NWSLC

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE & SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Prayer and Contemplation Room Policy(v1)2023

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Policy Author: Assistant Principal Student Services & Support

Lead Owner: Assistant Principal Student Services & Support

Target Audience: Staff, Students, Visitors

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Document History

Version Number	Amended By	Date of Revision	General Revision Description
1			New Policy

Prayer and Contemplation Rooms Policy (v1) 2023

1. Introduction

1.1 North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC) has designated Prayer and Contemplation facilities available at each campus location. The spaces offer a quiet space for spiritual/religious activities as well as a space for peace and reflection for all staff and students at the College, by exception the space may be used by approved visitors to the campus but only when approved by the Chaplaincy or the Safeguarding Team.

1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to outline the appropriate and acceptable use of prayer and contemplation rooms that are situated on the campuses of NWSLC. Through the implementation of this Policy, it is intended that the rooms can fulfil their intended purpose, be an asset to the learning community and be compliant with safeguarding guidelines and legislation. The Policy will also consider those actions which do not represent acceptable use.

1.3 This Policy is consistent with and should be used in conjunction with the following documents:

i. Equality Act 2010 (www.gov.uk).

ii. Counter Terrorism and Security Bill 2015 (www.gov.uk).

iii. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (www.gov.uk).

iv. NWSLC Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

v. NWSLC Prevent Strategy.

vi. NWSLC CCTV and Access Control Policy.

vii. NWSLC GDPR Policy.

viii. NWSLC Student Conduct Expectations Policy.

ix. NWSLC Staff Code of Conduct.

1.4 The College community considers it important to facilitate the fulfilment of its members' spiritual, religious and wellbeing needs to affirm the flourishing of an individual and to authentically implement the Ofsted requirement to encourage personal development by encouraging spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. The presence of the Prayer and Contemplation Rooms on College campuses responds to the reality that it is sometimes necessary to set aside a peaceful place in order to encourage students' "ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life" and that a compassionate workplace would also afford access to this space by staff.

1.5 'Prayer and Contemplation Rooms' refer to the spaces that are set aside at NWSLC campuses for the purpose of facilitating members of the learning communities' religious, spiritual and wellbeing requirements. 'Prayer' will have different connotations to individuals but may include the fulfilling of religious obligations and seeking amongst other things, wisdom, and comfort in the manner of a person's belief system. 'Contemplation' is a similarly wide term, allowing for time set aside for personal thought and may include 'willingness to reflect on their (students') experiences.'

1.6 The Chaplaincy Team will carry out "ad hoc" and planned checks of the facilities. The following activities are considered to fall outside the scope of acceptable usage:

i. social gatherings;

ii. organised religious services not sanctioned by the chaplaincy team (a group of people praying at the same time does not necessarily indicate an organised religious service);

iii. disseminating religious or spiritual literature and/or tracts;

iv. actively promoting a particular ideology;

v. activity that is secretive;

vi. activity that does not affirm diversity and inclusivity;

vii. activity that sits in contradiction to College values and/or British values;

viii. activity that intentionally seeks to present one group of people as more important than another;

ix. activity that promotes hate;

x. behaviour that is spiritually abusive.

1.7 The prayer and contemplation rooms are maintained and supervised by the College Chaplaincy Team, which falls under the umbrella of the Student Experience directorate. The following staff will also play a part in ensuring that the facilities are appropriately supervised:

i. The Lead Chaplain: to take responsibility for the day-to-day management and regular monitoring of the prayer and contemplation rooms and their appropriate use.

ii. College chaplains: to support the lead chaplain in their responsibilities and deputise when requested.

iii. The Assistant Principal for Student Services & Support.

iv. Student Experience Manager.

v. Duty Officers and Safeguarding Officers.

1.8 Risk assessments accounting for risks arising from either health and safety or safeguarding concerns will be undertaken on all rooms as appropriate and adhered to.

2. Rules for Use Of The Room

2.1 The following rules will apply to all Prayer and Contemplation Rooms to facilitate their appropriate use:

i. Users of the room must respect each other and their views.

ii. The room is available to all, at all reasonable times.

iii. No group has any exclusive rights to use the room unless in the event of an organised activity led by the Chaplaincy Team.

iv. The Multi-faith/Contemplation room may only be used by students and staff of the College.

v. Any authorised visitors must gain approval from the Chaplaincy Team or the Safeguarding Team before use is permitted, usage if granted, will then be limited.

vi. Storage for religious items is in the cupboard provided.

vii. Items should not be removed from the room unless they belong to the individual in question.

viii. Anything which is used (e.g. prayer mats, scarves, holy books, other artefacts, or aids to pray), in the prayer and contemplation rooms must be stored away in the cupboard or removed before other users leave the room. Users of the rooms should be respectful of these items.

ix. There will be no burning of incense or candles.

x. There will be no eating, drinking, or smoking in the multi-faith room.

xi. Promotional items or literature must not be left for other users, any such items will be removed.

2.2 These rules will be clearly displayed in all prayer and contemplation rooms.

3. Monitoring

3.1 The Chaplaincy Team will proactively inspect the prayer and contemplation rooms on a regular basis. Prayer and Contemplation Rooms will be monitored when in use and when they are not. During the inspections, particular attention will be paid to the following:

i. the general condition and tidiness of the room;

ii. whether any items or literature have been left in the room without the permission of the chaplaincy;

iii. signs of obvious misuse;

iv. the actions of users in the room when visited.

3.2 The entire College community are invited to use the prayer and contemplation rooms appropriately and note any concerns of inappropriate use and report them to the Chaplaincy Team. Signs will be present in all prayer and contemplation rooms with advice regarding how to report concerns.

3.3 Where concerns are of a safeguarding nature, these should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with guidance contained within the NWSLC Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

3.4 Where there is a concern of general inappropriate use of the prayer and contemplation rooms, every effort will be made to first understand what has happened and why. Where evidence arises that one of the prayer and contemplation rooms has been inappropriately used, in the first instance an informal conversation may be held with those involved to provide education on the correct and appropriate use of the rooms. Where there is a concern of persistent misuse, it may be necessary to invoke processes contained within either the NWSLC Student Conduct Expectations Policy 2022 or the NWSLC Staff Code of Conduct 2020.

3.5 Access to the prayer and contemplation rooms is controlled by College ID operated Salto door locks. As such, this means that NWSLC will gather and store information relating to the Staff or Student ID Number and name of those accessing the facilities on any given day. This information will be used to carry out analysis to determine activities being undertaken, the frequency of the activities, and to ensure appropriate use of the facilities.

3.6 Appropriate signage will be clearly visible, reminding users that their entry to the prayer and contemplation rooms is recorded when they swipe their ID card upon entry.

3.7 All data held will be handled in line with the College GDPR Policy 2022.

4. Equality and Diversity

4.1 By virtue of the provision of the Equality Act 2010, the College has a duty to have due regard to the need to:

i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.

iii. Foster good relations between people from different groups.

4.2 By implementing this Policy and associated procedures, the College will actively take these aims into account as part of its decision-making processes and will demonstrate how this has been undertaken.

5. Data Protection Impact Assessment

5.1 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) are an essential part of the College's accountability obligations under the UK GDPR. Conducting a DPIA is a legal requirement for any type of processing, including certain specified types of processing that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. Under UK GDPR, failure to carry out a DPIA when required may leave the College open to enforcement action

5.2 A DPIA, relating to any relevant areas within this Policy and Procedure, will therefore be undertaken to enable the systematic analysis, identification and minimisation of data protection risks and to demonstrate how the College complies with its data protect obligations.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

6.1 The Assistant Principal Student Services and Support will ensure that procedures are in place to provide effective management of the prayer and contemplation facilities.

6.2 The Policy and associated documentation will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or as required by changes in the law, regulation or as directed by the Principal.