



# Interaction & Communication

— Academy Trust —

# Safe space & Seclusion Policy

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## **SAFE SPACE and TEMPORARY RESTRICTION OF LIBERTY (Seclusion)**

“Safe space” refers to any space with the door closed that provides safety for the pupil, staff and other pupils. The pupil is secluded and there is a temporary restriction of liberty.

It is a risk assessed, personalised and structured (reported, recorded and reviewed) strategy. It is used in the child's best interests, with the aim of preventing the risk of significant harm to themselves or others.

Where a pupil uses Safe Space and the door is closed, they will be continually monitored by at least one member of staff. The pupil's behaviour and responses should be documented every 5 minutes until the door is opened or a member of staff enters the Safe Space. It must be recorded on a Withdrawal Support Form.

The use of Safe Space and Temporary Restriction of Liberty will be described in full within the pupil's Behaviour Support Plan.

### **Legal Considerations**

The 2010 Guidance, referring to the 2002 Guidance principles states:

**The use of seclusion** (where a person is forced to spend time on their own against their will) is a form of physical intervention and should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. The right to liberty is protected by criminal and civil law and seclusion outside the Mental Health Act should always be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil.

The use of seclusion must be seen as a restrictive physical intervention. It is only used as part of a holistic broad approach to the management of extreme challenging behaviour. The inappropriate use of seclusion may be unlawful, as will any unreasonable use of force where there is no legal justification. Therefore, seclusion should only be used when:

- it is in the best interests of the person being secluded – and never for ease of management
- it is normally an emergency rather than a planned response
- it is the least restrictive response and its use is proportional to the level of risk presented
- it is used for the minimum period of time to restore safety
- other strategies such as de-escalation have been used or are considered to be inappropriate in the circumstances

**Seclusion must not be used with any intent to punish or teach the person any new behaviours – its use must be as a responsive strategy aimed at managing the presenting behaviour at that time.**

## **Planning the use of seclusion and Safe Space**

If seclusion is considered to be appropriate, the following issues must be addressed before use.

- any use of seclusion must be in the context of the appropriate local policy and all those involved should have a thorough understanding of this policy
- the agreement to the use of seclusion for an individual should be part of a detailed behaviour support plan, which identifies the reasons for an individual's behaviour and provides a holistic graded approach to the risks and management of challenging behaviour. The plan should involve and be agreed by everyone involved with pupil
- good practice emphasises the involvement of the individual and their family in the consideration and planning of the use of seclusion
- staff involved will be Team Teach trained
- staff will need to be trained in the use of seclusion for the individual concerned within the wider context of a holistic approach to behaviour management and in the use of monitoring, recording and reviewing processes
- when an incident arises, staff should consider the balance of risks between managing the situation where it is happening and withdrawing everyone to create a safe space, compared with moving the pupil to a safe space and then withdrawing

## **Recording and reporting the use of seclusion and Safe Space**

All incidents must be:

- monitored and recorded as per the Academy's procedures

## **Reviewing the use of seclusion and Safe Space**

The review should assess each use of a safe space and seclusion and record whether:

- the use of seclusion is an effective response and how this compares with other possible responses or strategies
- it offers a lower level of intrusion than other possible responses or interventions
- it offers improved safety for the secluded person and those around them
- it helps the person to calm and return to normal behaviour as or more effectively than other responses or strategies
- it decreases the probability of the same behaviour occurring in the future when taken in the context of the pupil's behaviour support plan