

# Nurture Provision Policy

## ‘The Hive’



Last reviewed on: November 2023

Next review due by: November 2025

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This policy has been written by drawing on the principles of the Nurture UK Network Group as well as consideration for the needs of our school community and ensuring every child can *'Be the best that they can be'*.

### **1.2 What are nurture groups?**

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. 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 achieving their academic potential.

### **1.3 The six principles of nurture groups:**

- Children's learning is understood developmentally

The foundations of learning begin at birth and develop via a close relationship with an adult. Independence develops through dependence. Social empathy as well as learning develops 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 the child to move on. Children's developmental progress is assessed through the Boxall Profile handbook.

- The classroom 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 relationship with each other and with the staff.

- The importance of nurture for the development of 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 or taken for granted in our nurture group.

- Language is a vital means of communication

Language is more than a skill to be learnt, it is the 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 into the group or having breakfast together are as important as the 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.

- 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. If the child can sense their feelings are understood this can help to diffuse difficult situations. The adult makes the 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 this child trying to tell me?' Empathy is key.

- The importance of transition in children's lives.

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. Changes in routine are invariably difficult for vulnerable children and need to be carefully managed with preparation and support.

## **2. Aims and objectives**

2.1 In the Hive 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.

- To increase inclusive practice for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and to develop ways in which the school supports such children.
- To facilitate a positive whole school ethos in line with the school behaviour policy and Inclusion policy.
- To develop awareness about the cause of dysregulated behaviours and the effective management of these difficulties. The importance of relational, regulation and restorative approaches are understood in The Hive.
- To raise the achievement of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- To increase joint working practices between school staff and outside agencies when required.
- To increase parental involvement in supporting their children and developing a positive attitude toward school.

2.2 Our nurture group is called 'The Hive'. Most children attend nurture on 4 mornings a week and the group is carefully constructed to create a balanced and functional group. The maximum number of children attending the nurture group is 10. An additional nurture group is available for a smaller group of upper KS2 children who present with more complex

social, emotional and mental health needs. The needs of all children are reviewed through observation and assessment using the Online Boxall Profile every half term.

### **3. Staff Organisation**

3.1 The Hive is managed by the school's Inclusion Manager Mrs Sharon Marsh who has completed the Nurture UK Network training. Her role is to:

- to oversee the nurture group with the support and guidance of the SLT
- to be involved in the assessment, selection and re-integration of pupils
- organise medium term objectives and plan weekly activities with The Hive staff with consideration to pupils Boxall Profile targets
- be involved in formal reviews to support curriculum development
- lead the selection, assessment and re-integration of pupils
- ensure the maintenance of Nurture Group principles- this is to provide a carefully structured session where this is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and structure within a home-like atmosphere
- oversee the organisation and weekly planning of activities and the curriculum of the group with The Hive staff, bearing in mind the needs of the children in relation to Boxall Profile targets
- keep and maintain Pupil Profiles that record and track individual children's progress and attainment
- co-ordinate and support the work of the Nurture Group Assistants
- liaise with other professionals when appropriate including visits
- oversee activity work in partnership with parents in the development of their children including organising parent/pupil sessions and coffee mornings
- support Nurture Group children on trips and whole school activities
- ensure regular communication between nurture group staff, teachers, teaching assistants and parents
- manage the Nurture Group budget
- co-ordinate and supervise the review and maintenance of Nurture learning environments to ensure they meet Nurture principles
- report developments to SLT and Governors as appropriate
- support nurture group assistants on a day-to-day basis with the running of The Hive
- carry out and contribute to school policies and procedures.

3.2 We have 4 staff who have completed the Nurture UK network training.

Their roles are to run the nurture group sessions under the direction of the nurture lead. Their roles include:

- be involved in formal reviews of pupil's progress as required
- to support curriculum development

- maintain the Nurture Group principles- this is to provide a carefully structured session where this 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 Boxall Profile targets and additional targets provided by Outside Agencies
- keep and maintain Learning logs to track individual children's progress and attainment
- 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 the review and maintenance of Nurture learning environments to ensure they meet Nurture principles
- support Nurture Group children on trips and whole school activities where appropriate
- observe pupils in their mainstream classrooms
- liaise with parents/carers to continue to foster positive relationships.

### 3.3 Staff absence

In order to maintain consistency and security the nurture group is never covered by supply teachers. In the event of staff absence, the members of The Hive will be supported by a known member of staff and whose picture will be on display. However, if this is not possible the children who access this intervention will remain with their mainstream class.

## 4. Parental involvement

### 4.1 Parents are a key element of nurture work.

- Parents are consulted by letter and face to face discussion prior to children attending the nurture group. Consent is obtained for their child to attend The Hive.
- Parents are regularly invited to meet with staff and attend 'play & stay' sessions (where possible in light of Covid-19 risk assessments).
- Staff support parents during non-contact time in the form of meetings and give appropriate advice and interaction strategies.

## 5. Teaching and Learning

5.1 The Hive children have their own personalised learning pathway which is linked to the whole school curriculum with a large emphasis on PSHE, Social and Emotional learning and Language and Literacy. Activities are planned to provide a stimulating and fun environment

for children to learn in whilst also providing challenge. Medium term planning identifies our pupil areas for development based on Boxall Profile Data. Short term (weekly) planning demonstrates key activities to support these areas for development. This is undertaken by the Nurture Group Lead and Assistants, with planning easily accessed on the Schools 365 Drive. Each half term the planning will have a thematic focus and consideration will always be given to pupils' development stage of learning. Regular communication will take place with class teachers of pupils to ensure links are made with current maths, English and phonics objectives where possible and appropriate.

Each nurture session will follow the same structure to ensure it is predictable for pupils and enables success to be achieved. Nurture sessions will always begin after the pupils have been registered and attended the assembly with their mainstream class. Each session will be based on the following structure:

- emotional check-in
- circle time
- breakfast
- phonics/reading
- kinetic letters
- break time
- focused learning task
- child initiated learning
- story time
- celebration time

## 5.2 Planning, Preparation and Assessment

The Hive staff will meet to review pupil progress, plan and resource activities for the next week each Friday at 9am whilst pupils attend the school's celebration assembly. Each Friday morning staff will also have the opportunity to visit and observe pupils in their mainstream class.

## 5.3 Assessment

The Boxall Profile (which allows for an individual picture of the child's social and emotional needs) is used as the main assessment tool each half term. This is carried out in line with the school assessment system in order for staff to be aware of any progress or change in the areas of need to be developed. Alongside the formal assessment process is the informal, daily evidence recorded in Learning Logs by nurture group staff. Pupil's progression over the course of the week is discussed during the Planning, Preparation and Assessment time to decide upon key focus areas for the next week. Children are assessed in line with the school assessment system, in order to establish the impact, the Nurture group is having on their academic progress. Attendance is also monitored.

## **6. Identification of Pupils**

6.1 The nurture group currently supports a range of children across the School. The identification and review process takes place on an ongoing basis.

- Raising concerns – staff complete The Hive Referral form to raise awareness of current pupils experiencing difficulties.
- 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 Class teacher and Nurture Group Lead discuss the results. From the Boxall profiles, a report will be created where children are selected for the group according to need. This grouping can be flexible to include other children in some of the sessions. Children will leave and join the group as progress is made.
- Parents/carers will be consulted to discuss any concerns they may have about their child's development and ensure consent is gained if their child is to attend the nurture provision.

## **7. Reintegration of pupils**

The most effective length of time to be a member of a nurture group is 2-4 terms. At any time throughout this, depending on the progress of the child, a re-integration programme may begin. This programme is developed on an individual basis for each child to slowly build them back into their mainstream class on a full-time basis. The re-integration process is fully supported by nurture group staff, the pupil, class teacher and parents.

## **8. Arrangements to monitor and review**

This policy was written in consultation with staff and Governors. It should be read alongside other policies in school (Behaviour, Inclusion, Equal Opportunities). It will be reviewed on an annual basis.