

Meriden CE Primary School



Nurture Group Policy

Nurture Groups are acknowledged as a good approach for early interventions for pupils presenting with social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties which children often communicate through their behaviour.

The group is theoretically under-pinned by the 'Nurture Group' model (Boxall) and provides a modified curriculum based on the six principles advocated by Marjorie Bennathan and Marjorie Boxall.

The over-arching Nurture Group Principle is to provide a carefully structured part of the school day, where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and routine with a home-like atmosphere.

Nurture Groups are designed to offer pupils:

- Security
- A trusting relationship with 1/more reliable adults in which missing or insufficiently internalised essential early learning experiences are provided
- Support for children's positive emotional and social growth and cognitive development at whatever level of need the child shows by responding to them in a developmentally appropriate way
- Direct teaching

The 6 Principles are:

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

Purpose and Aims of the Nurture Group

- Provide a consistent, predictable pattern to the day
- Provide a space where the pupil feels safe and protected, is given guided choices and some sense of control
- Have nurturing and affectionate adults with whom pupils can develop positive, trusting relationships, more secure attachments and thereby resilience to manage their own vulnerabilities, difficulties and emotions.
- Set achievable targets for pupils based on the Boxall profile, allowing pupils to be successful
- Provide role models of behaviour/social skills
- Provide opportunities for pupils to practise mindfulness and controlled breathing
- Provide pupils with the opportunities to verbalise their emotional experiences
- To help children to learn to behave appropriately, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem, make decisions and wise choices through understanding the consequences of certain

ways of behaving and develop confidence and skills through a close and trusting relationship with adults. In short to make them more 'ready' to manage the classroom environment and expectations

- Support families in managing need and in securing positive relationships with each other
- To prevent possible exclusion

Inclusive Practice

In the Nurture Group, we recognise that every child matters and aim to respond to each child's needs taking into consideration their;

- Cultural background
- Life experiences
- Strengths
- Communication needs
- Emotional and social needs
- Development needs
- Physical needs

The Curriculum

The Nurture Group provides two parallel but linked curriculums

1. The Nurture Curriculum - designed to support a range of developmental needs and focuses on the following skills: collaboration, exploration, investigation, making choices and decisions, organisation, turn-taking, observation, taking responsibility, recording, interpreting, predicting, recalling and reflecting
2. The Nurturing Curriculum – designed to provide opportunities for missed or inadequately covered experiences resulting in gaps in learning and to consolidate learning

Setting

The nurture group has a maximum of 8 pupils across Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 which pupils can access for up to five mornings, with the children spending the five afternoons with their own class. The group is based in The Hub which has been developed to create a homely atmosphere. The group has access to the sensory room.

Routines:

We start the day by offering breakfast, which also gives us the opportunity to catch up on each other's news and share any worries or concerns. We offer toast, a range of cereals and a selection of drinks.

Our mornings have a practical, creative theme, giving the children opportunities to bake, do gardening, art and other sensory activities. When there is focus on English, Maths, Science and Reading, the children receive specific adult support. Academic work is levelled at each child's individual ability. We complete SEMH or therapeutic activities each day and discuss news and world events.

Lunchtime group provides a social setting for those pupils who find it difficult to self-regulate when outside in unstructured settings, or who find the social demands challenging.

A maximum of 8 children attend the group at any one time. All children will be on the SEND Register at SEND Support. They may be undergoing assessment for an Education, Health, Care (EHC) Plan or already hold an EHC Plan.

Staff Training

The two staff running the Nurture Group have attended training to support them in their role such as AET Level 2 and 3, Team Teach, PDA, Attachment and Relationship Based Play and will continue to access any relevant training. Staff use a range of risk reduction strategies and de-escalation.


Managing Physically Challenging Behaviour

Children in the Nurture Group often present with a delay in their emotional development; this becomes very apparent when they are cross, anxious, disappointed or confused. We accept that sometimes children struggle to regulate their emotions and thoughts which then affect their behaviour. We also understand that behaviour is a form of communication.

There are occasions when a child's behaviour becomes physically oppositional and challenging. Whilst staff do not condone this choice of behaviour, it will be managed positively and safely in a way that encourages recovery and repair.

Linked Policies:

This policy should be read alongside the following: SEND, Inclusion, Equalities, SMSC, PSHEE, Mental Health & Wellbeing Policies

Approved		November 2018	
Signature of Chair		Date	November 2018
Review Cycle	Three years	Review Date	November 2021