



## NURTURE GROUP POLICY

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### Purpose

Nurture groups are a small group of children within a mainstream primary school supported by the whole staff and parents. The groups have their own nurture group practitioners who collect them from their class base and return them at the end of the session. Nurture Groups developed in the early 1970s to support the emotional development of identified children. A model was developed based on Attachment Theory, a concept developed by John Bowlby concerning the importance and quality of the relationship between a child and its primary care giver.

The six principles of Nurture Groups are;

- 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

- To provide a flexible and preventative resource which is responsive to the particular needs of the children attending the school.
- To provide ongoing assessment and support for children showing signs of emotional stress and behavioural difficulties with the aim of enabling the child to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.
- To provide a secure and reliable environment where children can learn by re-experiencing pre-school nurture from caring adults who actively work towards their successful integration into their mainstream class.
- To help children to learn to behave appropriately, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem and develop confidence through close and trusting relationships with adults.
- To work in partnership with class teachers and parents to enable consistency of approach, both at home and at school.

### Teaching and Learning

- Nurture Groups are a unique, preventative resource based on well documented psychological theory and research.
- The Nurture Group is based in a separate room with a home-like area and an area set aside for formal learning. The Nurture Group is called Squirrels.
- Children will attend for a maximum period of up to four terms.
- There will be a maximum of 12 children in the Nurture Group at any one time.
- The children will be on the register of their mainstream class and they will join their class for appropriate activities.
- The Nurture Group will operate for 4 afternoons a week- Monday to Thursday.

Non-contact time will be required for the Nurture Group team to -

- See parents
- Plan activities for the following week in conjunction with teachers planning
- Attend case conferences
- Keep records
- Carry out observations
- Meet with other professionals
- Liaise with other school staff
- Attend INSET
- Non-contact time will be on a Friday afternoon.

The Nurture Group will continue to build on existing multi-agency outreach work. Training, advice and support for colleagues in the local area will be offered. Nurture Group staff will develop links with other professionals as appropriate and work with them to enable the child and the family to be offered an effective package of support.

## **Management Support**

The Steering Committee will meet termly to enable a cohesive and agreed vision to be formulated. Assessments and planning are approved by the qualified teaching staff member each term. Members of the steering Committee will consist of:

- The Headteacher
- Assistant Head/ SENDCo
- Nurture Group staff
- Link Governor
- Class Teachers

## **Staffing**

- The Nurture group Leader is undertaking accredited Nurture Group training. She is supported by another member of experienced staff. Both are supervised by a qualified member of the teaching staff.
- The staff are supported by the Head Teacher, Assistant Head/ SENDCo and Class Teachers. The day-to-day running is the responsibility of the two nurture staff.
- Nurture staff are not required to cover absent colleagues.

## **Role of the Nurture Group Leader**

The Nurture Group Leader is responsible for the day-to-day management of the group. The Leader has the following duties:

- To maintain the Nurture Group principle – this is to provide a carefully routined day where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and structure within a home-like atmosphere.
- To organise and jointly plan the activities of the classroom, bearing in mind the needs of the children. This is supported by the SENDCo who plans with the Nurture Group staff based on the Boxall Profile results and needs of the children.
- To keep records of individual children's progress.
- To coordinate the work of the Nurture Group assistant
- To liaise with other professionals when appropriate
- To actively work in partnership with parents in the development of their children.
- To help children manage successfully in less structured sessions including playtimes.
- To participate in INSET within school
- To carry out and contribute to school policies and procedures.

## **Role of the Nurture Group Assistant**

The Nurture Group Assistant works in partnership with the Leader. Her role is to assist the Leader in necessary tasks, including planning, and to participate in appropriate INSET.

## **Referral Procedures**

All referrals will be made in consultation with parents, and discussed between the Head teacher, SENDCo, Class Teacher and Nurture Group staff. A variety of assessment procedures will be used to inform referrals. These will include the Boxall Profile and appropriate academic assessments. Parents will be kept fully informed about the outcomes of these meetings and the reasons for referral.

## **Entry/ Exit Criteria**

Parents will always be consulted prior to a child being placed in the Nurture Group. Placement will be considered for children who are underachieving for social, emotional or mental health reasons.

This could include:

- Children who are very restless, cannot listen, behave impulsively or aggressively
- Children who are withdrawn and unresponsive and who have difficulty relating to others

The Boxall Profile will be used to objectively assess children's needs and their suitability for placement in the Nurture Group.

Reintegration will be discussed with all appropriate parties following Boxall and academic assessments and a plan to reduce Nurture Group sessions will be developed.

## **Parental Links**

As in all aspects of Scott Primary School, parental involvement will be welcomed and the Nurture Group aim to work in partnership with parents to give children maximum benefit of their experiences within the group. The Nurture Group have termly sessions where parents are invited to share creative time with their children. There is also the opportunity to look through the children's book and chat to the staff about their children's time in Nurture Group.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Scott Primary School is committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all children regardless of age, ability,

gender, race and social circumstances. All pupils are of equal value and have the same right to take part in the varied activities and opportunities wherever possible. All opportunities for learning should be offered in a way which allows all children access and the ability to progress at their stage of understanding.

### **Disability Discrimination Act**

Scott Primary School is committed to having due regard to the following

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places a duty on all public authorities, including schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.