe difficulties. It is also important that the Calm Central staff have a balanced caseload.

### **Referrals:**

Any staff member, Parent/Carer request a referral. The Calm Central Lead and the Calm Central staff will meet quarterly to identify which children will attend the following session.

If a child does not want to attend a group, then they are unlikely to benefit from the intervention. The reasons for not wanting to participate should be explored with the child and if these cannot be resolved then the referral should be put on hold and the child offered the opportunity again in the future.

**The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire can be used to identify children for interventions. This tool will also identify those children whose difficulties are too complex for this level of intervention. These children will need referring on for assessment and more experienced therapeutic work (i.e. a fully qualified therapist)**

## **Interventions**

### **Group work:**

- Groups will have no more than 8 children.
- The children will be of similar age and ideally will contain role models (once the group has begun the children and adults should not be changed/added as this disrupts the group)
- The group will run for a set length of time, 12 weeks and the children will be informed of this.
- The group will meet at the same time each week for up to one and a half to two hours.
- During the session they will take part in the following activities:
  - Mindfulness
  - sharing news
  - Circle time games and discussion
  - a set Emotional Literacy activity which may involve stories and poems (reading, writing, telling), art
  - a 'choosing time': puppets, sand play, making things, dressing up/home play.



- a relaxation and guided visualisation
- Groups may cover general Emotional Literacy skills or may be focussed e.g. friendship groups, happiness, sadness, self-esteem, anger.
- Each group will begin with a week of 'getting to know each other', establishing rules and routines and end with a week focusing on 'endings'

## Management

### **Confidentiality**

For therapeutic work to be effective, confidentiality needs to be offered. In Calm Central we have **conditional** confidentiality. This means that the child will be told: 'What we do or say in this room stays just between us unless I am concerned that you or someone else is being hurt. If this happens I would have to tell someone but I will talk to you about it first.' In these instances, information will be shared with Designated Safeguarding Lead and the usual procedures followed.

General information about patterns of behaviour, emotional developmental level and strengths and difficulties may be passed onto school staff or parents where these will help to meet the child's needs. The child will be informed of this. However, details of sessions remain confidential.

### **Behaviour Management**

Calm Central should be linked to the main office by phone or Lead so that help is available in emergency.

Calm Central operates a simple rule system:

**Respect yourself**

**Respect others**

**Respect property**

### ***Group sessions:***

**The group will sign an agreement to keep the rules at the start of the programme.** When children choose not to adhere to these rules, they will be given a verbal warning, along with a chat regarding their behaviour. If children continually break these rules they will be asked to leave the group and return to class for the rest of that session. They can return to the group for the next session.

## Monitoring and Evaluation



A referral form for general and qualitative information and Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire will be completed for each child. An evaluation form for qualitative comments and the SDQ will be completed at the end of the programme to evaluate progress. It is important that the same person before and after the intervention fills in the SDQ in order for the data to be consistent. When this is not possible the data can still be used but consultation with the original referrer is important.

Calm Central staff will be timetabled for time to keep notes on the sessions with the children, and to plan, prepare and evaluate group work. This will enable them to monitor the progress of the children and to pass useful information back to school staff.

### **Additional Uses of Calm Central**

It is important that Calm Central is made available to all children in the school in some way. There are many different ways to accomplish this.

Calm Central Stations around school

Mindfulness areas within the classroom

Sessions within classroom which highlight the weekly topic within Calm Central

Engaging Parents/Carers will greatly improve the effectiveness of Calm Central. Support groups for Parents/Carers and training courses for parents from outside agencies can be delivered upstairs in Calm Central.



## Appendix 1

### Model

#### Level 3

Therapeutically qualified professional provides:

- One-to-one therapy
- Supervisory support for Calm Central staff

Level 2 Calm Central sessions within school

#### Level 1 (Whole School)

Ethos, positive management of behaviour, effective policies, Emotional Literacy, Circle Time, Relaxation, Mindfulness

### Competencies for Calm Central

(Adapted from the Play Therapy UK Competency Framework)

#### **Core Competencies**

1. Has an understanding of the development of social and emotional functioning and the impact of early experiences on behaviour

2. Has an understanding of basic human needs (Maslow's Hierarchy)
3. Has an understanding of the elements of a therapeutic relationship
4. Has an understanding of theory of Emotional Intelligence/Literacy
5. Recognises the importance of creativity (including play) to human development and emotional health
6. Understands the difference between a directive and a non-directive activity
7. Establishes a successful therapeutic relationship.
8. Sets appropriate boundaries
9. Takes responsibility for physical safety
10. Takes responsibility for emotional safety
11. Uses directive creative approaches to deliver emotional literacy interventions
12. Uses a non-directive approach to play
13. Takes responsibility for passing on Safeguarding concerns to identified Safeguarding Lead
14. Maintains conditional confidentiality
15. Works within school's requirements for data protection
16. Works to the Calm Central ethical framework and within schools' policies and procedures
17. Agrees a therapeutic contract
18. Implements a therapeutic contract satisfactorily
19. Renegotiates a therapeutic contract satisfactorily
20. Presents cases and other information in an effective form for supervision

### **Support and Settings**

1. Works constructively with teachers
2. Works with staff to build an appropriate therapeutic alliance with children, family and other professionals
3. Liaises with SENDCO & teachers to identify appropriate referrals and to monitor

impact

4. Delivers emotional literacy /creative activities in a small group setting
5. Practices transformative play in a school setting

### **Therapeutic Skills**

1. Uses child observation to inform practice
2. Is able to identify patterns of behaviour
3. Writes notes for each session for each child
4. Uses a non-judgemental approach
5. Maintains appropriate boundaries
6. Uses a non-interpretative approach to creative activities/play in the sessions
7. Uses basic listening skills
8. Uses mirroring of body language and play
9. Uses reflective commenting and summarising
10. When appropriate, works with children to set and apply targets and rewards
11. Develops and works with appropriate beginnings & endings

### **Therapeutic Tools**

1. Uses appropriate materials & equipment
2. Uses circle time games and activities with a group
3. Delivers relaxation to individuals or small groups
4. Organises and delivers creative emotional literacy activities
5. Uses messy play as a transformative play intervention
6. Uses play dough & clay as a transformative play intervention
7. Uses movement as a transformative play intervention
8. Uses music as a transformative play intervention

9. Uses construction as a transformative play intervention
10. Uses art as a transformative play intervention
11. Uses puppets in transformative play interventions
12. Uses sand play as a transformative play intervention
13. Uses role playing as a transformative play intervention

### **Practice management**

1. Organises and manages Calm Central
2. Manages equipment
3. Manages stocks of materials
4. Ensures quality management of all group activities
5. Uses basic computer word processing to plan and record
6. Plans group interventions
7. Plans transformative play
8. Gathers quantitative and qualitative data
9. Uses spreadsheet to collate data
10. Checks and analyses data
11. Uses data to inform practice
12. Takes responsibility for own personal development and CPD

### **Application**

1. Supports children who have a range of social, emotional and behavioural needs.
2. Uses guidelines and SDQ scores to identify appropriate intervention
3. Uses qualitative information and data to identify need to refer on

## **Appendix 3**

### **Ethical Framework**

#### **Ethical principals**

**Calm Central staff are expected to work within the following six ethical principals:**

##### **Be trustworthy**

- Keep conditional confidentiality

##### **Respect the child**

- The interests of the child come first
- Inform the child of systems and procedures
- Recognise that the child has the capacity to enable their own development through their work with you
- Keep conditional confidentiality and inform the child if you are required to pass information on

##### **Act in the best interests of the child**

- Work within your own competence
- Take all issues of concern to supervision
- Continue to develop your practice by attending additional training, by reading and sharing good practice with other practitioners

##### **Avoid harm to the child**

- Avoid any incompetence – do not continue to work beyond your competence. If you are unable to function effectively due to health or personal circumstances seek advice and support and if necessary stop work with the child until the situation changes.
- Report any situation where a child has reported a safeguarding concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

### **Treat all children fairly**

- Respect children's human rights and dignity
- Ensure there is equal opportunity for children accessing your support

### **Respect yourself**

- Ask for help when you need it
- Attend and use your supervision sessions
- Ensure time for professional and personal development

### **Personal Qualities**

**Calm Central staff are encouraged to aspire to the following personal qualities:**

- Empathy with the child and their carers
- Sincerity
- Integrity
- Resilience
- Respect
- Humility
- Competence
- Fairness
- Wisdom
- Courage

**This framework is based on The Ethical Framework for Play Therapy UK.**

## Appendix 4

### Calm Central Supervision Contract

- Lead and Calm Central staff will agree to meet monthly. The date and time of each session will be agreed one month ahead.
- The content of these sessions remains confidential unless there is a need to share. In this case further necessary steps will be discussed with the Calm Central staff and then carried out.

#### **The supervisor commits to:**

- work within the PTUK/BACP ethical frameworks.
- provide the opportunity for the Calm Central staff to reflect on their work and the emotional impact it has on them.
- provide Calm Central staff with feedback, and where appropriate guidance and appraisal.

#### **The Calm Central staff commit to:**

- bring any issues or cases they need to explore in order to keep themselves and the children safe and to function to their full capability.