

## Contemplation Rooms - Procedure HR39

**Equality Impact Assessment:** Askham Bryan College recognises the importance of the Equality Act 2010 and its duties under the Act. This document has been assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff, students or stakeholders on the grounds of any protected characteristics.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, employees enjoy protection from discrimination and harassment because of their religion or belief, including non-belief.

1.2 Askham Bryan College is committed to creating an environment where students, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders celebrate equality and diversity in all activities. It welcomes and supports the Equality Act 2010.

1.3 Askham Bryan College is committed to creating a place where everyone, whatever their circumstances and/or background:

- Is fully respected
- Is listened to and encouraged to give their views
- Feels welcome
- Is treated in a friendly way
- Is treated in an equal way
- Has equality of opportunity
- Has full access to all activities wherever possible

Askham Bryan College is committed to treating people of all faiths and those of no faith fairly and to enable employees and students to have access to prayer and worship facilities, or quiet contemplation, where practicable.

Accordingly, a designated room is available at each College site as 'quiet' space which can be used by staff and students of all faith groups, beliefs and for those whom religion has no particular significance in their lives. The rooms may equally be used as a quiet space for people to sit and contemplate, to pray, to take a few moments to de-stress from a busy day, or to recover from a traumatic life event, such as bereavement. The rooms provided are small, only capable of being used by one or two people at a time.

Version: October 2018	Next Review: October 2021	Author: Director of Student Services	SMT Owner: Director of Student Services
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## **USING THE CONTEMPLATION ROOM**

### **2.1 To use the Contemplation room**

All requests to use the Contemplation room must be made via Student Services. The member of staff taking the booking will ask the user to complete the room log book with their name, issue time and return time for the key.

The room is available for use by any male or female member of staff or student, of any faith or beliefs and for those whom religion has no particular significance in their lives.

### **2.2 Who can use the room?**

The room offers a designated sacred space for spiritual/religious activities (individual and very small group), designated prayer, as well as a space for peace, quiet and reflection.

### **2.3 Vacating the room**

It is important that when users vacate the room that any items and furniture used are packed away, so other users find the room left clean and tidy ready for their use.

### **2.4 Physical set up of the room**

The room has been set up to make it possible for people of all faith groups to use. It is a small room without special additional equipment, fixtures and fittings. Anyone requiring washing facilities will need to use those available elsewhere in the college.

Users of the room will need to bring their own religious texts if they use them.

## **3 Guidelines regarding the use of the room**

### **3.1 Use of the room**

Staff or students may wish to use the room for silent prayer, meditation, to de-stress from their busy lives, or as a place of calm after bereavement.

The room should be a safe space for all users. This means that everyone has a duty to respect other users and to ensure the environment remains welcoming to people of all faiths, beliefs, and for those whom religion has no particular significance in their lives. It is therefore of the utmost importance that all users of the multi-faith and quiet contemplation room behave reasonably and considerately towards others who use the room.

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Version: October 2018	Next Review: October 2021	Author: Director of Student Services	SMT Owner: Director of Student Services
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## **CONTEMPLATION ROOMS PROCEDURE HR39**

If physical activity plays a part in the individual act of worship or contemplation, as is the case for Muslim prayer and for those practicing meditative yoga, then individuals are permitted to use the room for such activity.

### **3.2 Noise**

The Contemplation room may be used for quiet contemplation, designated prayer, reflection and meditation. Unless group prayer is taking place, individuals using the room must keep noise to a level that does not disturb others. It should be noted, however, that the room will only accommodate a maximum of 2 – 3 people.

It is permitted to use the room for devotional song, chanting or hymn singing if participants are engaged in an act of group worship, contemplation or meditation, and have thus reserved the room for their use in accordance with the room booking system.

If a room is required for a larger number then another room in college must be booked via the central room booking service.

### **3.3 Display of objects**

During the course of a session, a group is permitted to display religious materials. At the end of prayer, meditation or contemplation all these items must be removed from the room. This is so all users feel equally free and comfortable to use the room.

The Contemplation room will remain neutral and therefore it is not permitted to permanently display imagery, statues, or written materials in the rooms, or just outside the room. All users must be sensitive to others who may also wish to use the room after them.

Anyone using the room should make sure that sufficient time is calculated within the room booking to enable any specific material to be put away and for the room to be left clean and tidy for other users.

### **3.4 Notices, posters, leaflets**

Notices, posters, leaflets, or advertisements for forthcoming events must not be left in the Contemplation room.

### **3.5 Use of equipment in the room**

If individuals are using the room on a drop in basis, mobile phones, kindles, tablets, laptops, or amplifying equipment are not permitted in the room.

### **3.6 Security and valuables in the room**

No charity box, monies or valuables are permitted to be kept within the room. Users are responsible for looking after their own personal belongings.

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Version: October 2018	Next Review: October 2021	Author: Director of Student Services	SMT Owner: Director of Student Services
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## CONTEMPLATION ROOMS PROCEDURE HR39

### 3.7 Fire regulations and evacuation procedures

The College's no smoking policy also applies to this facility. The lighting of candles and burning of incense in the rooms is also **not** permitted.

The College's emergency evacuation procedures also apply to the rooms. Upon activation of the alarm, users should proceed immediately to their usual place when a fire alarm sounds.

### 3.8 Food and drink

No food and drink should be consumed unless this forms part of worship requirements. The room must be left clean and tidy and free of any food, drink or wrapping papers.

### 3.9 General

The Contemplation room should be respected for the purpose that is intended and is not to be treated as an additional meeting room or facilities that will provide additional storage space. Where students request time out to observe religious or cultural festivals and customs, curriculum areas should be sympathetic to their needs and requirements.

#### Links to Related College Policies / Procedures:

HR 12	Equality and Diversity Policy
SCA 6	Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
SCA 9	Bullying and Harassment Policy

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