



## Nurture Group Policy

2020-21

### What are Nurture Groups and why we use them?

Nurture groups are a small group of children within a mainstream primary school supported by the whole staff and parents. These groups have their own nurture group practitioners who collect them from their class base and return them at the end of the session.

Most children start school with the assumptions based on early experiences at home, about their capacity to enjoy learning: they are willing to try something new and can learn from their mistakes. They have developed expectations about how adults will behave: whether they will be helpful and interested or disapproving and easily angry. Most children therefore enjoy the challenge of school and will be supported at home if difficulties arise. However, in some classes there are children who arrive in school without having the necessary positive early experiences. This could be for very many different reasons depending on their personal situation. For them, the complex activities and bustle of a large class can be overwhelming: they could be unable to listen or take in what the teacher says; they could be easily distracted and quickly feel defeated. Some withdraw; others express their frustration by aggressive or impulsive behaviour more typical of a toddler.

### Aims and objectives

We aim to provide a carefully structured routine, where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection, and structure within a home like atmosphere. The list below includes some of the things the Nurture group provides:

- Encouragement of the development of positive social relationships with both peers and adults.
- Provide opportunities to understand emotions and develop pupil's self-worth, confidence, motivation, trust, self- esteem, and adaptability.
- Provide a safe, calm, and nurturing environment, alongside a program of activities structured to the emotional, social and intellectual needs of each pupil, while keeping them in close contact with their base classroom.
- Support pupils to understand their behaviour and their behaviours generally have a consequence and to develop strategies to self-regulate emotions and anxieties.
- Support the development of a whole-school nurturing ethos which is focused on inclusion to reduce fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- Deliver a modified curriculum in an environment based on the six principles of nurture.

## The six principles of Nurture Groups

- 1. Children's learning is understood developmentally-** the foundation of learning begins at birth and develops by our close relationship with an adult. Independence developed through dependence. Social empathy as well as learning developed from being thought about, valued and encouraged. Staff in the nurture group respond to each child at whatever emotional or social age s/he appears to be with the appropriate degree of control and nurture. The quality of this response enables a child to move on. Children's development progress is assessed through the Boxall profile.
- 2. The nurture room offers a safe base-** there is a structure to the day which is predictable, adults who are reliable and firm and can set boundaries without being punitive. Children see adults working together and supporting each other. This provides security and reassurance. The nurture group room offers a balance of educational and domestic experiences aimed at supporting the development of children's relationships with each other and with the staff.
- 3. Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing and self-esteem-** nurture is listening, being responsive, remembering and engaging in reciprocal, shared activities such as play, having meals, reading, learning, talking about events and feelings. Children respond to being valued and being thought of as individuals. This involves calling the children by their name, noticing and praising every small achievement; nothing is hurried in nurture groups.
- 4. Language is understood as a vital means of communication-** language is more than a skill to be learnt, it is a way of putting feelings into words. Nurture group children often 'act out' their feelings as they lack the vocabulary to 'name' how they feel. In nurture groups the informal opportunities for talking and sharing, e.g. welcoming the children to the group or having snack together are as important as a more formal lessons teaching language skills. Words are used instead of actions to express feelings and opportunities are created for extended conversations or encouraging imaginative play to understand the feelings of others.
- 5. All behaviour is communication-** understanding what a child is communicating through behaviour helps staff to respond in a firm but not-punitive way by not being provoked or discouraged. The child can sense their feelings are understood. This can help to diffuse difficult situations. The adult makes a link between the external/internal worlds of the child. This principle underlines the adult response to the children's often challenging or difficult behaviour. 'Given what I know about this child and their development what is the child trying to tell me?'
- 6. Transitions are significant in the lives of children-** the nurture group helps the child make the difficult transition from home to school. However, on a daily basis, there are numerous transitions the child makes, e.g. between sessions and classes and between different adults. Changing routines are invariably difficult for vulnerable children and need to be carefully managed with preparation and support.

## Lily Pad

Our nurture group is called 'Lily Pad' and is situated within the EYFS department. Children attend the nurture group 4 afternoons per week. Lily Pad children have their own themed curriculum with a large emphasis on PHSE, Social and Emotional learning. There are clear links to core and foundation subjects. Activities are planned around a half-termly theme to provide a stimulating and fun environment for children. Weekly planning incorporates developmental and age appropriate skills undertaken by the Nurture group Lead and Nurture Assistant.

### Nurture Group staffing

Lily Pad is staffed by a Nurture lead and a Nurture Assistant who have completed the 4-day Nurture Network certificate course.

### **The role of the Nurture Group Lead**

#### **Nurture Group Lead: Mrs. A Phipps**

To run the nurture group with support and guidance of the Head Teacher and to.

- Be involved in formal reviews as required, support curriculum development.
- Be involved with the selection, assessment, and reintegration of pupils.
- Maintain the nurture group principles dash. This is to provide a carefully structured session where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection, and structure within a homely atmosphere.
- Organise and plan weekly activities with the nurture assistant, bearing in mind the needs of the children relating to Boxall profile targets.
- Contribute to the maintenance of the children's learning journals.
- Support the work of the nurture group assistant.
- Plan and conduct activity work in partnership with parents in the development of their child, including organising parents/pupil, sessions, and coffee afternoons.
- Support nurture group children on trips and whole school activities where appropriate
- Engage in regular communication between nurture staff, teachers, teaching assistants and parents.
- Participate in the review and maintenance of nurture learning environments to ensure they meet the nurture principles.
- Contributes report development to SLT and governors, as appropriate.
- Carry out all nurture work in line with school policies and procedures.
- Liaise with other professionals when appropriate including visits.
- Manage the nurture group budget.
- Carry out and contribute to school policies and procedures

### The role of the Nurture Group Assistant

#### **Nurture Group Assistant: Mrs. J Moffitt**

- Be involved in formal reviews as required to support curriculum development.
- Maintain the nurture group principles. This is to provide a carefully structured session where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and structure within a home like atmosphere.
- Participate in the organisation and planning of activities and curriculum, bearing in mind the needs of the children relating to the Boxall profile targets and additional targets provided by Outside Agencies.
- Keep and maintain learning journals to track individual children's progress.
- Liaise with other professionals when appropriate, including visits where appropriate.
- Engage in regular communication between nurture group staff, teachers, teaching assistants and parents.

- Participate and engage in review and maintenance of nurture learning environments to ensure they meet nurture principles.
- Conduct activity work in partnership with parents in the development of their children, including organising parents/pupils, sessions, and coffee mornings.
- Support nurture group children on trips and whole school activities where appropriate.

### **The nurture environment**

Lily pad has six areas which provide a secure, safe base for learning both indoors and outdoors. The environment reflects nurture principles and consist of:

- Kitchen area
- Dining area
- Play area.
- Comfy area
- Quiet area
- Outside area.

### **Teaching and learning**

Lily Pad children have their own personalised learning pathway which is linked to the whole school curriculum but with a larger emphasis on PSHE and social emotional learning. Activities are planned to provide a stimulating and fun environment for children based on Boxall profile data to support these areas for development, this is undertaken by the nurture group lead and nurture assistant.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum is set to suit the cohort of children and will gain their interest. The cornerstone of the curriculum is PSHCE however each half term will be planned around one lead subject and cross curriculum links will be made where possible. It is common for nurture group children to make academic progress; the nurturing approach ensures that the children have opportunities to develop skills and strategies for managing these difficulties to access the curriculum alongside their peers. The Nurture curriculum may not lend itself to the current subject policies in place and therefore Nurture only follows its own policy

An important feature of Nurture is that the pupils feel 'safe' and at home. Part of this is to have daily snack, to promote communication and healthy eating habits together. Children have the responsibility of setting the table, preparing, and serving snack, there is always a conversation started by the nurture staff. Nurture children are encouraged to talk about how they are feeling, especially if things are not going well.

### **SEND**

The Nurture group is fully inclusive and if a child is on the SEND register, the nurture staff will be aware of any additional needs that a child may have. A SEND pupil may have recommendations in place from professionals such as a Speech and Language therapist or an Educational Psychologist. To help these children, succeed with their targets, these recommendations will be incorporated into the planning and fully adhered to by the nurture staff during their time in the Lily Pad.

### **Visits**

Visits are a powerful, positive teaching experience that can help enhance the social, personal, and emotional development of all learners. Extra stimulation in new environments can be particularly beneficial to nurture children and can help teach life skills, build on social skills, and improve independence and self-confidence. Opportunities to revisit early missed nurturing experiences such as a trip to a library or enjoying a meal in a café is an essential aspect of the nurture curriculum. It also allows children to practice skills learnt in the 'safe space' of the nurture classroom out in the real world.

## Visitors

Visitors can cause disruption and change to an otherwise ordinary structured day. Any change from routine can be difficult for some children. Therefore, visitors to Lily Pad should always be arranged in order to prepare the children for what will happen. It is best to involve the children in the preparation for the visit-making invitations, planning the menu, setting the table etc. It is important for the children's class teacher to feel a part of what is happening in the nurture group, and to carry the principals back to their classroom to provide consistency. School staff be invited into Lily Pad throughout the academic year.

## Identification and referral

The nurture group currently supports a range of children across year 1 to year 4. The identification and review process. takes place on an ongoing basis.

Raising concerns- Staff complete the pastoral referral form to raise awareness of current pupils with issues. (Appendix 1)

Boxall profiles- All children are screened using the Boxall profile. This is a series of questions covering various aspects of a child's social and emotional development. It provides a clear and personalised picture of a child's areas of need. The results will be shared with the class teacher and the Pastoral team. (Appendix 2)

From the Boxall profiles, a report will be created where children are selected for the group according to need. Children will leave and join the group as progress is made.

## Reintegration

Careful plans are required to resettle children back into their mainstream class. When the nurture staff considers a child ready for reintegration, they will discuss this with the Pastoral team and the class teacher to discuss the child's readiness for reintegration.

- Boxall profile is used as a guide to assess whether children are ready to spend more time in class. Boxall profiles will be completed by the class teacher and Nurture staff.
- A 'Readiness for Reintegration' form to be completed by class teacher (Appendix 3)
- Parents were informed of the plans for reintegration and offer support if required.
- Children are given clear expectations of the plan, using timetables and verbal reminders.
- The progress of reintegration is closely monitored, and pace of return is arranged to suit the needs of the child.
- A member of the Nurture staff will observe and support reintegrated pupils weekly in their mainstream class for at least half a term .

Appendix 1



Pastoral Referral Form

Date: 8.3.9	Name of Child:
Year:	Name of Teacher:
Reasons for referral:	Actions taken to date:
Behaviour and social skills – turn taking etc.	
Next steps—Learning Mentor, Nurture, Family Support	

Appendix 2

**Boxall Profile**

As part of the Nurture Group Network, the use of Boxall Assessments is essential. On completion, the scores of each individual student are compared to the standardised emotional literacy scores of "competently functioning" children of a similar age group. Individualised, achievable targets for social and emotional

aptitudes are then set for the student which are reviewed and re-assessed periodically. Both profiles have two sections, each consisting of a list of 34 descriptive items.

- A - E = most basic skills - need to be focused on first
- F - J = next area to develop
- Q & R = until these improve there will be limited progress
- S -U = interfere with how the child learns to socialise appropriately.
- V - Z = Child displays negative behaviour towards self.

Section I: Development strands, consists of items which describe different aspects of the development process of the earliest years: satisfactory completion of the first stage of learning is essential if children are to make good use of their educational opportunities.

Section II: The diagnostic profile consists of items describing behaviours that inhibit or interfere with the child's satisfactory involvement in school- self-limiting features, undeveloped behaviour and unsupported development. They are directly or indirectly the outcome of impaired learning in the earliest years.

## Appendix 3

### **Assessment of Reintegration Readiness**

To assess reintegration readiness, we use the 'Readiness scale for reintegrating Children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties into mainstream classrooms' (Rebecca Doyle, Norfolk CC - BJSE vol 28, No3, September 2001) to assess our pupil's ready necessary integration. This assessment is a screening

for suitability for inclusion, and it gives a diagnostic development profile. Used over time it gives a clear measurement of pupil's development skills in each area. It is specific, quantitative assessment tool to help analyse behaviour; Measure readiness to reintegrate; And highlight specific areas that need further development.

The profile considers 5 main areas.

- self-control and management of behaviour
- Social skills
- Self- awareness and confidence
- Skills for learning
- Approach to learning

Allocate a score of between one and four to each of the statements as follows:

- 1= rarely fulfils this criterion
- 2= sometimes fulfils this criterion
- 3= frequently fulfils this criterion
- 4= almost always fulfils this criterion

The numerical score at the end of each main area is totalled and plotted on the grid with a maximum score of 312; an overall score of 218 (70%) or above gives an indication that the pupil may be ready for transition into their mainstream classroom

The profile will indicate areas of relative strength as well as areas for further development the profile can therefore be used to inform future targets, track progress and inform planning for reintegration

### 1. Self-Control and Management of Behaviour

Can accept discipline without argument or sulking	1	2	3	4
Can arrive in classroom and settle down quietly and	1	2	3	4

appropriately				
Does not leave the room without permission	1	2	3	4
Can accept changes to plans or disappointments with an even temper	1	2	3	4
Shows some self-discipline when others try to encourage deviation	1	2	3	4
Is aware of normal sound levels and can be reminded of them and respond appropriately	1	2	3	4
Does not seek confrontation during unrestricted times e.g. break	1	2	3	4
Behaves in socially acceptable manner in public e.g. outings	1	2	3	4
Can maintain appropriate levels of behaviour when the classroom routine is disrupted	1	2	3	4
Will abide by accepted rules of an organised game	1	2	3	4
Goes to and stays in designated areas when requested e.g. playground, hall, etc	1	2	3	4
Controls emotions appropriately when faced with difficulties e.g. does not fight, strike out immediately, run away and hide or become excessively withdrawn	1	2	3	4
Behaves appropriately in all areas of the school building	1	2	3	4
<b>Score</b>	<b>/52</b>			

## 2.Social skills

Can cope with large numbers of people	1	2	3	4
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Can accept that teacher time needs to be shared	1	2	3	4
Can ask a question and wait for the answer	1	2	3	4
Has appropriate communication skills e.g. asking questions and listening	1	2	3	4
Can work alongside others in a group situation without disruption	1	2	3	4
Interacts and plays in positive ways with peers	1	2	3	4
Apologises without reminder	1	2	3	4
Asks permission to use objects belonging to another person	1	2	3	4
Shows empathy for and comforts playmates in distress	1	2	3	4
Chooses own friends and maintains reciprocal friendships	1	2	3	4
Makes and accepts normal physical contact with others	1	2	3	4
Accommodates other children who ask to join in an activity	1	2	3	4
Is self-reliant in managing own hygiene and basic needs	1	2	3	4
Shows genuine interest in the news and activities of another child	1	2	3	4
Contributes actively to play with two or more children	1	2	3	4
Shows variation in the roles undertaken during co-operative play e.g. is not always in the role of dominant character, etc	1	2	3	4
Engages in appropriate conversation with another child, exchanging information and using appropriate dialogue	1	2	3	4
Addresses adults and children appropriately by name and with eye contact	1	2	3	4
Shares legitimately required equipment with another pupil	1	2	3	4
Can take turns in question and answer sessions	1	2	3	4
<b>Score</b>	<b>/80</b>			

### 3. Self-awareness and confidence

Willing to ask for help	1	2	3	4
Can accept responsibility for actions without denial	1	2	3	4
Can acknowledge own problems and is willing to discuss them	1	2	3	4
Can risk failure	1	2	3	4
States feelings about self, e.g. happy angry, sad, etc	1	2	3	4
Maintains appropriate eye contact	1	2	3	4
Contributes to class discussions	1	2	3	4
Participates in group work, making constructive suggestions and adapting ideas	1	2	3	4
Responds appropriately to stories, identifying the characters e.g. funny, kind, scary, bad, etc	1	2	3	4
Participates in large class activities e.g. dance, role plays, performances, etc	1	2	3	4
Accepts public praise and congratulation appropriately e.g. when good work is shown to peers, etc	1	2	3	4
Shows pride in achievements and presentation of work	1	2	3	4
Has self-esteem for self	1	2	3	4
<b>score</b>	<b>/52</b>			

#### 4. Skills for learning

Can work alone without constant attention for brief periods	1	2	3	4
Can attempt to listen to explanations and instructions and attempt to act on them	1	2	3	4
Understands the structure of the day	1	2	3	4
Understands the role of the teacher and other adults in the room	1	2	3	4
Understands the structure of discipline - what happens if he/she does not complete work, does not conform to playground rules etc	1	2	3	4
Understands that there are different places for lessons other than the classroom e.g. library, hall, etc. and behaves appropriately	1	2	3	4
Can constructively use unstructured time in the classroom	1	2	3	4
Can organise him/herself if help is not immediately available	1	2	3	4
Responds appropriately to personal request from teacher	1	2	3	4
Will work alongside another pupil without attempting any distractions	1	2	3	4
Can organise the materials needed for a task and clear them away appropriately	1	2	3	4
Shows appropriate levels of curiosity when changes to the room routines are observed	1	2	3	4
Reading and numeracy up to level that can be coped with in a mainstream classroom given reasonable support	1	2	3	4
Shows a willingness to improve own literacy and numeracy	1	2	3	4
Can read sufficiently well to understand basic instructions needed for completion of tasks	1	2	3	4
Has developed some self-help strategies (at own level) e.g. using reference materials as word banks	1	2	3	4
Does not get up and wander around the classroom without a purpose	1	2	3	4
Needs a mainstream curriculum	1	2	3	4
Does not get impatient if help is not immediately forthcoming	1	2	3	4

Is willing to try and complete a task independently	1	2	3	4
Pays attention to class discussion and instructions	1	2	3	4
<b>Score</b>	<b>/84</b>			

Is prepared to work in lessons	1	2	3	4
Uses appropriate language and gestures	1	2	3	4
Wants to be reintegrated	1	2	3	4
Has parental support	1	2	3	4
Is courteous, and shows positive attitude towards staff	1	2	3	4
Can show an interest in lessons	1	2	3	4
Treats school property with care	1	2	3	4
Listens with interest to class explanations	1	2	3	4
Can accept disappointments e.g. when not chosen to participate in an activity	1	2	3	4
Will sit appropriately without causing a disturbance in both class and general school areas on request	1	2	3	4
Shows a sense of humor	1	2	3	4
<b>Score</b>	<b>/44</b>			

Record of progress

Pupil name:

Date of Birth:

Medical conditions which may impact on assessment scores:

Does their attachment profile (from their Boxall profile - linking attachments, emotions, behaviour and learning) suggest some learning loss which may also affect scores?

Start date in Nurture Group:

Date	Colour pen	Date	Colour pen
Date	Colour pen	Date	Colour pen
Date	Colour pen	Date	Colour pen
Date	Colour pen	Date	Colour pen

100					
90					
80					
70					
60					
50					
40					
30					
20					
10					
0					
Score for Areas of learning	Self-control	Social skills	Self -awareness	Skills for learning	Approach to learning