

Use of Safespaces Policy



Wheatley Hill Community Primary School

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Wheatley Hill Primary School – Safespace Policy & Procedures

Aims

- To maintain our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and secure whole school environment.
- To be available to support a pupil's Sensory needs identified through a sensory profile or following recommendations from an Occupational Therapist.
- To be available to provide a low stimulation environment for those pupils with a short attention period or those who are vulnerable to distraction.
- To be available for withdrawal of a student (staff or pupil initiated) in line with individual pupil Behaviour Support Plans (agreed with parents).

What is a Safespace?

The 'Safespace' is a multi-purpose safe area. It provides an area of low arousal that can be adjusted to easily accommodate pupil sensory needs. It is also designed for children with complex behavioural needs, who at times, would be unsafe in their usual classroom – posing a risk to themselves, others or a risk of significant destruction of property. The use of "Safespaces" are included in individual pupil Behaviour Support Plans and within our school Risk Assessments. They are maintained appropriately by our school caretaker and all allocated staff are trained and adhering to best use practices.

What are the uses of the Safespace?

One-to-One Space

When a safespace is attached to/ within a classroom it can provide for those with a short attention span, or who are vulnerable to distraction, a low stimulation environment in which one-to-one work can take place, without the need to withdraw from the classroom area.

Our Safespaces can provide a low arousal area where one-one working with a pupil can be carried out. This low arousal environment will support a pupil to focus on the task / intervention taking place as well as providing a quiet learning environment away from the main body of the class. This one-one work, will be pre-planned and will be recognised as an appropriate strategy to use with that pupil based on classroom observations, advice from the SENDco or following advice from another professional.

Sensory Space

Safespaces can be used as a sensory space by adding equipment such as fibre optics, special effects projection and sensory toys. This environment is ideal for carrying out therapeutic work, intensive interaction and deep massage.

All of our Safespaces have a range of sensory items attached to them to support pupils to use these spaces as part of their sensory processing needs. These resources include access to gym balls, sensory toys, body sox and weighted blankets. Although pupils can self select which resources they would like to use, many will be used with pupils as part of their sensory profile, which would be carried out by our SEND teacher or Occupational Therapist.

Promote Behaviour Self-Management

A Safespace can also be used to reduce background noise, distraction or anxiety in the classroom. With a Behaviour Support Plan, pupils can be taught to recognise the changes in their body when they are about to go into crisis. They can be invited to use the Safespace as a calm space when they start to feel anxious or agitated. This strategy can help to reduce the incidence duration of crises. In our school setting, it allows the individual to return quickly to the classroom and not be isolated from their peers for extended periods of time.

In certain situations it may be relevant to request a pupil or through positive handling move a pupil to one of the areas designated as a 'safespace'. These are areas set aside for the purpose of withdrawal and should only be used in line with an individual's Behaviour Support Plan (agreed with parents). At no time will a pupil be left unsupervised whilst using them and pupils must be observed at all times. Staff should actively encourage a pupil to 'calm' using a range of de-escalation techniques & resources.

As soon as is reasonable and appropriate they should either return to complete the task or activity they were involved in or be offered restorative discussion time in our Therapy Room. An individual pupil may take themselves to a particular 'safe-space' as a learnt strategy to manage their own frustrations, anxiety or behaviour. If this happens then a member of staff should accompany them to monitor and observe, following the guidance as above. Our Safespaces are not used for any form of "time out", nor are pupils locked within any of these areas. Here at Wheatley Hill Primary, we are not secluding children i.e. unsupervised or locked in and rooms / areas, we are using well planned pupil withdrawal so support pupils to learn to regulate their own behaviours. Some of our safe spaces have zipper doors and pupils are welcome to close these if it enables them to self-regulate more effectively. Staff may support pupils to close these zipper doors if requested by the pupil (zipper always to the top and always leave a 30cm opening for ease of opening / visibility. However, staff will not close a zipper door without a pupil request / consent as this would then constitute seclusion as this creates a physical barrier between the pupil and the supervising staff team.

The aim of a behaviour support plan is to reduce the need for restrictive intervention by helping the pupil to regulate their own behaviour. The ways in which the Safespace is to be utilised should be discussed with all those involved in the care of the individual. All interventions should be documented within the individual's Behaviour Support Plan. Refer to our 'Behaviour Support Plan Fact Sheet' for additional information.

Monitoring & Review

The Safespace should be used within our clear monitoring and review procedure. This should indicate whether, for example, when used as part of a Behaviour Support Plan, the frequency and duration of crises.

The use of our Safespaces for the support of pupils as part of their Behaviour Support Plans will be recorded on our V&A trackers as well as CPOMS. Parents will then be notified as outlined within our Positive Handling Policy.