



## Safe Spaces Policy

Date of Policy: May 2022

Date	Section of Policy	Amendment
12.5.22	Overview	Amended rationale for having safe spaces
12.5.22	Implementation	Added section about a planned programme of use
12.5.22	Implementation	Added Crisis Management section
12.5.22	Impact	Added Impact section

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies: Teaching and Learning Policy, Assessment and Recording Policy, Attachment aware behaviour regulation policy and Moving & Handling policy.

### **Overview**

Safe Spaces at Delamere School are the Safespace, calm areas, 1:1 rooms, the sensory circuit and some outdoor spaces.

The above areas have the opportunity to provide children with the environment they require in order to manage their emotions away from the busy classroom; this includes giving more space, fresh air and sensory input or a quiet, low arousal calm area. These areas can help where there is a demand on space and a wide range in the needs of students.

### **Intent**

- To provide a safe and secure environment for pupils to express their feelings and to gain control of their emotions which may be inappropriate in the classroom. These areas need to be seen by each pupil as a positive and safe place with a calming atmosphere.
- To provide additional environments to facilitate 1:1 learning.

“A functional assessment of any behaviour(s) will look beyond the observable behaviour and attempts to understand what motivates the person to use that behaviour, or what makes the behaviour meaningful to the person” Paley (2013).

Our vision, our values and our rights underpin all of our policies and the education we deliver. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: “The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions that affect children”. This policy has been created to keep the children at Delamere School safe and happy.

### **Implementation**

Pupils who access any of the safe spaces around school will have individual Learning Support Plans which detail when and how they should be used.

A child accessing the official Safespace will require an initial planned programme which ensures the child has had many positive experiences and is familiar with this environment; therefore the child will associate it as a safe space. In the event of the Safespace being used in a crisis, a programme should be implemented as soon as possible. The Safespace is positioned in a central area in school in order to enable easy access by all pupils.

The Safe Spaces can be used for any of the following functions:

#### **'Chill out' space**

These areas can provide space, a low stimulation area for pupils to express their feelings, calm down or have quiet time away from their classroom. They can be used by pupils as a means of managing their own behaviour by requesting time in the areas when they recognise their stress levels are rising. The areas can de-escalate an incident and reduce the incidence of crises situations.

#### **Therapy and sensory space**

A quiet, distraction free environment where children and staff can share quality time together, therefore enhancing their relationships. The Safespace can be used as a 1:1 or small group therapy space and as a safe area.

Time in a Sensory Safespace can be offered as part of a reward system.

#### **Intensive 1:1 quiet working area**

A quiet, distraction free environment where activities can be carried out either at a table or on the floor, e.g. TEACCH or IEP activities.

#### **Crisis management – Safespace only**

During a crisis situation:

A dynamic risk assessment can be made and the option of a Safespace can be used to reduce the level of physical contact during a physical restrictive intervention. Its use must be in the best interest of the pupil. If an unplanned use of the safe space occurs then a LSP must be put into place for the child as it is then a foreseeable risk and the protocol for an unplanned intervention must be followed [see after an incident checklist]

If a pupil is at stage 3 of a crisis and is demonstrating challenging behaviour, ideally two staff should be present. [see pupil's learning support plan – Stage 3 is different for all pupils].

If it is safe to do so, a member of staff should remain in the safe space with the pupil. The zipped door may be used as a barrier only in extreme circumstances where the risk of injury of not doing so has been assessed to be severe. This form of intervention should be treated in the same way as a restrictive physical intervention and should be reported to a member of the leadership team, with relevant forms completed.

The Safespace can be used as a restrictive physical intervention only if it has been risk assessed and agreed that it is in the best interests of the child and shared with parents as part of their Learning Support Plan. An RPI form must be completed following this incident.

Staff are trained in Team Teach; Team Teach training offers a range of responses including de-escalation strategies and holds which are graded. The least intrusive strategy should be used that is appropriate to the risk assessment / situation that is occurring.

As soon as it is safe to do so, the member of staff should re-enter the area to offer support to the pupil.

Staff may zip the Safespace closed at the request of the child, without the need to complete RPI paperwork.

The child must always be in full view of the adult, therefore the adult must observe through the clear panelling of the safe space. The use of this space must be recorded on the child's Learning Support Plan.

“Physical intervention uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming himself, herself, others or property.”  
(Team Teach).

### **Recording and monitoring:**

- Use of the Safespace as a Restrictive Physical Intervention should be reported to the Leadership Team and relevant paperwork completed as soon as possible
- Children using the Safespace should have a planned programme and Learning Support Plan
- The Leadership Team and Team Teach Intermediate Tutors are available to offer advice and support regarding use of the Safespace

### **Impact**

- Pupils will be able to identify and express their emotions
- Pupils will have access to safe spaces which support emotional regulation and readiness for learning
- Pupils will be able to identify and express when they need a break to re-regulate

### **Reference**

Advice for our Delamere School policy has been taken from Safespaces.

