

relax Kids



In June 2018 teaching and support staff at Holm Primary undertook a full day of informative and inspirational training on The Relax Kids education programme known as Calmaiclass.

This approach is being implemented in a variety of ways throughout the school. Parent information sessions, family workshops, this leaflet and updates through our Holm Primary newsletters and blog aim to keep you updated on how we are using Relax Kids, the benefits of this and how you can use it with your family.

### **We're working hard, creating calm, confident kids in chaotic times**

#### **What is Relax Kids?**

- A 7 step programme which gives children a range of strategies to support relaxation and mindfulness
- In school it can be used by classes, groups or individuals at anytime throughout the day.
- Can be used at home to promote relaxation throughout the day
- Encourages families to take time during busy, stressful days for mindfulness and relaxation

#### **What does it do?**

It encourages children to get in touch with core personal values of:

- Self-worth
- Happiness
- Kindness
- Gratitude

It helps children understand their own mind, recognise emotions and increase mental and emotional wellbeing

#### **What are the benefits of Relax Kids?**

It can help you improve your child's:

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| anger         | general behaviour |
| concentration | sleep             |
| communication | confidence        |
| attainment    | motivation        |



## Understanding the brain

The brain is incredibly complex and we are always finding out more about how it works as new research is continually being undertaken. If we focus on 3 crucial parts we can understand our behaviour and reactions. Being aware of them helps pupils, parents and adults respond in a more informed way.

### The Amygdala (the meerkat)

- This is the internal alarm system that keeps us safe
- The part of brain that is reactive to how we feel when we are under threat and upset
- It sends a message to the brain that releases adrenalin and cortisol
- This triggers our fight or flight response
- The brain reacts the same to a perceived threat as a real threat
- When we are feeling threatened it means many things to different people
- When in a state of fear, we can't think of anything else – all attention and focus is on survival



### The Hippocampus (the elephant)

- This is the part of the brain that stores our memories and stores how things make us feel
- It is very important because it is how we associate relationships, objects, sounds, smells, places etc. with how they make us feel
- This has a big impact on how we store information
- Stored information helps us recall certain memories (both positively and negatively e.g. hearing a certain song may trigger a memory; smelling a perfume may remind us of a person or place)

### The Prefrontal Cortex (the owl)

- This is the most evolved part of the brain where we develop imagination and language and do thinking, creating, organising and problem solving
- To fully access the prefrontal cortex the amygdala (the meerkat) needs to be calm
- We can't access it when stressed, upset or feeling threatened
- Therefore, a child does not have the full capacity to learn (listen, retain information etc.) if their 'meerkat' is not calm



★ ★ ★ **7 Steps of Relaxation** ★ ★ ★  
★ ★ ★ relax Kids ★ ★ ★

**MOVE**

Warm up exercise for energy & fun

**PLAY**

Activity games for vitality, creativity & joy

**STRETCH**

Stretching for balance, inner strength & power

**FEEL**

Peer/Self massage for self awareness, empathy and respect

**BREATHE**

Breathing exercises for improved health, anxiety & inner calm

**BELIEVE**

Affirmations for self esteem, confidence & positivity

**RELAX**

Visualisations for deep relaxation, Imagination & peace



<b>Which Step</b>	<b>Benefits, things to remember, possible resources</b>
<b>MOVE</b>	Improves circulation Releases endorphins and boosts energy Develops flexibility, co-ordination, balance and strength Any fun movement games which get children moving and channel energy positively
<b>PLAY</b>	Encourages social interaction Improves communication, co-operation Develops confidence and self-esteem Develops language and social skills Any games which children enjoy Encourage mindfulness and being in the present moment
<b>STRETCH</b>	Improves circulation and boosts immune system Promotes balance and mental calm Sharpens concentration and decreases tension Yoga like stretches May use Cosmic Kids, Yoga games for children, Yoga Pretzel cards, Enchanted Wonder cards
<b>FEEL</b>	Lowers stress levels and relieves tiredness Helps relax muscles and calms the nerves Promotes better social contact, respect and communication Improves circulation and stimulates lymphatic system <b>When taking part in peer massage children always ask for partners permission. A child can say no at any time. They may choose to watch or take part in self massage.</b> <b>In school only head, shoulders, arms, hands and back are massaged</b> May use hands, hand cream, simple tools such as back massagers, head massagers, rollers, ribbon, soft bristle brushes,
<b>BREATHE</b>	Brings energy to the respiratory system Calms the nerves Develops concentration and clarity Helps reduce anger, anxiety and stress Taught different types of breath that could be used in different situations May use feathers, orb balls, mini springs, foam shapes, hands, to focus breath
<b>BELIEVE</b>	Promotes positive thinking Develops self-confidence and self esteem Boosts self-esteem Improves emotional resilience Children (and adults) often find it hard to say positive things about themselves and others In school children are encouraged to do this regularly in controlled situations to encourage them to do this more naturally throughout their lives May use glasses, hat or masks to encourage children to speak aloud, positive affirmation calendars, affirmation cards or stones
<b>RELAX</b>	Improves concentration, listening skills and memory Improves mental and emotional health Promotes deeper sleep Develops imagination and creativity Children are encouraged to take part in relaxations and visualisations in a place they are comfortable e.g. at desk, on floor, with cushion or blanket May use Relax Kids relaxation CD's, scripts in Relax Kids books, tools online

Many resources can be found on Relax Kids Website – books, Cd's free downloads

<https://www.relaxkids.com/>

**Many items we use can be purchased low cost in supermarkets, pound shops and online e.g. windmills, feathers, dough, bubbles, handcream**