



# Training Guide



## Organising a prayer and reflection space

## Welcome

Thank you so much for giving your time to enable a prayer and reflection space to happen. It would not be possible without volunteers like you. This training guide will give you information on how to organise the space well, including what documentation you should complete. Hopefully it will address any questions you have around how to go about organising a prayer and reflection space from start to finish. We hope you find it a helpful guide as you look forward to organising the prayer and reflection space.

## Who we are

BeSpace is a Christian charity that aims to support churches to create spaces for prayer and reflection in the community. Our vision is to see every child, young person and adult connect with God in their daily lives. Our core values are:

- Hospitality- we aim to always have a culture where people feel valued, safe and welcome.
- Unity- we encourage churches from different traditions to work together to accomplish our mission.
- Creativity- we seek to inspire creativity and innovation as we continually work toward our vision
- Respect- we show love to people of all beliefs and backgrounds

## Become, Belong, Beyond

These 3 key words help to describe some of what we hope will be the impact of experiencing prayer and reflection spaces. We hope that people will **become** more of the person they were created to be, will know that they **belong** in a supportive community and have a purpose and that people will look **beyond** themselves.

## **Initial meeting/ contact with the school**

The first step to organising your prayer and reflection space is to make contact with the school. If they have had a prayer and reflection space before this may be as simple as contacting the usual person and discussing suitable dates, confirming which room you will use and what theme they may like to explore.

If the school has never had a prayer and reflection space before this meeting may involve explaining what a prayer and reflection space is through sharing BeSpace literature and perhaps inviting a member of school staff to see a local space in action. It can be helpful to explain how prayer and reflection spaces link into the curriculum and SMSC which is an Ofsted requirement. For church schools' links to SIAMS could be mentioned. Please see our website pages for details of this or email us on [info@bespace.be](mailto:info@bespace.be).

If the school has decided that they want to pursue having a first prayer and reflection space then a meeting to discuss dates, any questions the school may have, consider a suitable venue and discuss activities should take place. BeSpace staff are able to be present at this meeting so that we can share suitable dates from a staffing and equipment perspective as we support you in your first prayer and reflection space.

**Suggested minimum timeframe of organisation:**

The following pages cover the different elements of organisation for a prayer and reflection space, with a timeframe for when they should be ideally completed by. The earlier things can be organised the better to save last minute organisation which can be stressful.

Following initial meeting	To do	Tick when complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm date of space with school and BeSpace (if not confirmed in meeting) to ensure equipment availability and if it's your first prayer and reflection space, BeSpace support and staffing.</li> <li>• Confirm the theme of the space with the school so you can start to plan your activities (normally exploring prayer and reflection- thank you, sorry, please, others for a first space)</li> <li>• Inform your leaders who have never led sessions before of local schools they can observe a session in to gain confidence (speak to BeSpace to arrange this). Confirm the dates and times they will visit with BeSpace so they can inform the schools and leaders.</li> <li>• Share dates with your church so you can start to inform and gather volunteers.</li> <li>• Confirm the training date for BeSpace to deliver volunteer training if required.</li> </ul>	

6 weeks before prayer space

To do	Tick when complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the school for a class timetable confirming when sessions will be to aid you when confirming volunteers. Draft a volunteer timetable and add people as they confirm which slots they can do (you will need a volunteer per activity plus a session leader for primary spaces and 3 people present in the room for secondary spaces. Don't forget people to help with setup, pack down and transporting equipment)</li> <li>• Confirm the activities you will be doing in the space with the school (it is a good idea to confirm this with the school before writing and confirming the risk assessment as you may need to change the risk assessment if the school prefer different activities)</li> <li>• Adapt the BeSpace safeguarding document (downloadable online) to fill in the school details and ask the school to check and sign to confirm it is in agreement with their safeguarding policy. Check any other details you need to know around their safeguarding regulations (do the volunteers need to fill in a form if they don't have a current DBS check etc.)</li> <li>• Adapt the BeSpace risk assessment document so it covers any risks in the room and with the specific activities that you will be doing in the prayer and reflection space. Ask the school to check and agree this document by signing it.</li> </ul>	

4 weeks before prayer space

To do	Tick when complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm details with BeSpace around the collection of equipment from the Oxford store (if BeSpace are not supporting your first prayer space setup) and when you will return it. Confirm which resources are needed if BeSpace are not already aware.</li> <li>• Order any additional resources you need for the activities that BeSpace does not stock.</li> <li>• Send the agreed safeguarding and risk assessment documents to volunteers so they can read them. Inform them of anything else they need to do to comply with the school safeguarding policy.</li> <li>• Send the agreed activities to the volunteers so they are aware of what they will be doing in the prayer space.</li> <li>• Set a date and time for the debrief meeting with the school for after the prayer and reflection space to consider next steps.</li> </ul>	

2 weeks before prayer space

To do	Tick when complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm final volunteer timetable and send a copy to all your volunteers.</li> <li>• Send a copy of the timetable through to the school so they know who to expect on which days.</li> <li>• Prepare any resources for the activities (cutting out shapes for an activity etc.)</li> <li>• Gather volunteers together for a training session for the small group volunteers and session leaders.</li> </ul>	

Days before the prayer space

To do	Tick when complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect the equipment from the store in Oxford (if required)</li> <li>• Complete any resource preparation for the activities.</li> <li>• Gather your set up team and set up the prayer space.</li> <li>• Ensure the school have signed the risk assessment and safeguarding documents before you have any students in the prayer and reflection space.</li> </ul>	

## Safeguarding

As the prayer and reflection space organiser, it is your responsibility to ensure that your volunteers are able to comply with the schools safeguarding requirements by checking what these are and communicating this clearly to everyone so your volunteers can bring the correct documentation with them etc. Having a safeguarding conversation early on with a school will ensure that you know clearly what everyone needs to do and are able to recruit appropriate volunteers (e.g. a school may say everyone who helps must have a DBS check- this is very rare but could happen!)

It is always the school's responsibility to ensure they follow their own safeguarding procedures and any guidelines in use do not supersede school policies and procedures. They are more of a helpful summary of the policy for volunteers.

Ensure that the school are aware and happy that not all the volunteers may have a current DBS check (most schools are fine with this as they often have visitors to a school and make adequate arrangements to ensure that they will not be left alone with students). A volunteer should never be left alone with a child whether they have a DBS check or not.

Keep the space all in one room if possible so the session leader can keep a watchful eye. If you have no option but to be in two rooms you may need to recruit more volunteers so no-one is left alone in a room with students. Ask the school for advice on how they would like this situation managed as they also may need to find extra staff members to accompany students into the prayer space.

If the prayer and reflection space is taking place in your church it is again the schools direct responsibility to ensure they have enough staff members accompanying the students and that students are not left alone with volunteers. Make sure that the space is set up in one space so staff can see all that is going on easily.

On our BeSpace website you will find a safeguarding guidelines template document that needs to be altered with the individual school's details and confirmed with the school that it matches their safeguarding policy. This is an easier document for volunteers to read and know who to contact if a safeguarding concern arises and how they should work while on the school premises. You may use this document but will need to adapt it for any of the schools you work with.

You will also find a DBS disclosure form that we use in any BeSpace led prayer and reflection spaces. This form is filled in before a space begins and is a good prompt as we ask volunteers to confirm that they do not have a criminal record and so is a good way of starting conversations with volunteers who may actually have a criminal record and hadn't told anyone. Anyone with a criminal record cannot be in a prayer and reflection space due to the nature of schools works and building a relationship of trust with a school. The DBS form is also a good place to record DBS numbers and keep them in one place in the space. You may download and use this form in your prayer and reflection space.

With volunteers who are not known to you directly (e.g. from another church or a parent at the school) it is good practise to request 2 references to follow up on before they come under you or your church leaders covering in a prayer and reflection space.

### **Finding appropriate volunteers**

- You don't need to find people with any specific qualifications to lead a session or run a small group in a prayer and reflection space.
- Members of the congregation can sometimes be nervous about being a volunteer and may need encouragement to participate. Perhaps invite them to attend the training before the space and try out just one session in the week and tell them the session leader can support them in their activity area if they need this.
- Mobility is not a huge barrier to participation -often at least one activity will be at a table and volunteers do not have to move around the room but can be stationed there for the session.
- Due to the nature of school's work and building a trusting relationship with a school it is not possible to have a volunteer who has a criminal record in a prayer and reflection space.
- If a volunteer is unknown to you (e.g. from a different church) please request and follow up on two character references (one from their church leader) before they volunteer in the prayer and reflection space. This applies even if they have a current valid DBS check.

### **Website documents to help you**

To make it as easy as possible for you to organise a prayer and reflection space we have many template documents available on our website resources page [www.bespace.be/resources](http://www.bespace.be/resources) that you may find helpful:

- Volunteer timetable template
- Class timetable template
- Safeguarding guidelines template
- DBS safeguarding form
- Risk assessment form template
- Range of activities and themes
- Leaders plans for leading a primary or secondary session
- Newsletter paragraph that schools can use to send out details of the prayer and reflection space in their newsletters/ online
- Training guides
  - Leading a small group activity
  - Setting up a prayer and reflection space
  - Leading a session in a prayer and reflection space
  - Facilitating a secondary session



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