



St Mary Magdalene's Primary School

Whole School Nurture Policy

Agreed by Governing Board on 09.2024

Policy will be reviewed by Sep 2025

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Introduction

We believe that to enable our children to learn effectively they need to feel safe in their environment and be both socially and emotionally ready to learn. However, we recognise that some of our children are not always emotionally ready to learn and require an increased level of support for them to access the wider curriculum. For this reason, we offer support within a Nurture Group.

Nurture groups consist of a small group of children within a mainstream primary school supported by the whole staff and parents. The groups have their own nurture group staff and nurture classroom. They are met and dismissed by nurture staff. The rationale is that these children have missed out on early experiences that promote good development. They generally have not learned to make trusting relationships with adults or to relate appropriately to other children, resulting in difficulties with settling at school.

The six principles of Nurture Groups

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development of self-esteem
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in children's lives.

Aims and Objectives

- Support the development of a whole-school nurturing ethos focused on inclusion in order to reduce fixed term and permanent exclusion.
- To develop awareness about the cause of behaviour and the effective management of challenging behaviour in line with the school Relational / Behaviour policy.
- Provide opportunities to understand emotions and develop pupil's self-worth, confidence, motivation, trust, self-esteem and adaptability.
- To increase inclusive practice for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and to develop ways in which the school can support such children to develop positive social relationships with both peers and adults.
- Provide a safe, calm and nurturing environment alongside a carefully structured programme of activities whilst meeting the emotional, social and intellectual needs of each child, while keeping them in close contact with their base class.
- Support pupils to understand their behaviour and that behaviours generally have a consequence and to develop strategies to self-regulate emotions and anxieties.
- To raise the achievement of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- To increase joint working practices between school staff and outside agencies
- To increase parental involvement in supporting their children and developing a positive attitude toward school.
- To successfully reintegrate children back into their mainstream class.

Staffing

The Nurture group consists of three members of staff.

- The staff are supported by the SENCo, and the Head teacher. However day-to-day running is the responsibility of the nurture lead.
- Every effort is made to ensure that nurture staff remain consistent.
- Visits by other staff and outside agencies are carefully planned.
- Staff regularly liaise with mainstream school staff and outside agencies.

Referral and Entry Criteria

- Teachers express concerns to SENCo / nurture staff.
- Nurture staff meet with class staff / SENCo to assess needs, gather background information and complete relevant baseline assessment including Boxall Profile.
- A refer to specialist teacher, where appropriate, for assessment.
- Meeting with SENCo, Headteacher and nurture staff to discuss inclusion of a child with any SEND implications.

- Parents are contacted and invited to meet with SENCo / Headteacher / nurture staff and agreement is sought from the parents to begin intervention.

Each child will be selected for intervention in the nurture group for individual reasons.

These may include:

- Children who appear emotionally insecure – this may present as a lack of self-acceptance, low self-worth or a lack of trust.
- Children who are withdrawn, unresponsive or have a poor attention span.
- Children with poor social skills, who cannot share, are demanding or uncooperative.
- Pupils who demonstrate immature behaviour, who behave aggressively, impulsively or inappropriately in other ways.
- Pupils who find change upsetting or appear unable to integrate into a mainstream classroom.

Monitoring

Prior to joining the group, all pupils are assessed using the Boxall Profile. From this, targets are developed by the Nurture Lead drawing on the information in the Boxall Profile as well as experience of the child's behaviour. These are assessed half termly to monitor progress, identify areas for development and indicate reintegration. For this reason, targets will be reviewed regularly and adapted as required, dependent on the changing needs of the pupil.

The Nurture Lead will plan targets to focus on and evaluate each week with the child. Progress towards this target will be discussed at the end of each week. A copy of these targets will be sent to parents and discussed with them at meetings. To support assessment a log of the child's behaviour will be kept throughout their time in the Nurture Group to facilitate comparisons.

A range of nurture-based strategies will be used to support the pupils in developing their social and emotional learning.

These may be as follows:

- The children will be introduced to the rules to follow to show good listening. They will be encouraged to demonstrate these rules for themselves and look for good listening in others.
- During talking and listening times, particularly during snack, the pupils will be encouraged to speak relevantly and to wait for their turn, replying to and complimenting others.
- Games and role play will be used to demonstrate behaviours such as fidgeting, distracting and being distracted.
- Puppets, masks, posters and other prompts will be used to encourage the pupils to reflect on how they feel, and on how they can affect the feelings of others.
- The pupils will be encouraged to quickly respond to instructions from all adults but also to operate independently when appropriate and to use their own initiative.
- Positive praise will be used constantly and at every opportunity to encourage the pupils and Dojos will be awarded to enable them to feel a sense of success.
- Reflection on the week's achievements regarding their targets will enable the pupils to monitor their own progress.
- The Nurture Lead will plan for the provision, prepare resources and keep up to date with record keeping.
- Half termly meetings with staff are arranged to review progress.
- Regular meetings are held between Nurture Staff, Headteacher and SENCo to review how and when to reintegrate children or introduce further supportive.
- Nurture staff regularly monitor and record the academic progress of children currently attending the nurture group and those who have re-integrated back into the class using the school 'tracker' system.

Structure of the Nurture Group

The nurture group is well structured with a strong sense of routine and familiarity for up to eight children. The morning sessions will start from 8:45 – 11:30 am and the afternoon from 12:30 – 3:15pm. The same nurture staff support the children throughout the day and lunch break.

- Registration, breakfast, paired, group games / activities, adult-led outside playtimes leading to shared play, curriculum based activities, PSHE and finally special talk time / circle time, planned in line with targets set from the individual Boxall Profiles.
- Shared Lunch with Nurture Group staff

- The afternoon session will include creative activities linked to foundation subjects, snack time, playtime and opportunities for reflection. Children will attend swimming, PE and other activities within the group and /or with their peers / other children.

Parents / Carers, other children and staff

- Nurture staff will be available on the playground to 'meet and greet' the children and their parents.
- Leaflets / Class Dojo messages will be sent out regularly to keep them informed of curriculum activities / events.
- Parents are invited to attend sessions / social events within the groups to celebrate successes and see nurture practice in action or events with their class.
- Termly meetings with parents / carers to share successes / discuss progress.
- To maintain positive relationships with their peers, regular activities / opportunities will be planned to invite other children based on a clear system of reward when targets are met.
- Parent and pupil surveys will be completed termly to ensure their views are recorded and considered.
- Ultimately, celebrations will take place in whole school assemblies.

Reintegration

Careful consideration is undertaken to plan to reintegrate children back into their mainstream class. Boxall profiles are used as a guide to assess whether children are ready to spend more time in their class together with discussion between nurture staff, class teacher, Headteacher and SENCo.

The pace of return is then carefully planned using the 'Readiness for Reintegration' criteria and shared with parents. Children are given clear explanations of their individual plan and are given an opportunity to make their own contributions.

The progress of reintegration is closely monitored and the pace of return is arranged to suit the needs of individual children. A risk assessment is completed for children who have previously exhibited physically violent or aggressive behaviour with a range of de-escalation techniques.

Appendix 1 Reintegration Readiness Scale

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 appropriately	1	2	3	4
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
Score	/52			

2. Social Skills

Can cope with large numbers of people	1	2	3	4
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
Score	/80			

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
Score	/52			

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 complete a task independently	1	2	3	4
Pays attentions to class discussion and instructions	1	2	3	4
Score	/84			

5. Approach to Learning

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 humour	1	2	3	4
Score	/44			

Record of Progress

Name:

Date of Birth:

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:

Area of learning	Score in each area				
Date:					
Self-control					
Social skills					
Self-awareness					
Skills for learning					
Approach to learning					
Total Score					

Appendix 2 Reintegration Meeting

Name:	Date of Birth:
Present:	
What is currently working well:	

Summary of Discussions	Actions	Who by
Child		
Parents/Carers		
Mainstream Classroom Staff		
Arrangements for arrival:		
Transition Timetable:		
Additional Information / Comments:		

Date of follow-up reintegration review meeting:

Appendix 3 Reintegration Review Meeting

Name:

Date of Birth:

Present at Meeting:

Views of all involved on how the child has reintegrated back into their mainstream classroom.

Child:
Parent
Class Teacher:
Nurture Lead (SENCo)
Changes / additions to reintegration plan and additional arrangements agreed:
Other information / comments:

Date of next reintegration review (if required):