

A Safe Place to Be

Guidance for Secondary / Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units



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Section 1

Introduction to Safe Place to Be

1.1 Safe place to be

This booklet has been designed to support secondary/ special schools and pupil referral units (PRU) in developing their 'offer' to young people aged 11-14 (11-18 for young people with a disability) and their parents, in respect of additional services outside the school day, known as 'Extended Services' and in particular the Safe Place to Be.

A varied menu of activities in secondary/ special schools and pupil referral units can provide access to a Safe Place to Be for young people, which would include an offer of activities from 8am- 6pm during term time and more flexibly in the holidays (schools do not need to provide access to formal childcare unless there is an identified need). A varied menu of activities might include academically focussed activities (from extra tuition for those who have fallen behind to more challenging opportunities for the most able), study support, play, homework clubs, arts and creative activities and other recreational activities, including sport. Alternatively the Safe Place to Be might be an area defined in school where it is a comfortable 'chill-out area', where young people can sit and relax, read or play quiet games, have a drink or a snack, or just socialise.

The Safe Place to Be in secondary/ special schools and pupil referral units can be developed as formal or informal childcare depending on identified need through consultation with parents, carers and the local community. Working parents do value a Safe Place to Be for their children out of school hours and in holidays, where they can be involved in positive and educational activities, including a safe place to socialise.

Parents may also be eligible for financial help towards the cost of registered childcare and the child for whom the claimant incurs childcare charges must be under 15 (under 16 if disabled). Children are eligible until 1 September following their 15th birthday, (or 16th if disabled). Further advice can be obtained by calling the **Tax Credit Helpline** on **0845 300 3900** or apply online at: **www.taxcredits.inlandrevenue.gov.uk**

This guidance is not intended to be prescriptive as there are many ways that the 'Safe Place to Be' can be developed and delivered. It draws on examples from schools across the county that are already delivering extended activities and the Safe Place to Be.



1.2 Extended Services contribution

Extended Services is a key vehicle for delivering the Government objective of lifting children out of poverty and improving outcomes for them and their families. Extended Services is one of the key ways schools can promote well-being and standards and ensure that each child and young person achieves their full potential. By 2010, all schools should provide access to the full 'core offer' of Extended Services:

- Childcare, 8am-6pm, 48 weeks a year; for primary schools
- A varied menu of activities (including study support and play) in a Safe Place to Be for primary, secondary/ special schools and pupil referral units
- Swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services
- Parenting support, including family learning, and
- Community access to facilities, including adult learning

Offering Extended Services enables schools to meet the aspirations of the Children's Plan (the 21st century school as the hub of services for the children, families and the community) and to meet their statutory duties on well-being (ECM) and community cohesion.

1.3 Partnership working

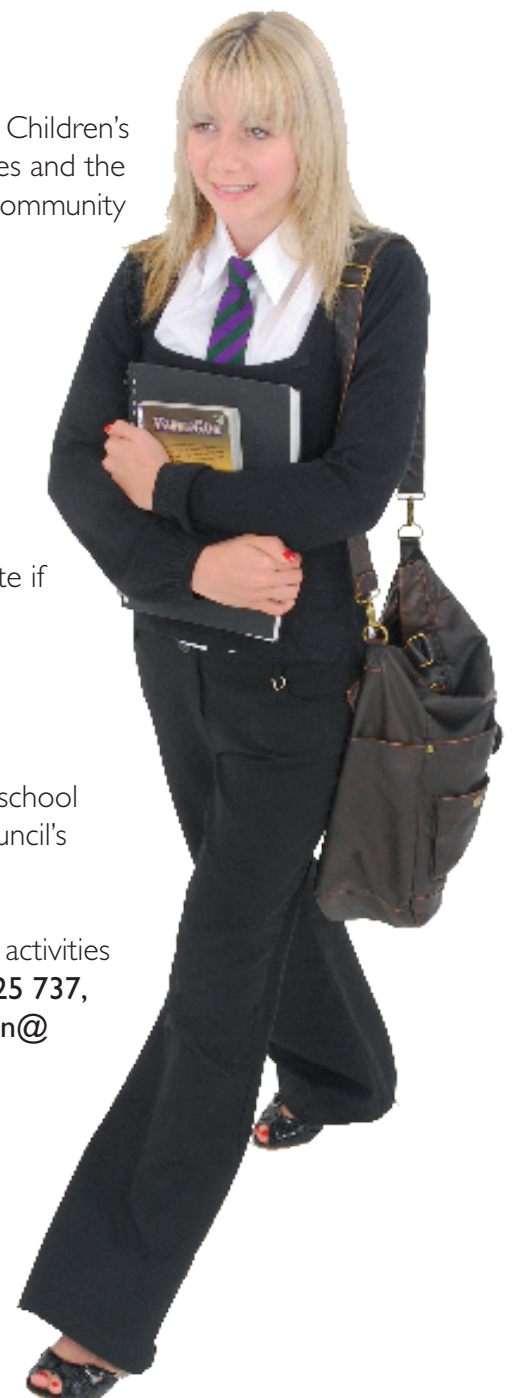
The Safe Place to Be or any other activities do not need to be provided directly by the school. Schools can gain significant benefits, including a greater range of activities, more sustainable provision and minimal addition workload, from working with existing or new providers in the voluntary, community or private sector. Provision does not need to be on a school site if suitable transfer arrangements are in place.

1.4 Children and Families Information Service (CFIS)

If you're looking for information about childcare provision including out of school activities, but you don't know where to start, contact Cumbria County Council's Children and Families Information Service.

The service can provide you with details about the wide range of services, activities and entitlements for children and families in Cumbria. Telephone **08457 125 737**, 9am until 5pm, Monday to Friday or send an email to **childrens.information@cumbriacc.gov.uk**.

We also provide a **brokerage service** to help and support parents and carers who are experiencing difficulties finding childcare that meets their needs.



The **Record 4 U database** holds information about children and young people with disabilities and additional needs in Cumbria. Inclusion on the database is voluntary by request from parents and carers.

Everyone registered on the database receives a copy of a newsletter as well as other information specific to a child or young person's disability or additional need. Information is also used to help plan local services. If you know of any families who may benefit from being included on the database please contact the Children and Families Information Service on **08457 125 737** or email childrens.information@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

The Children's Services On-line Directory holds details about local services, support groups, activities and lots more. It is aimed at parents, carers, young people and practitioners. Visit www.help4me.info. Contact Jamie Tickner on **01228 221 197** or email jamie.tickner@cumbriacc.gov.uk if you have any queries.

The Website for 13-19 year olds in Cumbria - www.watson4u.com – this is the place to find out about activities - from drama clubs to music lessons, sports activities to youth groups, volunteering and lots more! Contact **Jamie Tickner** on **01228 221 197** or email jamie.tickner@cumbriacc.gov.uk if you have any queries.

1.5 Childcare Sufficiency

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that provision of childcare is sufficient to meet the needs of parents in their area, in order for them to work or undertake education or training.

As part of this a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was undertaken in Cumbria in 2007-2008 following the Childcare Act 2006. This is available at <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/information/childcare-sufficiency.asp>.

The documents present a detailed profile of the childcare market in local areas and describe identified gaps in this market. The childcare sufficiency is continually under review and if you would like to give feedback on the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, or need a paper copy of any of these documents, please contact the Children and Families Information Service on **08457 125 737**. Alternatively, you can email at childrens.information@cumbriacc.gov.uk

1.6 Job Centre Plus

In 2008 there were a number of new measures introduced for lone parents. From 24 November 2008 most lone parents with a youngest child aged 12 or over making a new or repeat claim to Income Support will no longer be entitled, and will claim Jobseeker's Allowance instead. By October 2009 this will also affect lone parents with a youngest child aged 10, and by October 2010 those with a youngest child aged 7. Parents who may not be able to work will be directed to the most appropriate benefit for their circumstances. To support these changes Jobcentre Plus New Deal for Lone Parents Personal Advisers (NDLPAs) are able to offer advice, support, and financial incentives to help parents find suitable employment and training.

Section 2

Consultation

2.1 Establishing need

Extended Services provision including the Safe Place to Be should be offered in response to demand shown through consultation. For example if there is no demand for formal childcare after 5:30pm, this does not need to be offered but a Safe Place to Be is offered through the varied menu of activities. Equally, holiday activities would need to be shaped around demand in order to be sustainable. Local authorities have already developed a good understanding of childcare needs in the area. The advisor for your cluster/footprint of schools can support with consultation and should be informed of any outcomes of consultation. If developing childcare for younger children please work with the Local Authority Early Years and Childcare team in your area.

Early Years and Childcare Team

South Lakes and Eden (East)	01539 713175
Carlisle	01228 221210
Furness (inc Ulverston)	01229 894317
West	01900 706131

Children's Centre and Extended Services Team

South Lakes and Eden (East)	01539 713490
Carlisle	01228 221211
Furness (inc Ulverston)	01229 894317
West	01900 706164



Section 3

Ofsted Guidance

3.1 External provider guidance

Safe Place to Be provision can be registered on the Voluntary Ofsted Childcare Register (VoCR) if provided by an alternative provider:

The Childcare Act 2006 introduced a Childcare Register which has two parts, a voluntary part where people choose to join and a compulsory part for those who must register. The compulsory part is for those providers who provide childcare for children from the end of reception up to age 8 for more than two hours in any one day. The voluntary part of the register started in April 2007 and is a key element in Government strategy for making childcare more affordable through tax credits, and specifically the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit. By joining the voluntary part of the register, providers show parents who use their services that they:

- Meet certain requirements relating to people, premises and provision designed to safeguard children.
- Are monitored through inspections that Ofsted carry out on a random basis or when parents tell Ofsted that they have concerns about the care.

A school cannot apply for registration on either the compulsory or voluntary part of the childcare register if it is intending to provide childcare as part of its activities and at least one of the children attending is a pupil of the school.

Further guidance on the Childcare Registers including the Voluntary Ofsted Childcare Register can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk

3.2 Schools guidance

From September 2008 childcare provided by a school's governing body, on the school site, for children aged three and over, where at least one pupil from the school attends will not be registered by Ofsted. Instead it will be inspected as part of the school inspection system. Parents will be able to use tax credit and employer childcare vouchers for that childcare, using the school Ofsted number.

From September 2008 early years provision and childcare on a school site, whether these are run by governors or by the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector, will be inspected at the same time as the school. If the setting is PVI they will be expected to have done their own self evaluation form (SEF) and will get a separate inspection report. If they are managed by the school they will be inspected as part of the school inspection under Extended Services and this needs to be reflected in the school self evaluation form.

This process will also apply to inspection of Children's Centres on a school site where the inspection will be carried out by an inspector at the same time as the school inspection.

Section 4

Safeguarding; Health and Safety

4.1 Policies and procedures

Extended Services require procedures and systems to be in place to ensure pupils, parents and staff are safe and protected from harm.

Insurance - Check this with your local authority. Study support activities that are run by the school are usually covered by the school's insurance. However, provision off site may need additional insurance. You should also check the insurance arrangements of other agencies running activities, as these may vary from one type to another.

Criminal Records Bureau - all adults running activities will need to be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau. This should be explained to newcomers and volunteers. Some may have organised their own checks, in which case you will need to ask for documentation. If you are using outside providers to run the Safe Place to Be or the varied menu of activities it is important to remember your child protection responsibilities. It is recommended as good practice that providers register on the Voluntary Ofsted Childcare Register which ensures that provision meets quality standards and staff have CRB checks in place.

Risk assessments - each activity and each venue/ space will need to be assessed for potential risk to staff and participants.

Using alternative providers - If you are using an alternative provider it is recommended that they adopt the school policies and procedures. If the provider's own policies are used then the school should be aware of and satisfied with these.

If you require any further information then please contact **Kym Allan**, County Manager for Health, Safety and Welfare on **01228 226026** or alternatively email kym.allan@cumbriacc.gov.uk



4.2 Adult and pupil ratios

The ratio of adults to pupils is a key issue for any 'Extended Services' activities. You need to consider the appropriate number of adults for your setting and activities. To address this issue you need to think about whether the nature of the activities requires a high ratio of adults to pupils. The ages and abilities of the pupils will also affect the ratio, as well as the experience and skills of the staff. Below are some points to consider when planning the Safe Place to Be;

- Are the pupils easily supervised in one place? Do staff have clear sight of all pupils? Do pupils move between area and sites?
- Have you considered the age and physical development of the pupils? Are there mixed age groups? Have you considered the pupils' abilities?
- Do particular children or activities increase supervision needs?
- Have you thought about the length of time activities take?
- Have you considered any gender issues?
- Have you considered additional support for any pupils with special educational needs? Is extra supervision necessary?
- Have you considered the skills and experience that staff have for supervising the activity?
- Are there sufficient staff to deal with an emergency?
- How does the ratio of adults to pupils impact on the risk assessment for the setting?
- The Safe Place to Be or other activities may start with low numbers, but the need for extra staff may occur rapidly as numbers increase. Have you a clear staffing policy identifying when you will need extra staff?



Section 5

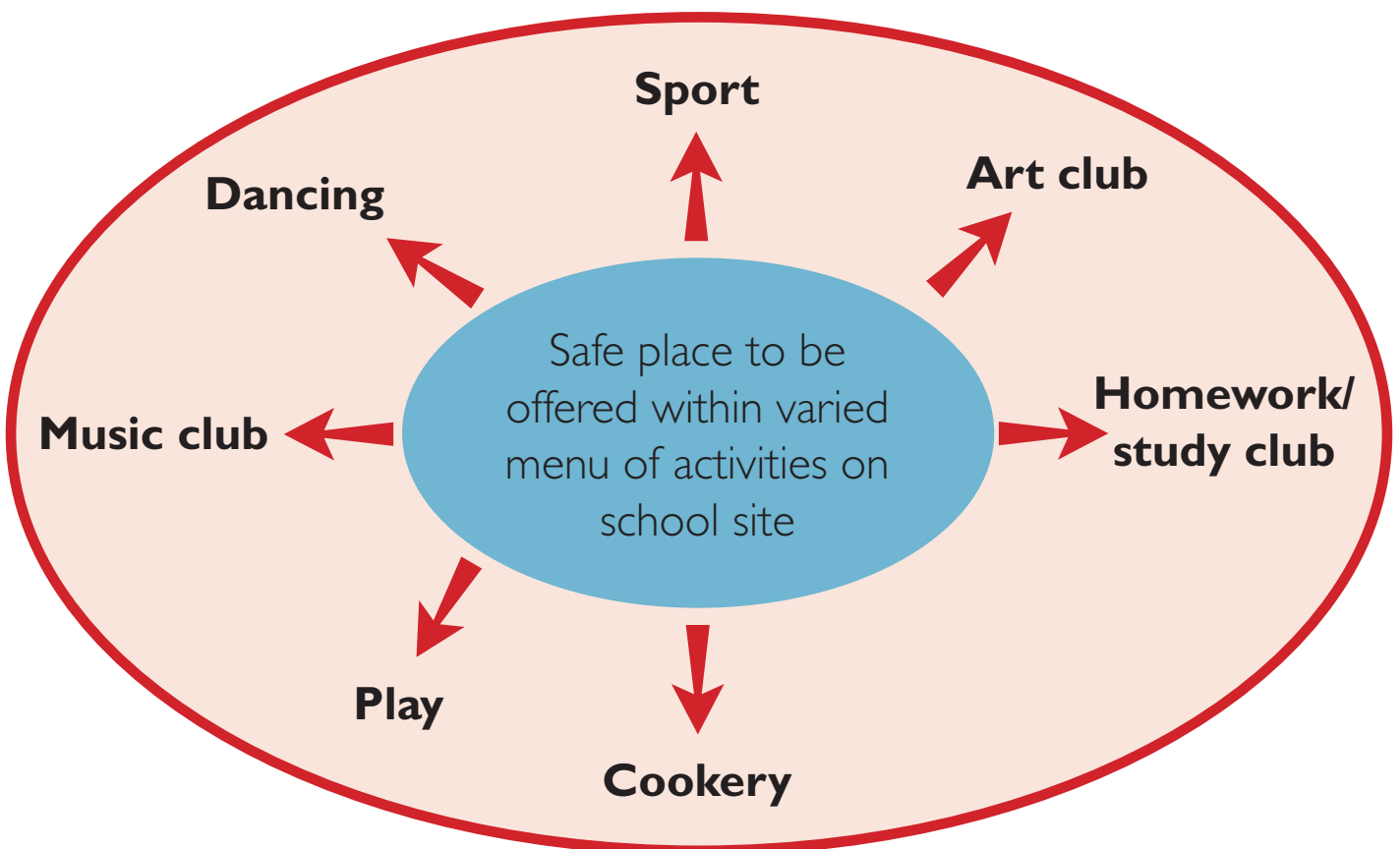
Models of Safe Place to Be

5.1 Model I

Informal - safe place to be offered as varied menu of activities

- Parental consultation showing no formal need for Safe Place to Be (parents not contacted if pupil doesn't turn up or leaves Safe Place to Be)
- Included within the varied menu of activities provision.
- Registers should be taken at each individual activity as part of health and safety regulations
- Offered on school site and run by either the school or an alternative provider

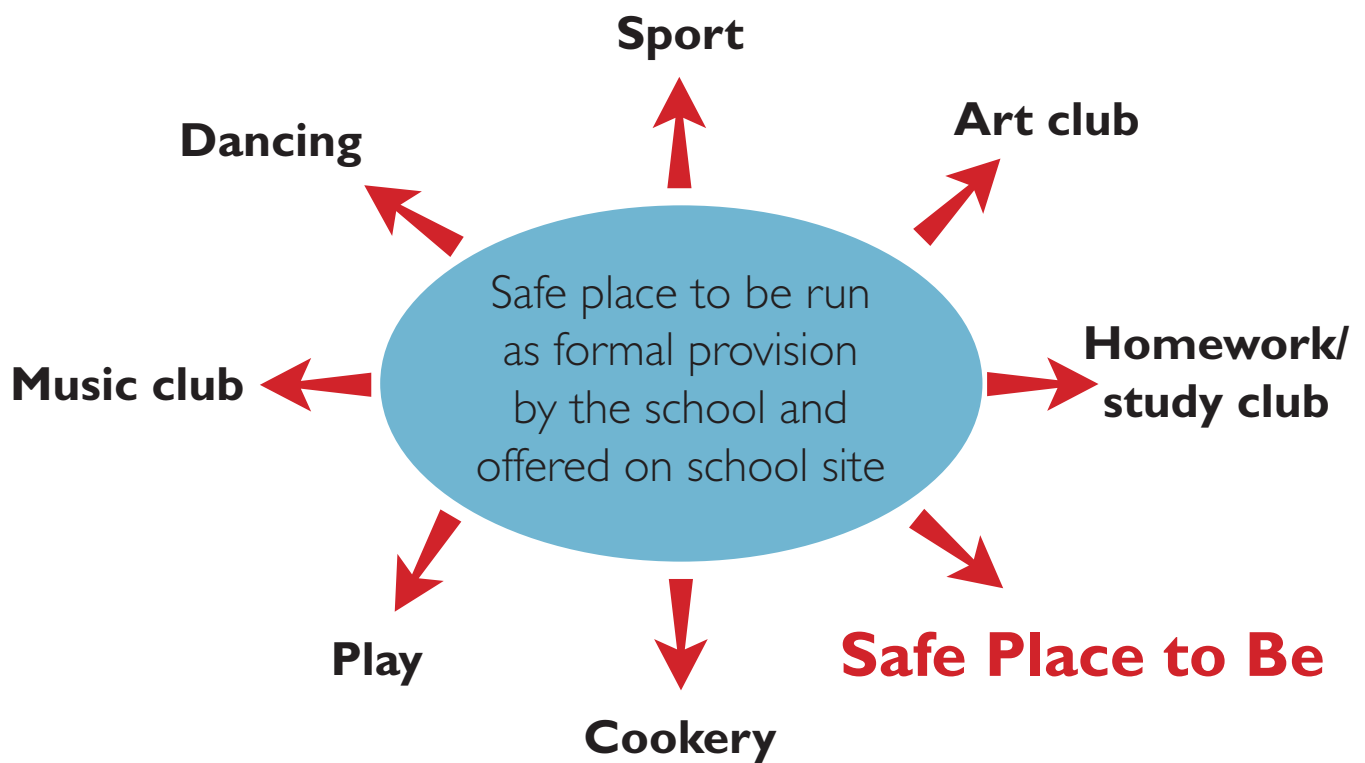
If using this model you need to ensure that alternative arrangements are in place should the provision not take place. Alternative plans in school could include, for example, that children go to another activity taking place at the same time.



5.2 Model 2

Formal - Safe place to be offered as formal provision

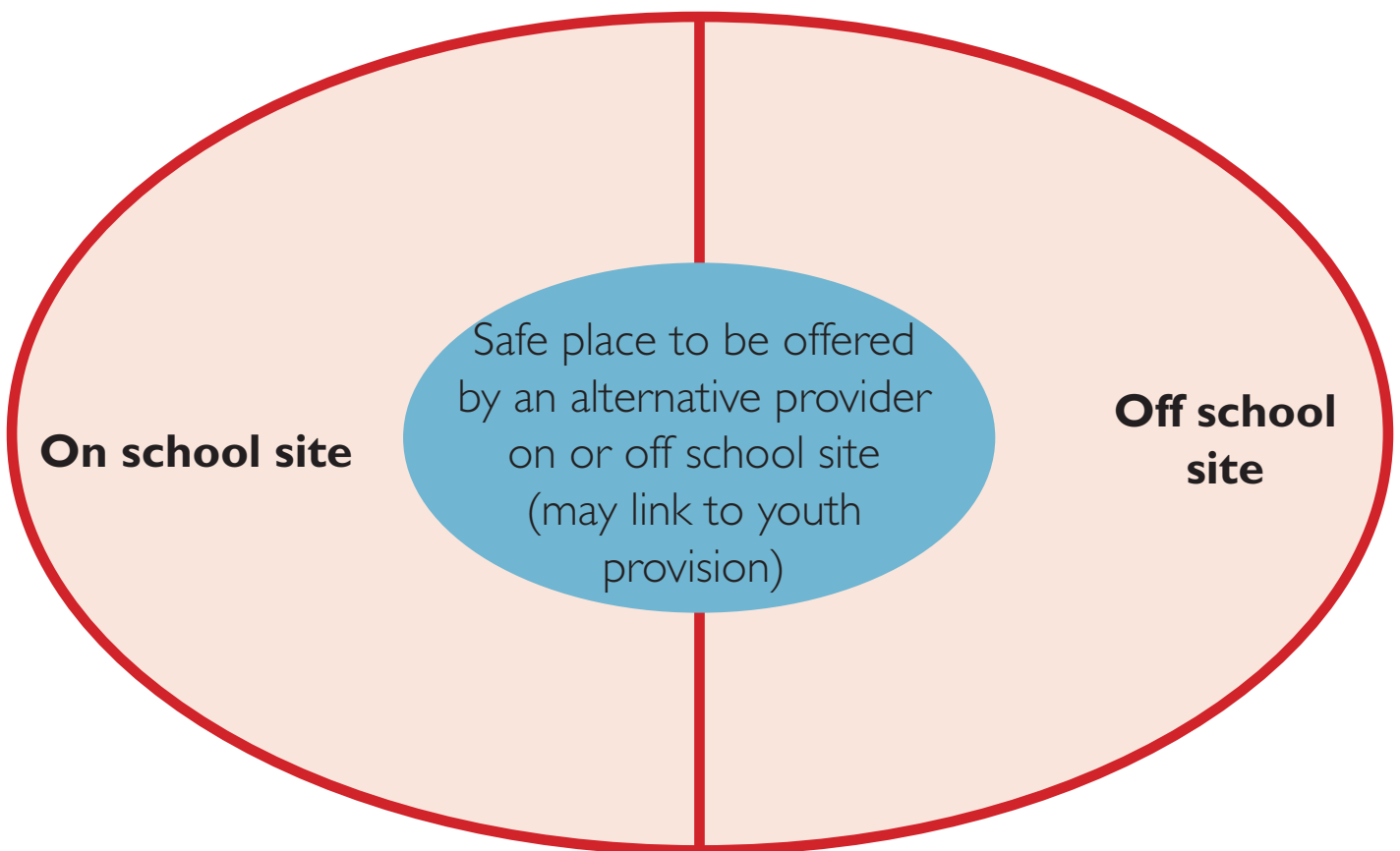
- Parental consultation showing identified need for Safe Place to Be (could be charged provision)
- Central registration and de-registration point (parents contacted if pupil doesn't turn up or leaves Safe Place to Be)
- Varied menu of activities could be used to form the Safe Place to Be
- Parents able to claim working tax credits



5.3 Model 3

Safe place to be offered by an alternative provider

- Parental consultation showing identified need for Safe Place to Be (charged provision)
- Central registration and de-registration point (parents contacted if pupil doesn't turn up or leaves Safe Place to Be)
- Registration on the Voluntary Ofsted Childcare Register to enable parents to claim working tax credits
- Offered on or off school site with suitable transfer arrangements in place



Section 6

Governance

Model 1 and 2	Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by the school governing body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School has control and overall management of provision Easy transfer of young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools under single status will need to pay Cumbria County Council salary scales which may be considerably higher Extra work for governing body Difficulty in raising additional finance
Model 3	Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by an outside provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the most of community resources Reduced workload on school staff Attract additional funding Different environment for young people to the school day More sustainable provision due to lower staffing costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less control for the school Difficulty with transport if not offered on school site

Section 7

Examples of Good Practice from Cumbria

Model 1 – Informal

- Large maintained secondary school with 1438 pupils on roll
- Consultation with parents taken place and showed request for Safe Place to Be without formal registration and charges
- Safe place is offered through the learning resource centre on the school site
- Pupils register to comply with health and safety regulations
- Run by school learning mentor
- Open from 3:30 – 5:30pm 4 days a week
- Managed by the school governing body

Model 2 – Formal

(model not based on Cumbria example)

- Parental consultation showing identified need for Safe Place to Be (could be charged provision)
- Central registration and de-registration point (parents contacted if pupil does not turn up or leaves Safe Place to Be)
- Offered through a designated space in school or through the varied menu of activities

Model 3 – Alternative provider

- Voluntary managed provider and registered charity
- Requests from parents to alternative provider and through CFIS
- Charged provision
- Central registration and de-registration point (parents contacted if pupil does not turn up or leaves Safe Place to Be)
- Registered with Ofsted for 32 children aged 4-14 years old
- Offered off school site with suitable transfer arrangements in place
- Open 5 days a week throughout the year including school holidays

Section 8

Glossary

CFIS – Children and Families Information Service

CRB – Criminal Records Bureau

ECM – Every Child Matters

HMI – Her Majesty's Inspectors

NDLPAs – New Deal Lone Parent Personal Advisers

PRU – Pupil Referral Unit

PVI – Private, Voluntary and Independent

SEF – Self Evaluation Form

VoCR – Voluntary Ofsted Childcare Register



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