

Classroom breaks expectations

- Only students with documented OCOPs or recognised learning/behaviour challenges can negotiate breaks. All other students have the option to use the calm down corner (one inside all learning spaces) as well as participating in regular whole class brain/movement/interoception breaks and positive primers throughout the day
- Breaks are to be negotiated with the teacher every time
- Teacher is to provide a choice of 2 break options for the student to use when having an individual break e.g. you can either do 20 wall pushes or 5 mins of belly breathing
- Teacher is to be explicit with the time, language and purpose the student has for their break e.g. “I can recognise you are in the yellow zone so you can spend do 20 step ups to bring yourself back towards the green zone”. Students should be able to explain this information to an adult when asked.
- Individualised breaks should be a maximum of 10 minutes before being ready to return to the classroom and ready to learn (not all OCOP students will achieve this and may need additional time. This is to be discussed with the student on a needs basis “I can recognise you are still in the red zone and not ready to learn so I am going to give you another 10 minutes to bring yourself back to the green zone”)
- Timer needs to be set and remain in a visual location for the student, with the teacher keeping track of the time as well.
- Students with documented OCOPs/recognised challenges taking breaks do it independently, not with a friend. It is about them regulating their emotions and increasing their capacity to do it, not extra time for playing with a friend
- Recommended maximum of 2 students to take a break at any one time. These breaks need to be completely separate and independent from each other e.g. one in the calm down corner and one having an eating break.
- Students can have maximum of 3 breaks a day. Number of breaks used for students to be shared between NIT teacher and classroom teacher between lessons
- All individualised breaks are to be purposeful and clearly outlined with the student before taking it. Their purpose is always for students to regulate their emotions when they are de-escalated and be ready to learn.
- Any student outside the classroom for a break either needs to be accompanied by an adult or in immediate line of sight of the teacher, with a break card and have a timer set. These breaks need to be purposeful and clearly outlined before leaving e.g. picking up rubbish around the school.
- Whole class breaks (brain, movement, interoception and positive primers) are done regularly throughout the day between transitions and extended periods of learning
- Whole class breaks are timetabled in addition to those the teacher recognises as being necessary (during extended learning periods, when the class is unsettled, etc.)
- Whole class breaks should be a maximum of 5 minutes