

Space to Grow: Learning Spaces



Handbook for Coordinators and Learning Mentors

This Handbook was produced by Viva in 2021. It draws on materials produced through work with Viva's partner networks as well as content produced in partnership with **Food for the Hungry**.

Some key resources used in developing this programme include:

- ARC: Foundation Module on Psychosocial Support
- IFRC and Save the Children Denmark, The Children's Resilience Programme: Psychosocial support in and out of school
- IRC, Creating Healing Classrooms: Guide for Teachers and Teacher Educators
- INEE, Teachers in Crisis Contexts Working Group (TICCGW), Training for Primary School Teachers in Crisis Contexts package
- INEE, Guidance Note on Teaching and Learning
- IASC, Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings
- Headington Institute, www.headington-institute.org
- Mentally Healthy Schools, [Resource toolkits and activities](#)
- Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families, [Coronavirus Support](#)
- Save the Children, Protect a Generation: The impact of COVID-19 on children's lives
- Stella Vosniadou, *How children learn*, UNESCO Educational Practices Series 7
- <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/goal-setting-for-kids>

Learning Spaces – Handbook for Learning Mentors

This guide will support you to set up and run a Learning Space to support children to engage with learning and receive psychosocial support. This handbook provides some simple guidelines on what you will need to know before starting your Learning Space, and practical tips for supporting children's learning and wellbeing through the space, as well as ensuring your space is safe.

Remember to refer back to this guide whenever you need to.

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Space to Grow: An Overview

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 188 countries imposed countrywide school closures affecting more than 1.6 billion children and young people. At least a third of the world's schoolchildren – 463 million children globally – were unable to access remote learning. The actual number of students who could not be reached is likely significantly higher than this estimate.¹

Space to Grow Learning Spaces are designed to help children and young people to engage with learning which has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and to equip children to make an easier transition back to schools once they reopen.

The main outcomes for children are:

- Children make progress in self-defined learning goals
- Children improve psychosocial wellbeing and coping skills
- Children have a positive attitude towards lifelong learning
- Children continue to engage with mainstream education where possible and are prevented from dropping out of school

Learning Spaces can take place in COVID-secure community centres, church buildings or other community spaces, and are open out of school hours. Learning mentors work with small groups of children and offer psychosocial and learning support.

This programme draws on the experience and expertise of Viva's partner networks², as well as Viva's work with children in emergencies and external partnerships³.

How to use this handbook

This handbook is divided into two sections:

- **Preparing the Ground (pages 6-11):** to help you get ready to launch your Learning Space, this section lays some foundations in understanding how the space provides support for children, and how we can encourage growth effectively as learning mentors, even when we may not be qualified teachers.
- **Growing Together (pages 12-28):** Provides practical tools and advice on how to set up, launch and run your learning space.

This handbook should be used alongside the other Space to Grow: Learning Spaces materials which have been produced to support your implementation of the programme:

- **Space to Grow: Training for Learning Mentors** – Training materials including PowerPoint slides exploring the contents of this handbook which can be delivered by the Learning Space coordinator
- **Space to Grow: Learning and Psychosocial Support Resource Guide** – Examples of activities and approaches to create a supportive learning environment and plan your Learning Space sessions

¹ Unicef, 2021: <https://data.unicef.org/covid-19-and-children/>; <https://data.unicef.org/resources/remote-learning-reachability-factsheet/>

² CRANE (Children at Risk Action Network), Uganda; CARNet Nepal,

³ In particular, Viva's partnership with Food for the Hungry (FH) on developing a psychosocial support training curriculum for teachers

- **Space to Grow: Learning Journal for Children and Young People** –A space for each child to set learning goals and reflect on their progress, and for the learning mentor and parents to record the child's learning
- **Appendices** – Useful resources, forms and for setting up the Learning Space

PART 1: PREPARING THE GROUND

The idea for Space to Grow Learning Spaces emerged following feedback from Viva's Child and Family Phone Mentoring Programme, where families reported that children's learning had been severely disrupted by the COVID 19 pandemic. The Learning Spaces' idea incorporates thinking from Creative Learning Centres run by Viva's partner network CRANE in Uganda to help girls to return to education, and builds on the model of after school clubs or child learning centres, hosted by Viva Partner networks in different parts of the world.⁴

Space to Grow Learning Spaces are designed to open out of school hours to help children learn and grow holistically with the support of Learning Mentors. They can complement or run alongside existing work with families, children and young people in community centres, child learning centres, church buildings or other community spaces, or they can be set up as separate projects with possibilities to add new learning activities as the learning space evolves.

The concept of Space to Grow Learning Spaces recognises the connections between a child's psychosocial and emotional wellbeing and their ability to learn.

One picture that we can use to describe a Learning Space is that of a garden. For children to learn and grow things in their 'gardens', we need to help them by preparing the ground so they can grow new skills and learn new things in good, well balanced 'soil'. Learning Mentors support this in the Learning Space by creating a safe, supportive environment, addressing children's psychosocial wellbeing and building their resilience.



Learning Mentors can then help children to nurture the seeds of learning that they are planting, by supporting children with independent learning, motivating them to believe that they have the capacity to learn new things and grow as well as leading activities to help them build confidence and learn together. We hope that, while this project provides some resources and activities around specific areas of learning, Space to Grow Learning Spaces create the possibility of new types of plants and learning to be added, which will enhance children's motivation to learn now and in their lives ahead.

⁴ Specifically CARNET Nepal

Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on children's wellbeing

As well as disrupting children's education, the experience of being out of school for long periods of time, with the general experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, has had a significant impact on children's mental health and wellbeing. In addition to finding ways to encourage children to return to learning, the Learning Space also provides an opportunity to address the difficult experiences children have been through, and find ways to help them to move forward through these challenges.

This is why the Learning Space includes a significant focus on providing psychosocial support for children. By building children's resilience and coping skills, children are also significantly better able to re-engage with learning and education. As Learning Mentors, we need to understand how children are affected by emergencies such as COVID-19, and how a programme like a Learning Space can be developed to ensure it supports children to overcome these impacts.

Understanding the impact of emergencies on children

Some key development processes are interrupted by emergencies:

- **Trust** – if life becomes unpredictable, children can see the world as unsafe. Separation from caregivers can cause a loss of trust. Without trust and a sense of safety, it is difficult for children to grow and develop.
- **Competence** – play, education and community activities are often disrupted, which reduces children's ability to learn and develop new skills and abilities.
- **Identity** – children's ability to develop their sense of who they are, and their self-confidence, can be disrupted.

We can expect to see different reactions in different age-groups of children:

0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	13-18 years
<p>Because of the importance of attachment and the relationship with the primary caregiver, the reaction of surrounding adults is key to determining the impact of the crisis on babies and infants. Disruption of attachment is very significant.</p> <p>Babies and infants may express fear at parting from their caregiver. They may be withdrawn, clingy, unsettled, irritable and emotional. They may cry more than usual.</p> <p>Even though small children do not have words to describe an event or their feelings, they can retain memories of particular sights, sounds or smells.</p>	<p>Pre-school children often feel helpless and powerless after a crisis. Development may go backwards – children may lose skills they had developed (e.g. toilet training or speech).</p> <p>Children may express fear of being separated from their caregiver, may revert to bedwetting or fear of the dark.</p> <p>Play activities may involve re-enacting aspects of the events of the crisis. Some children show signs of denial and withdrawal.</p>	<p>Children are able to understand the meaning of the loss of loved ones and may feel guilt at surviving when others did not, or anger that the event was not prevented.</p> <p>Children may have flashbacks of what happened, or may want to talk about the event all the time.</p> <p>Children may appear moody or 'difficult' as they deal with their feelings and what has happened. They may become more aggressive or more withdrawn.</p>	<p>Young people may feel frustrated that they are unable to change their circumstances or what happened. They may take on adult roles without enough capacity or support.</p> <p>Identity and belonging are important so they may be more easily targeted for recruitment into the armed forces.</p> <p>Responses can be similar to adults and adolescents may experience isolation, irritation, rejection of rules and aggressive behaviour. Some display risk-taking behaviour such as alcohol or drug abuse, or self-harm. Others become fearful.</p>

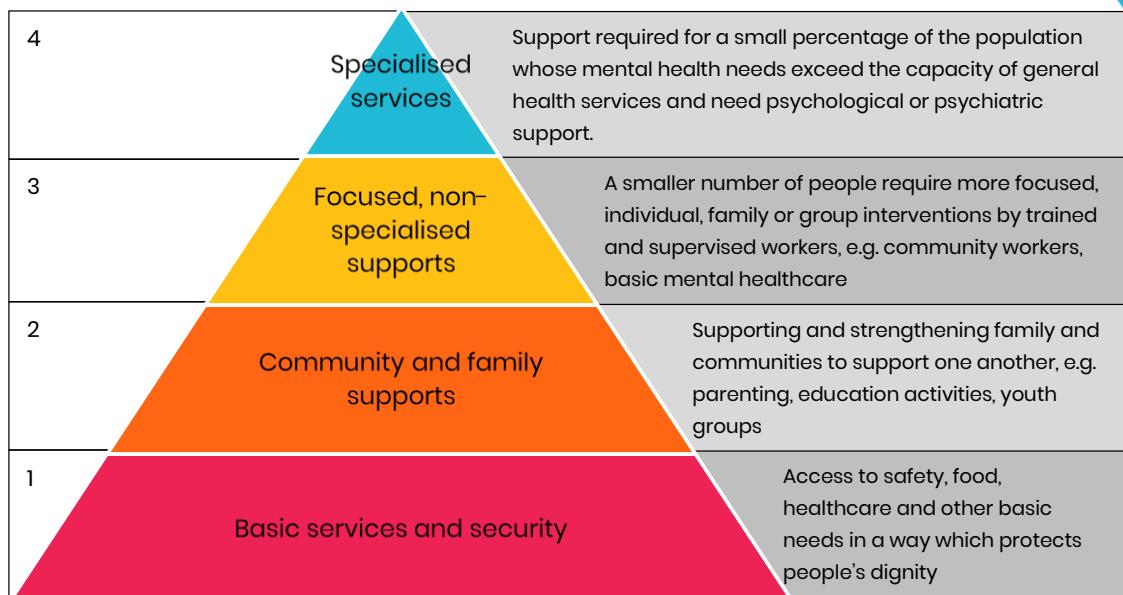
Supporting children – introducing some key terms

Psychosocial support

The term 'psychosocial' refers to the dynamic relationship between the psychological and social dimensions of a person and how these interact. The psychological dimensions include internal emotional and thought processes, feelings and reactions. The social dimensions include relationships, family and community networks, social values and cultural practices.

Learning Spaces operate at level 2 of the psychosocial support pyramid⁵ (next page) by strengthening the community's ability to support children. The Learning Space may also link children, young people and families with support on other levels.

The IASC Psychosocial Support Pyramid:



Encouraging resilience in learning spaces

While all children are vulnerable in emergency situations, children also have the ability to meet, bear and recover from exposure to violence and losses. This capacity to cope and "bounce back" after stressful experiences is called resilience. Resilience refers to the ability to react or adapt positively to a difficult and challenging event or experience.

Risk and protective factors

Although children are very different from one another, there are certain factors in children's lives that have been shown to influence their level of resilience. These are called 'protective factors' which give people psychological 'cover' and help to reduce the likelihood of negative psychological effects when faced with hardship or suffering. Some of these factors are innate but many can be developed and strengthened through psychosocial support.

Being aware of these risk and protective factors helps us as Learning Mentors to notice which factors are particularly relevant to individual children, or to the group, and to target our approach and activities accordingly.

⁵ IASC, Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial support in Emergency Settings

Risk factors	Protective factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult or frightening experiences • Lack of understanding of what has happened • Loss of family home, friends, or caregivers • Loss of self-respect and self-confidence • Poor living conditions or lack of access to basic services like healthcare • Poor diet and nutrition • Lack of opportunities for education and play • Excessive burden of paid or unpaid work • Uncertainty about the future • Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem, self-confidence, and communication skills • Can think through and process events and look to the future • Can express themselves through play, arts, games, community rituals • Positive parenting and carers who respond to the child's emotional needs • Positive family environment that provides love, support and discipline • Can express feelings and anxieties to adults who listen to them • Friends who are good role models and a source of fun and acceptance • Able to maintain normal family life, religious practices, language • A positive school experience where teachers are supportive • Part of a strong community where children are active members

Foundations for Learning

As well as providing psychosocial support in the Learning Space, another key aspect of the Learning Mentor's role is to help children with independent learning and foster in them a desire for learning. In order to do this, it is important to have an understanding of how children learn.

Children are born with the capacity to keep learning new things, all the time, anywhere. Learning Mentors should help students to become active and goal-oriented by building on their natural desire to explore, to understand new things and to master them. There are some key evidence-based approaches which can help support children to learn:

Social interaction and participation in activities relevant to real life: Research has shown that children learn more quickly when they are interacting socially with others and when they participate in activities which they understand to be relevant for real life.

Tip to achieve this: Create an environment in the Learning Space that encourages active engagement through discussions and group activities. (see Space to Grow Learning Space Resource Guide for ideas)

Building on prior knowledge and understanding: New learning must build on the foundations of what children already know and they can make connections between what they already know and

what they are learning. They must also be able to adjust their thinking if their initial understanding is wrong.

Tip to achieve this: When helping children with their independent learning, (e.g. homework), ask children questions about what they know about the topic, so they can make the connections. Be prepared to correct them if they have a misconception about something foundational.

Developing strategies to solve problems, and understanding rather than memorising: Children need to develop learning strategies to help them to solve problems, for example: solving mathematics problems or strategies for learning how to read. They should then practise these strategies. The aim of learning should always be about understanding. Research has shown that when something is memorised, it is easily forgotten, whereas if it is understood, it can be transferred to other situations.

Tip to achieve this: Help children to practice problem solving strategies for reading and mathematics by using learning activities and games from the Space to Grow Learning Spaces Resource Guide

Setting their own learning goals

Children learn more effectively when their individual differences are taken into account and when they can set their own learning goals, monitor their learning and correct mistakes. The ideal scenario is when children are personally motivated to learn.

Tip to achieve this: Influence children's determination to learn by the way you speak to them. Help children to believe in themselves and set realistic goals; and praise the learning process as well as the accomplishments children make.⁶

Helping children to develop a 'Growth Mindset'

As a Learning Mentor, one aspect of the role is to encourage children to develop a growth mindset. Children with a fixed mindset believe that their abilities are set in stone or can't change no matter how hard they try. Children with a growth mindset believe that their abilities can improve over time through dedication and hard work, and that learning does not depend on innate ability that a child is born with. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for children to succeed.⁷ Having a growth mindset means learning from feedback and experience and developing strategies for improving. It is about believing that even if you fail at first at something, you can still succeed.

Tip to achieve this: Praise how a child approaches a challenge, not how hard they tried or how well they did. This is called "process praise" and it is the most helpful type of praise for promoting a growth mindset, as it puts the emphasis on the steps the child took to get to the end result. By focusing on process it shows that getting stuck, asking for help and trying new strategies are important too.

⁶ Based on Stella Vosniadou, *How children learn*, UNESCO Educational Practices Series 7

⁸ Carol S. Dweck 2015 (Growth) British Journal of Educational Psychology May 2015

PART 2: GROWING TOGETHER

How to set up a Learning Space

Key roles needed

1. **A Learning Space Coordinator** will be needed to set up and manage the Learning Space. This person will be the Child Protection Focal person for the Learning Space and will coordinate a team of Learning Mentors to work with children including being available for debriefing sessions. The coordinator may also take on the role of mentor during the Learning Space sessions.
2. **The Learning Mentor** is key to the success of Learning Spaces. The role of a Learning Mentor is to help children with psychosocial support, and to engage them with learning. As a Learning Mentor, you need to have a concern for the holistic welfare of children and want to see them develop to their full potential. This starts by helping children to build their resilience and coping skills and being aware if children are struggling and require extra support.

Learning Mentors are not expected to be teachers.

Learning Mentors will:

- Help children to set their own learning goals
- Support children with their independent learning to reach those goals.
- Motivate children and encourage them to have a growth mindset, to believe that they have the capacity to learn new things and grow.
- Lead activities with groups of children to help them build confidence and learn together.

Role Descriptions for the Learning Mentor and Learning Space Co-ordinator can be found in **Appendix 2: Learning Space Co-ordinator Job Description (p.32)**.

Creating a Safe Space

It is important that children are safe when they attend the learning space. In addition to child protection and safeguarding, you should ensure that your space operates in line with the current COVID-19 guidance in place where you are, and avoids risk as far as possible.

Child protection and safeguarding:

If you are part of one of Viva's partner networks, you should already have a child safeguarding policy and code of conduct in place. Make sure that you are using these and that all adults involved in operating the Learning Space have been trained in, and signed your policy and code of conduct. A sample code of conduct is included in **Appendix 8 (p.40)**.

Before children use the Space to Grow Learning Space, it is important to make sure that you have considered the risks to their safety both getting to the Learning Space and within the Learning Space. This is so that you can put measures in place to reduce those risks. One way of doing this is to undertake a risk assessment (see example, **Appendix 6: Learning Space Risk Assessment Template, p.36**).

Dealing with a Child protection Disclosure It is important to know what to do if a child makes a disclosure (see **Appendix 11: Dealing with Disclosures, p.43**). This includes knowing how to react the child, making sure that the disclosure is recorded (See **Appendix 12: Child Abuse Reporting form, p.44**) and reporting the disclosure to the Learning Space Co-ordinator who will follow up the case. If the Learning Space is part of a Viva partner network, the Learning Space Co-ordinator will do this with the support of the Network Child Protection Officer. You should also think through what you would do if the child is in immediate danger or needs medical attention. Any action taken would need to be in consultation with the Learning Space Co-ordinator.

It is important that you have thought through the referral procedure and that everyone is informed what to do before you open the Space to Grow Learning Space. A good way to think through and record the referral system is to use a diagram (**Appendix 10: Sample Reporting Procedure diagram, p.42**).

Mapping Referral agencies You should also outline the child protection referral agencies and services available in your community, and explain the reporting procedure your network or organisation has in place. If you do not know of appropriate referral processes or agencies, take time to research these and build relationships with these services before starting your Learning Space. Your Viva contact point could help you to develop your child protection policy and procedures if this is not already in place, and can point you to useful resources. You could also look at Viva's Basic Child Safeguarding Training materials, available from your Viva contact.

Examples of child protection concerns	Suggested actions
A young child travels alone to the Learning Space and you are worried they are not safe on the way to the Centre	Decide at what age children should be able to travel alone (according to your context and guidelines) and explain to parents that they will need to drop off and collect their children each day, or set up a walking bus or shared travel with several parents.
A child says they are being bullied at the Learning Space by another child	<p>Set up a children's code of conduct with children at the start of the project to agree on behaviours that are appropriate. Also, discuss what should happen when we don't follow these rules.</p> <p>Talk to both children, ensuring that the child who has been accused of bullying understands the rules and agree a plan for a different way of behaving. Check with both children that things have got better and in some cases you will need to involve children's parents and a warning system. While we don't want to exclude any child from the centre and would always rather work with them to help them to stay, we may sometimes need to exclude a child for a period of time if their behaviour is harmful to other children.</p>
A child at the Learning Space does not attend regularly, is often hungry, and often finds it hard to concentrate	Talk with the child and, if possible, with the child's parents or caregivers, to find out more about the situation at home or any challenges the family is facing. If possible and if needed, refer the family to other support services that could help them.

A child confides that they don't feel safe with another Learning Space Mentor or staff member	Follow your Child Protection policy/reporting procedure. You must have this in place before opening the Learning Space. If you don't have one, make sure you develop one. A reminder of how to respond to a disclosure is included in Appendix 11, p.43.
A child mentions that they are being abused at home	Follow your Child Protection policy/reporting procedure. You must have this in place before opening the Learning Space. If you don't have one, make sure you develop one. A reminder of how to respond to a disclosure is included in Appendix 11, p.43.

Covid Safety:

It is important to follow national guidelines and laws regarding meeting together. If meeting in person is permissible, COVID restrictions are likely to be in place for people gathering in one space.

Learning Spaces should be set up to minimise any risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus. This can be done by making sure that everyone entering the space has not been in contact with anyone experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19, and that there is social distancing, good hygiene practices, and ventilation in place. Masks may also be required. Please see **Appendix 1: Learning Space COVID-19 Health and Safety Regulations (p.30)** for detailed guidelines.

If national laws and guidelines prevent people from meeting face to face, you may want to consider how some elements from the Learning Space model (psychosocial support and helping children with independent learning) could be run without face-to-face contact. This could possibly be as a continuation of the phone mentoring programme (www.childreninemergencies.org/mentoring).

Setting up your Space: Top Tips

Initial Planning

Which children will attend?

You will first need to decide which children you will target to be involved in the Space to Grow Learning Spaces. These could be:

- Children who have received some educational input from schools during the pandemic but need support with homework
- Children who have dropped out of education because schools have been closed during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Children who have never been to school and need support with learning before they can join school

Children who would benefit from extra support for learning will be identified through the Viva Phone Mentoring Programme or by network projects.

Parents or Guardians must give their consent for their children to attend Space to Grow Learning Spaces and sign a Parent Consent form. A sample Parent Consent form can be found in **Appendix 4: Parent Consent Form, p.34.**

How many children can attend?

The number of children that you can have in a Learning Space at the same time will depend on the size of your Learning Space, bearing in mind COVID-19 social distancing regulations. It will also depend on the number of Learning Mentors you have. We recommend that learning spaces operate at a ratio of around **1:8 for children up to the age of eight** and **around 1:10 for children over the age of eight.**

The amount of children that the space can cater for will depend on the size of the space, taking into account social distancing.

Learning Centre opening times

This will depend on availability of space and Learning Mentors. Based on similar programmes, this is likely to be once or twice a week for 1 to 2 hours.

In many instances, we are expecting that children using the Space to Grow Learning Spaces will have participated in the Viva Child and Family Phone Mentoring Programme, meaning that a connection with the family is already in place and the Learning Spaces can provide longer-term support. Children can also be referred to the Learning Space by network projects.

Setting up the Learning Space: Checklist

Resources – We have:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>A budget for materials and books for the learning space</p> <p>Materials for creative learning</p> <p>A space in the community that is COVID secure (Appendix 1: Learning Space Covid-19 Health and Safety Regulations, p.30)</p> <p>A Learning Space Coordinator preferably with a teaching background, who has responsibility for the Learning Space and is the Child Protection Focal point, plans the Learning Space sessions and coordinates the Learning Mentors (Appendix 2: Learning Space Co-ordinator Job Description, p.32)</p> <p>A Trainer who can train Learning Mentors using materials provided (this may be the Learning Space Coordinator)</p> <p>Learning Mentors who are trained and can provide support to children with psychosocial support and independent learning (Appendix 3: Learning Mentors Job Description, p.33)</p>	
Preparing to begin – We have:	
<p>A completed Risk Assessment which lists the ways in which the Learning Space will come into contact with children, assesses the safety risks to those children and puts measures in place to mitigate those risks (Appendix 6: Learning Space Risk Assessment template, p.36)</p> <p>A safe environment and a safeguarding policy that covers children, parents and workers</p> <p>A code of conduct so that all workers know how to behave with children before interacting with them (Appendix 8: Sample code of conduct, p.40)</p> <p>A commitment to keeping children safe poster displayed on the wall so that everyone is aware (Appendix 7: Commitment to Keeping children Safe poster)</p> <p>Screened everyone who will have contact with children</p> <p>Identified children who will benefit from psychosocial support and engaging with learning</p> <p>Trained everyone in child safeguarding</p> <p>Trained Learning Mentors in how to support children and provide activities as they help children to engage with learning</p> <p>Obtained written parental consent for each child to attend the Learning Space (Appendix 4: Parent Consent Form, p.34)</p> <p>Prepared attendance register for children starting in the Learning Space (Appendix 5: Attendance Register, p.35)</p> <p>Prepared learning journals for children starting in the Learning Space</p> <p>Carried out baseline survey for children starting in the Learning Space</p> <p>A children's code of conduct – Children draw up the rules for how they should conduct themselves in the Learning Space (Appendix 9: Developing a Children's Code of Conduct, p.41)</p>	

A child's journey through the Learning Space

Registration and setting learning goals

Register the child into the Learning Space collecting basic information about them and their current needs. See 'child registration form' and **carry out baseline survey**

Set child-led learning goals. Children can set their own learning goals – see 'Child learning goal tool'



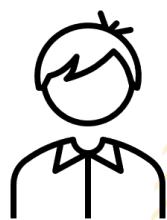
Learning

Facilitate psychosocial activities, independent learning sessions and collaborative learning activities.

Plan sessions which help children build confidence and have a positive experience in learning together.

Support progress

Encourage the child's progress towards learning goals and psychosocial wellbeing by encouraging the child to complete their Learning Journal. Talk with the child about their learning and complete the end of term survey.



Connect

Learning Mentors support children's learning by keeping in regular contact with the family, ideally once a month, and by providing learning activities for children to do at home with families.

If available, families can be directed to other activities run by the network such as Family Learning Days.

Transition

Make sure you have a plan for how children will transition from the Learning Space after an agreed period, such as 3 months. They may be re-entering mainstream school or joining another programme.



Planning Sessions in the Learning Space

You should plan ahead, choosing activities and how much time will be spent on group activities, and how much on individual learning. Here is a sample session plan:

Welcome and registration (5 minutes)

Establish a regular routine for beginning your sessions – perhaps with a song or routine that helps children settle into the space. Register each child's attendance. (**Appendix 5: Attendance Register, p.35**)

Opening game or activity (10-15 minutes)

Choose an activity that promotes psychosocial wellbeing, perhaps targeting a specific theme (**Resource Guide, p.3-9**). This time helps to develop children's confidence and to build relationships between children in the learning space. It can also work towards meeting children's psychosocial wellbeing goals.

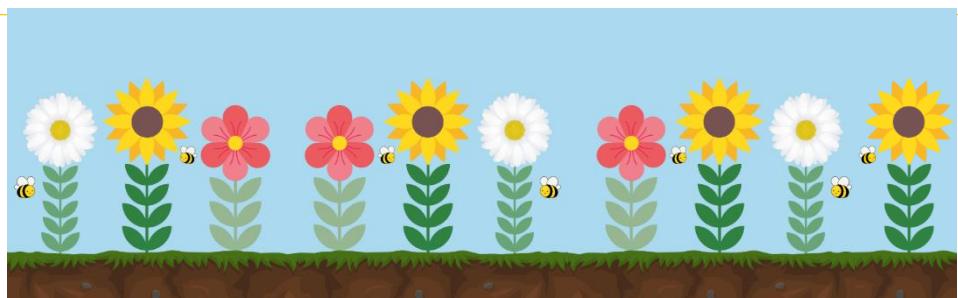
Independent learning and/or learning together (30 minutes)

Time for children to work on their individual learning goals with the support of Learning Mentors. This could mean working on homework tasks, or practising skills in reading, writing, numeracy, or other topics identified through their learning goals. See activities to support children's learning (**Resource Guide, p.12-23**). You can include 'Learning Breaks' (**Resource Guide, p.10-11**) to break up this time if needed.

Collaborative learning activities (**Resource Guide, p.23-25**), which enable children to learn together at different levels while looking at the same theme or topic, are also included in the Resource Guide and you may sometimes choose to use these in the Learning section of the session.

Closing activity and reflecting on what we've learnt (10 minutes)

Use the garden reflection activity (**Resource Guide, p.26**) or something to help each child reflect on and share what they have learnt in today's session. Children also complete their learning journal. Make sure children leave the Learning Space safely and can travel home safely.



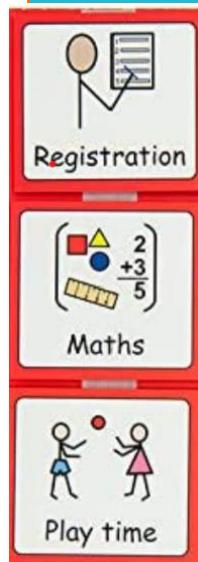
Creating a supportive environment in the Learning Space

Create a routine

One of the most significant ways to provide psychosocial support in the Learning Space is simply by creating and maintaining predictable routine and structure which helps children to find structure, consistency and security in their daily life again.

- You could use a **visual timetable**. It's great to have a framework that will be the same from day to day and that emphasizes familiar routines: beginning activity, independent or collective learning, summary of learning etc.
- Establish routines such as registration and always starting the session with the same kind of activity
- Work on having **calm transitions** when children come in and out of the Learning Space

Once you have started a routine, **stick to it**. It will help children to know where they stand and what to expect – and they will be better able to manage their emotions and behaviour as a result.



Realistic expectations

Children feel safe and secure when they know what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and focus, however, the crisis may have disrupted children's ability to concentrate for long periods of time. Adjust (where necessary) the delivery of activities (for example, change to 15- or 30-minute learning blocks and incorporate physical activity in between blocks to stimulate attention and concentration).

Restoring connections

As relationships are an integral part of social and developmental growth, any disruption to children's friendships and connections with others can be very challenging to their wellbeing. Try to find ways to support children to re-establish connections with their peers and to develop new friendships within the Learning Space.

Creating a code of conduct together

At the beginning of the project, ask children to decide together on some 'rules' or guidelines on how they want to behave in the Learning Space. Ideas might include being on time, listening to one another, being able to ask questions, being kind and helpful to one another, not hurting one another.

- a. **Provide choices** – help children to regain a sense of control by giving them the chance to make choices, such as by choosing their own learning goals
- b. Focus on **strengths and positives** – this can be as simple as offering praise to students when you notice a positive behaviour or personal strength they have developed or demonstrated
- c. **Connect with parents** – be prepared to reach out to parents and to listen to their concerns about children's return to school or other issues
- d. **Create 'safe spaces'** – these areas can be used when children need some time to calm themselves down

Psychosocial support activities

In each session you should aim to include a group psychosocial support activity at the start. You can develop or use your own ideas for these, but some guidance is given below on how you can select activities. The Resource Guide also includes a selection of activities on these themes which you could use or adapt in your sessions.

The Resource Guide includes a section with some suggested activities in these key areas:

Expressing feelings and emotions: Activities such as drawing, art, drama, and storytelling can help children to share their feelings. Creating a safe and responsive environment after an emergency is crucial in promoting psychosocial wellbeing and allowing children to deal with the grief of their losses.

Understanding what has happened and being able to think positively about the future: Learning Spaces can play a vital part in facilitating children to discuss experiences of loss due to the pandemic. Learning Spaces can also help children to understand the facts about COVID-19 and how to stay safe. Such discussions develop both individual and shared understanding of the meaning of these events and help personal coping.

Building self-esteem and self-confidence: Being out of school or feeling that they have been unable to prevent difficult things from happening can damage children's self-confidence. Being confident in themselves and their identity can be a key step towards children's resilience.

Cooperation and learning how to have positive relationships with others: During the pandemic, children may have lost opportunities to connect with their peers and to develop their interpersonal and social skills. These simple activities can encourage children to work together.

As a Learning Mentor, you can select and create activities which specifically target risk and protective factors you have identified as priorities, and include activities which link with the situation of your children.

Individual Learning Support: Helping children grow and learn

This time can be used to help children with homework, or it may include other learning activities to help keep children engaged with education. These can include activities and games that help children in their literacy learning, numeracy skills, love of outdoor learning and collaborative learning. Older children can focus on an activity for about 45 minutes or more. Younger children (pre-primary and primary) can engage in learning activities for no longer than 20-30 minutes

Throughout the Independent Learning Session, make sure that you encourage children to have a growth mindset.

During Individual Learning time, make sure that you are

- Adhering to COVID guidelines.
- Spending time with each child to, ask them what they are working on what they need support with.
- Referring to their Learning Goals (see section below)
- Encouraging them to have a growth mindset

If children are working on homework

- Make sure they know what they have been asked to do
- Ask a few questions to make sure that they understand the topic.
- Be prepared to answer any questions that they may have.

Even if you know nothing about the topic, you can still help just by talking and listening and helping them to find their own answers. If you want to learn more about the topic, The Resource Guide gives a list of websites hosting a range of materials to help children learn about different topics.

Helping children with reading or numeracy

Learning Mentors are not expected to be teachers or teach children, but children may ask for help with reading or want to improve their numeracy. Games and activities can be found in the Resource Guide to help children with literacy and numeracy. Some of these activities can be used during independent learning time, others can be shared with families.

Helping to children to read includes

- Helping children to understand that letters represent the sounds of spoken words,
- Helping children to be aware that they need to understand what they are reading (comprehension)
- Helping children to summarise the content of what they have read and connect it to what they already know (Retention)

Helping children with numeracy includes

- Number Sense: Helping children give meaning to numbers and know how numbers relate to one another (counting, understanding, sizes, seeing patterns in numbers)
- Understanding mathematical language (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- Helping children to use maths to solve problems in everyday life. (shopping, measuring, weighing etc)

The Independent Learning session could also involve children learning outdoors. Children should be encouraged that learning occurs everywhere at all times, not only when they have a book in their hand. For this reason, the Resource Guide also contains activities to help children learn outdoors.

During the Independent Learning Session, ask yourself

- Is the child practising their learning and applying it to different situations?
- Is the child learning from mistakes?
- Have you praised the child for the accomplishments that they made?
- How has this session contributed to the child's learning goals?

Learning Journals

Each child is encouraged to keep a **Learning Journal** to mark their progress and record their achievements. It is based on the garden theme, with learning goals represented as plants (flowers).

We have provided a template for the Learning Journal, which can either be printed out for each child and filled in, or children can use it as a template and they can complete the activities in their own exercise book.

Learning Journals provide a space for children to be creative and set their own learning goals. Children will also reflect on their progress each week, and there will be space for you, the Learning Mentor, to record what skills/topics the child has learnt – this means that if a child gets a new mentor, moves Learning Space or goes back to school, their next mentor/teacher can build on what they have already learnt. This is also a way that parents can be engaged in what their child is learning about.

We recommend at the outset that children set up to **3 learning goals**, which could include goals targeting literacy, numeracy and/or wellbeing.

Wellbeing goals could target something the child feels they would like to grow in, for example in the areas of psychosocial wellbeing targeted by the Learning Space programme.

For example:

- Expressing feelings and emotions – ‘I will keep a journal of my feelings and write in it at least once a week’
- Understanding what has happened and being able to think positively about the future – ‘I will find someone I trust and talk to them when I am confused or have questions’
- Building self-esteem and self-confidence – ‘I will learn a new skill and practice it twice a week’
- Cooperation and learning how to have positive relationships with others – ‘I will help look after my sibling after school once a week’

An activity for helping children to set their learning goals is found in the Space to Grow Learning Space Resource Guide.

Using the theme of the garden in Space to Grow learning spaces, children can be encouraged to think of their learning goals as plants that they are growing in their garden. These learning goals are recorded in their Learning Journal and can be represented as flowers

Children are asked to:

- **Choose their big goal** – something they would like to achieve. (the centre of the flower)
- **Make the goal SMART** – breaking the goal into smaller manageable steps using I will / by / when and with whom template. (this will help fill in the leaves)
- **Discuss purpose of the goal** – why do they want to achieve their learning goal – how will it help them, how can they then help others, and where will it lead them? (the petals of the flower)
- **Think about potential obstacles to learning, and what they will do to overcome obstacles** (the solutions will be shown on objects which give the flower life – for example a watering can, the sun and a bee)

Children can choose plants other than flowers to visualise their learning goals and if you feel that children or young people will not benefit from using a flower or plant as a symbol, just talk them through the process of setting their learning goals.

After the child has used their Learning Journal to create their learning goals, it is important to **remember to revisit these goals regularly** and discuss what progress the child has made towards reaching them. There is time at the end of every session for this.

At the end of each week, they record in their journals:

- What have I learnt this week?
- How confident do I feel about achieving my learning goals?
- How have I felt this week?
- How have I helped someone this week?
- What am I good at?
- What am I looking forward to next week?

The answers the child gives to these questions will also help you answer the relevant questions in the child baseline and end of term surveys.

To keep a child on track with their learning goals:

- Remind the child of the purpose of the learning goal
- Remind the child of the plan they developed to overcome obstacles and help them to follow through with their solutions
- Recognise and celebrate small steps in confronting obstacles, or steps towards achieving their goals – this will help them stay motivated to continue working towards their goal
- Focus on how they can continue improving
- Celebrate the child's effort and persistence
- Get children to fill out their Learning Journal each week

Monitoring children's progress

It is important that we are able to know if Learning Spaces are having a positive impact on children's psychosocial wellbeing and their engagement with learning and to learn how to improve them for the future. We hope that with the support of Learning Mentors:

- Children make progress in self-defined learning goals
- Children improve psychosocial wellbeing and coping skills
- Children have a positive attitude towards lifelong learning
- Children continue to engage with mainstream education where possible and are prevented from dropping out of school

We suggest that any group learning session ends with an activity that enables each child to recognise something that they have learned or made progress in during the session. Doing this each week will help children to reflect and recognise that they are always learning, even if it is something really small or hard to notice. You can do this through the 'my learning box' or 'our garden' activities detailed in the **Resource Guide p.26**.

Child Surveys

As well as children keeping a record of their own progress through the Learning Journals that they keep, we ask that a Learning Mentor undertakes 2 surveys with the children that they are mentoring.

These are a **baseline survey**, when the child first enters the Learning Space and an **end of term survey** with the child 12 weeks in. You can access the surveys through the same link here:

<https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/QXAPnpYW>

Completing these surveys will enable Viva to:

- Send you a report of the findings to be able to see a summary of the impact your network has made on children through the learning space over the first 12 weeks
- Learn how to improve the programme to achieve greater impact on children in the future
- Increase support for the work you are doing

The Learning Mentor must complete a baseline and an end of term survey for each child. If a child leaves the Learning Space before the end of the term, the Learning Mentor should log onto the same link and record the child left early on the same link as the baseline and end of term survey.

The child surveys are designed to be completed by the Learning Mentors in 2 parts.

Part 1: is for the Learning mentor to complete for each child. For this section, you will enter the child's details that you gather from your registration form and information about the learning space. Sample questions are pictured on the right:

▼ **Part 1: for the mentor to answer**

▼ » Details of learning mentor completing this form with the child

Learning mentor first name

Learning mentor surname

▼ » Learning space details

Country of learning space

▼ **Part 2: Questions to ask the child**

▼ » School situation (ask the child and record their answers)

Are schools open now in your community?

No and no classes online
 No but have classes online
 Yes but part time (e.g. only some children returned, or all children but only mornings/afternoons/certain days)
 Yes for the full week in person for all children

▼ » Questions relating to: Children are supported to continue to engage with mainstream education where possible, and prevented from dropping out of school

How old do you think you will be when you leave school?

How confident are you about your progress in learning?


Part 2: The Learning Mentor will complete with each child individually. We recommend that you sit together, go through the questions and enter them. The questions in part two are phrased so you can read out the question to the child and answer directly into the survey. Sample questions on the right:

How to complete the surveys (the process is the same for both baseline and end of term survey):

- You will need internet access to open the survey using this link on your phone or computer: <https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/QXAPnpYW>
- Once you have opened the survey, save the link as a bookmark on your phone or laptop so you can answer the questions even when offline
- Complete one baseline and one end of term survey for each child that registers on the learning space. You can select which survey it is by answering this question:

Are you recording the baseline survey or 12-week survey?

- Baseline survey (in first week of child attending learning centre)
- 12 week survey as scheduled
- Child dropped out early but answered some questions from 12-week survey
- Child dropped out early and no questions answered at this stage

- The baseline survey should be completed no later than the first week that the child enters the learning space, we recommend you complete the survey with the child on their first day as part of their registration
- You can submit the survey even when offline, it will then enter the platform when your phone or laptop is next open with internet
- If you need to, you can 'save as draft' and return later you can select 'save as draft' instead of 'submit' at the bottom. You can find your drafts by clicking the button at the top left-hand of your screen as pictured to the right:



Guidelines for completing the survey with the child:

- Before you start, make sure that you have familiarised yourself with the content and completed Part 1 for mentors
- Invite the child to sit with you, ensuring all child protection guidelines are followed.
- Explain to the child that the purpose of this survey to help track their progress. This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers so they can answer honestly with no pressure to answer if they do not want to. You must also have the child and parent's permission from the registration form.
- Aim to make this process a positive experience for the child, so have a conversation around the questions and allow them to talk about topics not included in the survey if they would like to
- Plan in 10 minutes with each child to complete part 2 of the survey. This should give time for extra conversation if needed/wanted.
- If helpful, you can use the 'my learning box' or 'our garden' activities detailed in the **Resource Guide p.26** to reflect with each child on their progress over the term before you complete the end of term survey together.

Mentors' Survey

We will also ask for feedback from Learning Mentors after 12 weeks to learn from your experience about how it can improve. You can share your feedback through this link:

<https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/rg02GfL6>

How do we engage parents with children's learning?

It is important to engage with parents because research has shown that when parents are engaged in their children's learning, children learn better.

Some ideas for connecting with parents and caregivers are:

- Host an event for parents with their children at the Learning Space (adhering to COVID-safe guidelines, so perhaps in smaller groups) showing the space and their child's artwork or other work, or a presentation by the children
- Parents visiting the Learning Space to share something in the session (e.g. parents with an interesting skill, a job or a recipe to share, or to read a story with the children) ensuring that parents agree to the Code of Conduct and are not left alone with children
- Communication with parents – you may choose to start a WhatsApp group, using a work phone, through which you can keep parents informed and they can share ideas and support one another
- Use the initial consent and registration form as a 'getting to know you' exercise where you might be able to meet with the family and begin building the relationship
- Children being given activities by their Learning Mentors from resource guide where families can be involved in their child's learning (**Resource Guide p.16-20**)
- Encourage parents to check in with, and support, their child's learning via the Learning Journal, perhaps including a space for parents to add comments each week

Supporting Children who are Struggling

Supporting children with learning difficulties

There are many reasons why children may experience learning difficulties. Some may have sensory or physical disabilities, others may have intellectual or behavioural challenges. Some children may struggle with some topics and not others. For example, children with dyslexia find it difficult to understand and express meaning through words, while those with dyscalculia often struggle with number sense. Other children may be struggling with psychosocial distress.

In order to support children with learning difficulties, and meet their needs, you must have some understanding of the difficulties they face but, crucially, it is important to remember that all children have the capacity to learn.

Space to Grow Learning Spaces need to be inclusive which means acknowledging that all children can learn, including those with impairments, disabilities or specific learning needs.

Supporting children who are struggling to cope

Some common signs of psychosocial distress we might observe in the learning space are:

- An inability to complete simple tasks, difficulty concentrating
- Always looking sad, never smiling, or crying often
- Acting withdrawn or not reacting to games or other fun activities
- A noticeable change in behaviour or personality
- Not having many friends
- Persistent, aggressive behaviour with peers or adults, either physically or verbally
- Disruptive behaviour in sessions, such as non-stop questions or arguments
- Frequent absences from sessions
- Constant physical complaints, including headaches, stomach aches or dizziness

What can we do to help these children?

Make sure that the child is involved in at least some of the specific psychosocial activities including music, dance, drama, personal writing, drawing or other expressive arts. Watch to see how the child reacts when involved in some of these activities.

Children who continue to be very distressed often have a difficult, disrupted or unsupportive family situation. After you have engaged the child in communicating with you and you begin to understand him or her better, ask if it is okay to make a home visit. Meet with the family and the child together. Ask them, in general terms, how they think the child is doing. Note any major ongoing problems that could be the source of the child's distress.

Try to use supportive communication with children, understanding their point of view and strengthening their self-esteem, rather than using critical, negative tones. Gently encourage children to talk about their experiences and feelings at their own pace.

What can we do when children continue to be severely distressed?

The level and causes of distress in some children are such that they will not go away no matter how much psychosocial support and other responses schools and teachers can give.

- If children continue to show a high level of distress after you have tried all of the things suggested here, discuss the situation with the child's family. Ask for their permission to refer the child to services that specialise in helping children in distress.
- Establish a referral procedure and make sure that all learning mentors know it. The families of highly distressed children must be contacted before making any referral to outside services. If the child is attending school, it may also be helpful to contact the school for advice.

If there are any doubts about the recovery of a child, seek advice from a supervisor or a professional expert. This may include seeking further advice from, or sharing information with, relevant individuals or organisations. If a child changes significantly, and shows no signs of improvement, seek professional help.

When referring a child, be aware of the standards, guidelines and legal framework related to the service in question and always take into account that the referral should be in the best interest of the child.

Supporting children at risk of abuse

As a Learning Mentor, you have a trusted relationship with children in Space to Grow Learning Spaces and an obligation to keep them safe. You will be requested to sign and abide by a code of conduct, which outlines appropriate behaviour when working with and being in contact with children and young people. This is designed to keep you safe from any accusation of misconduct as well as keeping the children safe. The sample code of conduct can be found in **Appendix 8, p.40**.

As a Learning Mentor you should be alert to signs that may suggest a child or young person is in need of help because they are being abused. There may also be occasions that a child confides in you that they are being abused. You should have covered this in your organisation's child protection training, but a reminder of how to respond to a disclosure is included in **Appendix 11, p.43**.

Supporting one another (debriefing sessions)

It is a good idea to schedule debriefing sessions with your supervisor as a group of mentors, to enable you to celebrate what is going well, to share challenges that you may be facing and to learn how you could do things differently. Some of the questions you may want to cover are:

- ✓ What is going well? Are we seeing improvements in the psychosocial wellbeing of children? What activities were helpful? Are children able to define and achieve their learning goals? Are children being motivated to learn independently? Any stories or examples to share?
- ✓ What are the challenges? Any activities that didn't work? How do we help children who are struggling to learn? How do we involve parents in children's learning?
- ✓ What could we do differently?
- ✓ Concerns about specific children would probably not be shared in an open debriefing session, but should be shared with the Learning Space Coordinator.

What	When	Who	How will I know when it's been achieved?

Getting Started: Learning Space Action Plan

What are three or four key actions you will take over the next month to put this training into practice and set up the Learning Space? How will you know you have achieved it?

Appendices

Appendices included in this section:

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Additional resources available separately:

1. **Child's Learning Journal**
2. **Resource Guide** includes:
 - Psychosocial support activities
 - Collaborative learning activities
 - Learning activities and games to help literacy and numeracy skills
 - Outdoor learning activities
 - Links to useful websites/lessons/videos on specific topics

Appendix 1: Covid-19 Health and Safety Regulations

These Covid-19 health and safety regulations should be carefully applied in Space to Grow Learning Spaces (LS) to ensure the safety of all participants.

Entry Procedures

Anyone entering the Learning Space (LS) has the potential to spread Covid-19. Minimise risk by:

1. Ensuring no one enters the Learning Space (LS) who has been in recent contact with anyone experiencing symptoms of Covid-19.
2. Consider whether you can check the temperatures of those entering the LS so those experiencing a high temperature, which could be due to Covid-19, does not enter.
3. Make sure everyone sanitises their hands on entry.
4. Make sure every adult who enters the LS wears a mask (unless they are medically exempt).
5. Encourage anyone who is medically vulnerable to participate in the LS virtually, if possible, rather than in person, to keep them safe.

Social Distancing

Increasing the space for air-flow reduces the risk of airborne transmission of the virus.

- Ensure every adult wears a mask inside the building, unless a medical exemption applies. You may ask children to wear masks too.
- Enforce a one-way system within the LS with clear signs if possible.
- Where possible keep people 2 metres apart and put signs up as a reminder. Allocate chairs or mark the floor so that children are sitting 2 meters away from each other.
- Limit the number of people who can enter the LS (or specific areas within the LS) at a given time.
- Consider staggering shifts or having set teams who always work at the same time, to limit staff contact. Also consider a similar timetable for children visiting the LS – smaller, consistent groups are the best option to minimise the spread of Covid-19.
- Ensure that children keep 2 meters apart in games or activities.

Hygiene

The virus can also be spread by touching contaminated surfaces. Regular cleaning and hands washing helps reduce this transmission.

- Encourage regular handwashing with clear signs. Everyone must wash/sanitise their hands when they arrive in the building, before and after eating, when using communal appliances (such as kettle, photocopier, communal computer, phone etc.) and when leaving the LS.
- Create a cleaning rota so communal areas/equipment is sanitised every few hours. Repeat touch points need regular sanitisation, including door handles, light switches, banisters, taps, toilet flushes, kettle, phone, photocopier etc.
- Toys and equipment should be sanitised between use by different children and at the end of every day.

Ventilation

To reduce the risk of airborne transmission of the virus, you must ensure good ventilation to decrease the concentration of the virus in the air.

- Keep the space as well-ventilated as possible by keeping doors and windows open. Consider using outdoor spaces when possible.
- Simply try and ensure movement of air through the LS.

To make sure these measures are being applied effectively, regularly speak to your team and ensure they understand WHY these measures are so important and how best to implement them.

Encourage them that, although these safety measures are important and must be followed, it is also important to ensure a welcoming, friendly atmosphere which is so important for children.

Appendix 2: Learning Space Co-ordinator Role Description

Characteristics

- Has a genuine concern for the holistic welfare and development of children and young people and engages easily with them.
- Has leadership characteristics and is able to lead and enthuse a team of learning mentors
- Caring, organised, efficient, and resourceful
- Ability to deal with challenging situations and respond appropriately

Skills

- Has a background in teaching or is a teacher
- Child protection and safeguarding knowledge and experience
- Recruitment and people management skills
- Able to plan and run activity sessions with children and young people
- Training and debriefing skills

Role

- Setting up and running a Space to Grow Learning Space for children to help them with Psycho social support and engage with learning
- Co-ordinating a team of Learning Mentors to work with children
- Planning and running children's psycho social activity sessions and collaborative learning sessions
- Running Debriefing sessions with Learning Mentors
- Making sure that the Learning Space is safe for children and COVID secure
- Being the first point of contact for any Child Protection Concerns
- Overseeing Liaison with families

Person Specification

- Teaching or education background
- Trained in Child protection, how to work with children and creating safe spaces for children
- Experience of working with children and families
- Experience of People and Premises Management
- Experience of providing psychosocial support and supporting children's learning

Tools the Learning Space Co-ordinator needs

- Effective support on how to be a Learning Space Co-ordinator
- Space to Grow Learning Space Handbook
- Ongoing support throughout the programme

Appendix 3: Learning Mentor Role Description

Characteristics

- Has a genuine concern for holistic welfare and development of children and young people and easily engages with them
- Reliable, trustworthy and patient committed to journeying with a child to see them develop to their full potential
- Emotionally mature to be able to support and respond appropriately to children with psycho social or learning challenges
- Encouraging and non-judgemental and able to actively listen

Skills

- Has excellent motivational skills and can encourage children to want to learn
- Able to plan and run activity sessions with children if required using materials provided
- Sufficient literacy and numeracy skills to be able to support children with independent learning
- Ability to help children set their learning goals and provide positive feedback that will enable them to reach their learning goals.

Role:

- Work with groups of children in Space to Grow Learning Spaces to help them with psychosocial support and engage with learning
- Selecting and running psychosocial activities and collaborative learning and games with children, when required
- Helping children to set learning goals and supporting them with independent learning towards those goals
- Knowing where to signpost children if there any concerns
- Connecting with families of children.

Person specification:

- Trained in child protection and how to work with children
- Have some experience of working with children
- Enthusiastic about supporting children's learning and Psychosocial wellbeing
- Literacy and numeracy skills

Tools the Learning mentor needs:

- Effective training on how to be a learning mentor and safeguard children
- Space to Grow Learning Space Training
- Space to Grow Learning Space Handbook
- Ongoing support throughout the programme

Appendix 4 Parent Consent Form

Name of Child Date of Birth Male or Female: [M/F]

Parent/ Guardian

Address:

Tel (day): Tel (evening):

Mobile: e-mail:

Does your child suffer from any medical conditions/allergies that the Space to Grow Learning Space should be aware of (including any current medication)

.....
.....

Please provide details of medication that must be administered:

.....

Emergency contact details: (If different from above)

Name: Telephone no:

Relationship to child:

CONSENT (please read carefully and circle Yes or No as appropriate)

- I agree to my son/daughter/child in my care taking part in the activities of the Learning Space. YES/NO.
- I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my child does not suffer from any medical condition other than those listed above. YES/NO
- I understand that there may be occasions when my child is photographed in a group at the Learning Space. YES/NO
- I give permission for information to be gathered by Learning Mentors and used by Viva to understand the impact and reach of the Learning Space and how to improve. YES/NO

Signed (Parent/ Guardian) Date:

Appendix 5: Space to Grow Learning Space: Child Register of Attendance template

Appendix 6: Child Protection Risk Assessment: LEARNING SPACES

Name of Learning Space:

Date:

List ways in which your project comes into contact with children:

PROGRAMME		In place?	Notes
The learning environment is free from sources of harm, first aid kits are on site and emergency evacuation procedures are well known			
Learning Spaces have been made COVID-secure			
Safe water and sanitation facilities are provided, including separate toilets with lockable doors for boys, girls and staff			
There is enough space for children to play and exercise, and any play equipment is well-maintained and open areas safely fenced in			
Children are safe on their way to and from school			
The Learning Space programme does not take children away from opportunities for formal education, and links children to formal opportunities where available			
Learning Mentors have the skills and knowledge needed to provide a supportive learning environment and to promote learners' psychosocial wellbeing			
Learning Mentors have received training and debriefing support is in place			
ACCESS AND INCLUSION			
We have found ways to include (where relevant):			
Children with disabilities		Child caregivers or child-headed households	
Pregnant girls		Young mothers	
		In place?	Notes
There is flexibility to include children whose identity documents or certificates are missing			
There are strategies for children with disabilities, and the building is adapted to be physically accessible			

There is flexibility around age limits so that children who have missed a period of schooling are able to access Learning Spaces		
There is equal registration and ongoing participation by both boys and girls		
PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		
All Learning Mentors have been trained in recognising different forms of abuse, and have signed a code of conduct, including the prohibition of physical punishment	In place?	Notes
There is an accessible and effective reporting procedure for responding to concerns about children's safety, including a named child protection officer		
Visitors are briefed on the code of conduct, and learners are never left alone with visitors		
PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK		
Learners and parents have access to the code of conduct and child protection policy or procedures	In place?	Notes
There is an accessible, well understood mechanism for suggestions and complaints to allow children and parents to report any concerns they have about the Learning Space		

Learning Spaces Risk Assessment

Risk (Risk level = significance x likelihood)	Significance (1-3)	Likelihood (1-3)	Risk Level (1-9)	Mitigation already in place	Possible further action steps
Example: A child is harassed on their way to the learning centre	3	1	3	Asking parents to drop off and collect their children from the Learning Space	Explain the importance of this in parents' session at the Learning Space, talk to children about safety
Example: A child is sent to the Learning Space with COVID symptoms	3	2	6	Posters and signs at the Learning Space, and communication with parents on registration; procedure in place for closing the Learning Space when this happens	Regular reminders to children and parents in the Learning Space and via WhatsApp

Appendix 7: Commitment to Keeping children Safe poster

Viva logo

NETWORK LOGO

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN

- > **We are committed to providing children with a safe, positive and caring environment so that they can reach their full potential.**
- > **We commit ourselves to listen to, believe in and act for children and to find ways to protect them from harm.**

WE BELIEVE THAT:

- 1** The welfare of children and young people is paramount and all of us have a duty of care to children with whom we work.
- 2** Everyone must take precautions and responsibility to help create a safe place for children and support their care and protection. This begins with everyone being well informed and aware of how to keep children safe.
- 3** Each of us will work to meet international good practice standards of protection for children in our care.
- 4** It is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind.
- 5** All children and young people have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation and inequalities should be challenged.
- 6** Openness must be encouraged about concerns relating to child protection matters.

AS STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR VISITORS

- All of us know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when working with / interacting with children.
- We use positive, respectful and encouraging language when working with children and behave physically in a way that will never harm children.
- We do not discriminate against, show differential treatment towards, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- We make sure that we do not spend periods of time alone with individual children and we are visible when working with children. We do not have children with whom we are working stay overnight with us unsupervised or do things of a personal nature for children, which they can do themselves.
- We listen to children and take them seriously and act if they voice any safety concerns.
- In the area of disciplining children, we have agreed appropriate responses that are considered, controlled and non-abusive and will keep each other accountable.

WE ENCOURAGE CHILDREN:

- To be polite, kind, trustworthy and respectful to all.
- To be aware of how they can protect themselves from harm, to keep themselves safe and not engage in risky activities.
- To report inappropriate behaviour or unsafe situations.
- To use positive and encouraging language.
- To never bully other children.

AT OUR PLACE OF WORK

Each of us respects the rights, dignity and worth of all regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background or religious beliefs.

We have a policy or written rules on how to protect children from harm. This can be found:

We are currently developing this.

We have a named member of staff with special responsibility for keeping children safe. This person is:

Appendix 8: Sample Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to anyone working directly with or coming into contact with children through their work with [Space to Grow Learning Space name]. A child is defined as anyone under 18 years of age.

You should:

- *Treat children with dignity at all times, using age-appropriate language that is encouraging and respectful*
- *Respect each child's boundaries and privacy, including taking photos; physical contact should be initiated by the child*
- *Reward good behaviour and use positive discipline such as warnings, time-outs and involving parents*
- *Always have at least two adults present when working with children*
- *Be visible to other adults when talking with children*
- *Be accountable to one another so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged*

You should not:

- *Spend time alone with children or invite children to the place where you are staying, especially where they will be alone with you*
- *When using social media, you should not name children or share any personal details that may enable anyone to locate a child (eg. Email addresses, schools, locations...).*

You must never:

- *Act in ways that may abuse a child or place a child at risk of abuse*
- 1. *Hit or otherwise physically abuse children, or use physical punishment including hitting, pinching, slapping and beating*
- 2. *Use words intended to shame, humiliate or threaten children*
- 3. *Touch children inappropriately – a general guideline is not to touch children in areas that would normally be covered by shorts and T-shirt*
- 4. *Develop physical or sexual relationships with children*
- 5. *Expose children to sexually explicit or pornographic materials*
- *Excuse, or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or harmful*
- *Favour particular children while excluding others*
- *Do things for children of a personal nature that the children can do for themselves.*

All [LS name] staff and volunteers working with or representing [LS name] must sign a statement to say that they have read and will abide by this Code of Conduct and understand that disciplinary action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behaviour.

Appendix 9: Developing a Children's Code of Conduct

Aim: To ensure that children know what behaviour to expect from each other and from adults, and when to speak out if they feel uncomfortable

You will need: Flipchart paper and markers, copies of your organisation's Code of Conduct

Method: First, play a game together which involves cooperation between the children. For example, divide children into groups and give them some materials such as newspapers and tape, or toy bricks. Ask the groups to build the tallest tower that they can, which can stand without falling down. Award a prize for the winning team.

Afterwards, talk with the children about what behaviour was helpful in the game, and what wasn't. (For example: sharing ideas, listening to each other, working together).

Explain that as a group, we can work together when we understand what behaviours are expected of us and what behaviours are not appropriate. We should decide together how we can best work together by setting up 'Ground Rules'.

On a piece of flipchart paper, divide the paper into two columns, 'DO' and 'DON'T'.

Ask the children for ideas about how they think children should behave in their group.

Think about practical ways children can respect one another and encourage each other.

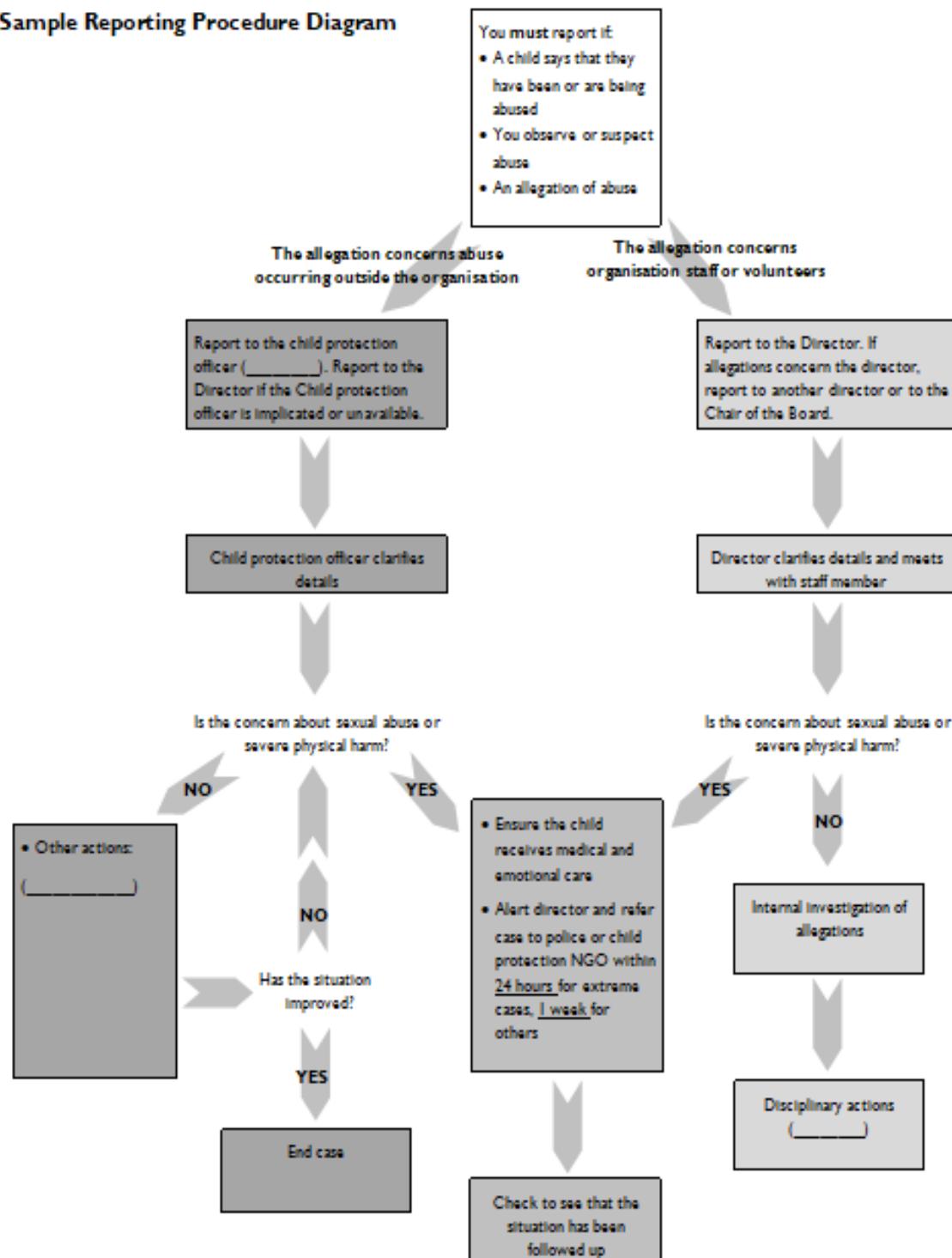
Let the group discuss together which of their ideas they want to include in their Ground Rules.

If your organisation also has a Code of Conduct for adult staff and volunteers, you can also share this with children, in a child-friendly version if possible. Explain that these are the behaviours which children should expect from adults in the organisation, and that they should report any concerns they have that adults are not following these rules.

Talk together about if there are any 'DO' or 'DON'T' behaviours which children could add to their list of Ground Rules based on what they have learnt about the adults' Code of Conduct. (For example: 'DO report any concerns; DON'T go to the home of an adult alone').

Appendix 10: Sample Reporting Procedure Diagram

Sample Reporting Procedure Diagram



Appendix 11: Dealing with Disclosures

If a child discloses abuse

- React calmly.
- Show acceptance of what the child says
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling you.
- Look at the child directly.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – never promise confidentiality – be honest.
- Take what the child says seriously, even if it involves someone you feel sure would not harm them.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell anyone.
- Do not judge the young person
- Do not lay blame – even if the child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Listen to what you are told, even if it is difficult to believe.
- Never push for information – avoid leading questions. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Ask just enough to clarify your understanding of what is being said, so that you can pass the information on.
- Ensure that the child or young person is safe.
- If they need urgent medical attention, make sure that the doctors, or medical staff, know that it is a child protection issue.

After a child has talked about abuse

- Make written notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told).
- Complete 'Reporting Child Abuse' form.
- Refer to the Learning Space Co-ordinator (unless it concerns the Learning Space co-ordinator in which case refer to the Network Child Protection Officer)
- Do not discuss the suspicions or allegations with anyone else.
- Do not contact parents or other carers until advice and guidance has been sought from the Learning Space Co-ordinator and/or the Network Child Protection Officer
-

If the child is in Immediate danger or needs medical assistance

- In consultation with the Learning Space Co-ordinator take immediate action to seek medical assistance and contact relevant authorities or police

Appendix 12: Sample Child Abuse Reporting Form

YOUR DETAILS	
Your name:	
Your address:	
Your email address:	
Your role in, or relationship to Viva	
Your relationship to the child or young person:	
Details of any other organisation(s) involved:	
THE CHILD / YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS	
Child's name:	
Child's address:	
Child's date of birth:	
Who does the child live with? Please give name(s) and nature of relationship to the child:	
Is the child male or female?	
Does the child have a disability or a learning difficulty? If so, please give details:	

DETAILS OF THE CONCERN (S) / ALLEGATION (S) OF CHILD ABUSE	
Nature of concern(s) / allegation(s):	
Details of how you came to have a concern / allegation:	
Day, date, time and location of any incident(s)	
Observations made by you (NB: Please distinguish what is fact, opinion or hearsay):	
What did the child say?	
What did you say to the child?	
Details of any other children involved:	
External agencies contacted – date, time, name of person dealt with and advice received:	
Action taken by you:	
Your signature:	
Date this form was completed:	
Date form filed with CP focal point:	

