

Reflection Spaces in Community Schools

What is a Reflection Space?

Sometimes known as a Quiet Space, Soul Space or another locally chosen name, a Reflection Space gives pupils time to be still and reflect. They may think about big questions, personal worries or concerns. The space offers a range of interactive activities suitable for pupils of any faith or none. Pupils are invited, but never pressured, to take part; some may prefer simply to watch. For pupils with or exploring faith a reflection space gives them a chance to pray. Some schools invite pupils to show their parents and careers around the reflection space after school. This is to be encouraged.



How will a Reflection Space Benefit the Pupils?

Mental health and wellbeing

Reflection spaces activities often support pupils' mental health and wellbeing. In discussion with the school, these may focus on themes such as identity, self-esteem, exam stress, relationships, anxiety and bereavement. Pupils are also given opportunities to be still, for example by watching a bubble tube or colouring.

Spiritual development

Spiritual development is part of a school's SMSC curriculum. A reflection space encourages pupils to think about themselves, their experiences, others and the wider world. Activities often allow pupils to respond in ways other than writing, such as washing a stone or closing a zip.

How will pupils with additional needs access the Reflection Space?

Experience shows that pupils with additional needs often find reflection spaces helpful. Some benefit from visiting in a small group, while others prefer to explore the space on their own before joining their class or group. Activities involve minimal reading and writing, and a team member is usually available to explain each activity, so pupils do not need to read the instructions. Teams should always work with the school on making the Reflection Space accessible for all pupils on role in the school.



What does a Reflection Space look like?

The space is arranged to give pupils privacy while keeping them safe. This may include using a gazebo or drapes to create smaller areas within a larger room. Reflective activities are presented attractively, often with strings of lights, beautiful dishes and cushions. Many teams also use gentle background music.

Below are some examples of activities for a Reflection Space

Self - Masks  Pick up a mask. If you want to, hold it in front of your face. Do you talk and act differently around different people? Do you ever say or do things because you want to be liked, but deep down you know that you're not being yourself? Do you sometimes wear a mask to fit in, to belong? If you want to, write or draw something about the way you talk and act when you're not being yourself. Then, on the other side, write or draw something about who you are – the real you – when you're being yourself.	Others – Reconciliation zips  When people argue and fight, they get separated from each other. They're not together anymore. Have you argued with someone recently? Do you know people who don't get on well together? Zips are clever. Zips bring two sides together. Reconciliation means bringing two sides together. Pick up a zip and think about the people that you want to bring back together. If you want to, you can say a quiet prayer for the people you're thinking of as you do up the zip. This is a reconciliation prayer.
The world -  Look at the map or globe. Who do you know who lives in a different place or community? Can you find a place or country that you have heard about on the news recently? Which country would you like to think about for today? Place a sticky note onto the globe or map and make a think about, or pray for, peace and healing.	Big Questions  Everyone has big questions about life. What are your big questions? Whether you believe in God or not, if you could ask God one question right now, what would you ask? Write or draw it on; • a large piece of paper on the floor • ripped up cardboard pegged onto • strings hanging from the ceiling, • chalk it on the pavement

Where do I find ideas for use in a Reflection Space?

The activities above all come from the resource library on the [Prayer Spaces in Schools website](https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/prayer-spaces-in-schools). Most of these are suitable for use in community or non-faith schools.