



Training Guide



Setting up 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 set up a prayer and reflection space, choose activities and create a great environment. We hope you find it a helpful guide as you look forward to setting up your 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.

Resources

If you are based within Oxfordshire we have resource kits that are available to borrow for you to set up your prayer and reflection space. These kits can get quite booked up so please contact us at info@bespace.be well in advance so that our resources are available on the dates you are planning your prayer and reflection space for.

Our basic resource kit contains 2 boxes of fabric, 2 pop up gazebos, 1 electrical box, 1 box of consumable resources (post it notes etc), 1 box of fixatives (bulldog clips, staplers etc), 1 box of pens, CD player, 12 mats and 12 cushions.



We also stock the following resources that can be used for various prayer and reflection space activities: Bubble tubes, sand trays, large and small mirrors, plasma balls, Magnadoodles, world maps, MP3 players, Acetates, Effervescent Vitamin C tablets, Pipe cleaners, Pebbles and water containers, Plastic vases, post it notes, Tissue paper, Scratch cards, Water beads, Inflatable globes, Chalk boards, Parachutes, Large wooden crosses, inflatable lifeboat and an artificial Christmas tree.

We stock all the resources that you will need for running a 1st, 2nd or 3rd prayer and reflection space in a primary school or 1st or 2nd prayer and reflection space in a secondary school using our instruction guides. As you begin to create your own activities and themes you may need to acquire additional resources but may always use our kits and equipment if they are helpful.



Choosing activities

A wealth of ideas for activities can be found on both the BeSpace website www.bespace.be and prayer spaces in school's website www.prayerspacesinschools.com. Most activities can be very easily and cheaply resourced and, on the websites, you will find a printable instruction card that you can use in that activity area. We will also happily help you with activity ideas if you need support with this. Email info@bespace.be and one of the team will be in touch.

It can be helpful to choose activities based around a theme. Our 1st and 2nd prayer and reflection spaces are based on the theme of exploring reflection and prayer and this is a very good way to introduce a prayer and reflection space into a school. Once you have had a few spaces that explore the basics of prayer and reflection you could consider looking at a different theme such as special seasons (e.g. Christmas, Easter, Remembrance), school values, stories (e.g. Narnia- The lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe) or even just more general themes (e.g. adventure, change, identity etc).

Within the prayer and reflection space try to ensure a balance of writing and sensory activities so the space is accessible and engaging and reflects the variety of different ways to reflect and pray. We typically try to only have writing activities for half of the zones and sensory activities for the other half.

Important note: - Please do involve the school at all stages of the planning of activities and themes for the prayer and reflection space. Some themes may not be appropriate in some contexts and could potentially damage a relationship between the school and church and prevent the opportunity for future spaces. Be sensitive to the needs and context of the specific school you are working in and ensure that the headteacher is aware and happy with the themes and activities in the prayer and reflection space.

We would recommend that themes and activities are discussed in your initial meeting with the school for each prayer and reflection space.

Top tips for choosing activities and themes

- It can be helpful to start out with an exploration of different aspects of reflection and prayer (thank you, please, sorry, others) before bringing in themes so the children fully understand the concept and how to use the space
- Think about how you will introduce the theme in the introduction and how it links into prayer and reflection- if it is based on a story you might need to tell or recap the story first for example
- Simple props and printed pictures in the different activity area or as part of an introduction can really bring a theme to life

Top tips for writing a new activity

When coming up with a new activity we try and follow these guidelines to make sure it will be successful.

- Keep it clear and simple- 2 sentences of explanation is usually enough with clear directions of what to do.
- Use everyday language- no abstract concepts or religious words.
- Keep it accessible and relevant- make sure it is familiar and something that the students can relate to and respond to
- Keep it interactive- make sure there is something to do- a reflection and then a way to respond.
- Make sure it is inclusive- use the language of “Many Christians believe” for sentences of explanation and don’t assume that all believe that.

Feel free to use any of our activity instructions as a template to help you come up with additional activities and if you need any help with wording or writing an activity please just ask.

Please do share your new activities with us so we can share them with other people both locally and nationally and build a large database of great activities for prayer and reflection spaces.

Setting up the space

Move as much furniture out of the room as possible or push it to the edges and stack tables and chairs up that you don't need.

Decide where the gazebos will go if using these and put them up- it can be helpful to note where electrical sockets are at this point so the zones you create are close to a socket for lighting etc. Do not block any fire exits and ensure there is a way out of the room that is kept clear in case of emergency.

Your aim in setting up the space is to create distinct areas for an activity with a space for the group to gather for the introduction and conclusion (in Primary schools there will usually be 4 zones and in Secondary schools 8 zones)



Cover the backs of the gazebos and the walls of the room/ furniture with the cotton backing fabric so you don't see any of the usual things that are in the room. Use staple guns into display boards or use string or even lift up ceiling tiles and attach fabric to the ceiling to create your areas using bulldog clips/ fold back clips.

Consider which activities will go in which areas- try to have different activities next to each other (e.g. not all the writing activities together) so as the students rotate around the room they are getting a good mix of activities.

Use the sheer fabric and camo netting to make the zones look interesting and unique. Fabric could be used to create walls to section off areas or used as a canopy overhead. Consider the colours you will use of mats and cushions and try and make your zones look distinct. You could make a fairy light canopy (see image below)



When putting up fabric make sure that you can see every activity area clearly and nowhere in the room are hidden areas where students might be. This is for safeguarding purposes and so that you can see volunteers and students at all times. Only use cotton fabric on 2 sides of a Gazebo and use the sheer fabric that you can see through for the other sides.

Add lighting, mats and cushions to your areas and put in the activity along with the instruction cards and everything needed to complete the activity (e.g. pens, post it notes etc). Create atmosphere with pictures/ props/ lighting and lay everything out neatly so it looks inviting and cosy.

Turn off the lights in the room and see which areas may need a bit more lighting- fairy lights can be strung overhead and lamps put in. Check that the lamps are not too close to where the students will be so they don't get injured if the lamps get hot.

Tape down any cables and pin up any loose fabric where people will be walking.

Hide the set-up boxes somewhere in the room and only keep out the spare pens, post it notes and things that you will need for the prayer space.



Here's a little bit of inspiration as you think about how you will set up your prayer space. There is no wrong or right way to do it so enjoy the process as you create your space.



If you have any questions on anything shared in this guide or need some help planning activities or training in setting up a prayer and reflection space please contact info@bespace.be



www.bespace.be

info@bespace.be

Registered charity number: 1168891