

Touch Talk Policy

Policy for use of massage in school following the Touch Talk principles

Rationale

Promote respectful nurturing touch through massage sequences linked to stories, poems, curriculum themes.

Purposes

- To provide a low arousal sensory approach to support reducing stress/anxiety in students.
- To facilitate a positive atmosphere that enables pupils to accept positive touch from an adult/peer as a strategy to enable them to maintain/retain a sense of emotional well being.
- To provide an atmosphere of calm that will relax the student in order for them to be ready to learn/work.
- To provide an opportunity for the student/s to express their needs and subsequently develop their self esteem.

Broad Guidelines

- Parents will be informed about the reasons for incorporating Touch Talk into the curriculum and how it will be done.
- Parents will be asked to sign a permission slip for all children receiving/giving massage.
- All Touch Talk stories will be used as part of a structured timetabled relaxing whole class/small group session or it will be used as part of an agreed individual behaviour plan.
- Staff will be trained in the core Touch Talk massage strokes.
- Staff/children will be fully clothed when receiving massages.
- Massage strokes will only be used on head, neck, shoulder, arm and back.
- Children will be taught to ask permission before massaging their peers.
- Adults will ask the child/children (using verbal/visual cues as appropriate) for permission before giving a massage.
- Adults/children will be taught to ask their partner how a stroke feels.
- Children will have the right to accept/refuse or ask to stop the massage at any time.
- Children who could benefit from it as part of individual behaviour plan will be supported in learning how to request a Touch Talk massage.
- Staff will not massage a pupil in a room when they are alone.
- All staff need to pay regard to Health and Safety/Child Protection issues in the School Policy. If members of staff have any concerns they are to follow the agreed procedures for child protection.

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