



The Diocese of Ely
ACT Multi
 Academy
 Trust
**Agapé, Courage
 Thankfulness**



Nuture Policy

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1.0	S Hibbitt	New Policy	Sept 2020	Sept 2023



Rainbow Room Nurture Group Policy

Our Policy

At St. Michael's Church school, we strive to live out our aim for all our community to have the opportunities to be the "Best that they can be." This can be achieved through subscribing to our core values, and in specific connection with our Nurture groups, particularly those of developing resilience, perseverance and happiness. All children deserve the best start in their education and our school is determined to ensure that this applies to all our children, whatever their start in life has been. A specialist provision based on therapeutic Nurture principles is available to provide additional support as required.

Why Nurture Groups

Most children start school with assumptions based on early experiences at home, about their capacity to enjoy learning; they are usually 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 angered. 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 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.

The Six Principles of Nurture

Six important principles underpin the organisation and ethos of a nurture group.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally

The foundations of learning begins 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 they appear to be with the appropriate degree of control and nurture. The quality of this response enables the child to move on. Children's development progress is assessed through the Boxall Profile online.

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 can see adults working together and supporting each other. This provides security and reassurance. The nurture room offers a balance of education and domestic experiences aimed at supporting the development of children's relationships with each other and with the staff.

3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing

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 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.

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. 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?'

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

Aims of the Nurture Provision

- To develop children's self-esteem
- To develop children's social skills
- To provide a calm environment
- To build relationships between adults and children
- To help the children grow in confidence, trust and reliability
- To provide a secure environment where children learn
- To provide children with nurturing care from two trusted adults, whose aim is to work towards their successful reintegration
- To help children learn the consequences of certain behaviours
- To work in partnership with parents and school staff to ensure consistent approach
- To provide continuous monitoring and termly assessment through the "Boxall Profile"
- To prevent possible exclusion

The Nurture Provision

At present the Nurture Provision operates every morning from 9.30am to 12.00pm, catering for 8 to 12 pupils. Pupils are collected and returned by the two Nurture Lead Practitioners from their classes.

The Rainbow Room has 7 areas which provide a secure, safe base for learning both indoors and outdoors.

These 7 areas are listed below:

- Kitchen area
- Dining area
- Play area
- Comfortable home-like area
- Quiet area



- Work area
- Outdoor area
- Therapy Room

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

- Through a puppet or soft toy, the pupils 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 Nurture Breakfast, the pupils will be encouraged to speak relevantly and to wait for their turn, replying to and complimenting others
- 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 'raindrops' and 'proud cloud time' 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
- To support the secure and safe environment, visitors and unfamiliar adults should knock before entering the provision

The Nurture Practitioners

- The Nurture Group is overseen by the Inclusion Manager
- The Nurture Practitioners will be given one full afternoon per week to plan for the provision, prepare resources and keep up to date with record keeping
- To ensure that social behaviours are effectively modelled, the Nurture Group is always staffed by two members of staff, both of whom are qualified by the Nurture Group Network in 'The Theory and Practice of Nurture Groups.'
- The Nurture Practitioners should remain within the provision in order to ensure stability and continuity of the practice
- The Nurture Practitioners are good role models for children and will demonstrate this with their behaviour and communication with each other
- In the rare event of staff absence, the Inclusion Manager will make the decision, dependent on the needs of the pupils and the availability of other staff, as to whether to use another member of the Inclusion Team (who is well known to the pupils in the provision and trained specifically to support the needs of this provision) to support in the group for the day, or whether to close the provision for the day

Aims of the Nurture Practitioners

- To deliver a curriculum under the guidance of the class teacher that is suited to each child's needs
- To work as a team and support each other
- To liaise with the Class Teacher, Inclusion Manager and Family Support Worker
- To actively work in partnership with parents in the development of their children



- To provide opportunities for children to express their feelings

The Process of the Nurture Provision

Assessment

- Children are assessed prior to joining the group using the Boxall Profile and observations from class teachers and nurture staff
- Individual targets are set from the Boxall Profile for the children and these are circulated to class teachers to ensure a consistent approach
- Boxalls are done by the Class Teacher and Nurture Practitioner each term and progress monitored and tracked

Referral

- The inclusion manager will be aware of any children that are thought to be considered for the group
- Raising concerns – staff to complete The Rainbow Room Referral form
- Class Teacher will have an informal discussion with parent
- Nurture staff to speak to parents prior to their child joining the group

Reintegration

The aim of the Nurture group is to help all children attain the highest level of achievement of which they are capable and to be able to function successfully within their mainstream class.

- Reintegration will take place when indications from the Boxall suggest the child is ready to join their class full time
- A timetable of gradual reintegration will be planned, and the child's progress carefully monitored
- Timescales will vary depending on the individual's needs

When it is thought a child is ready to return full time to their classroom there is a great need for flexibility between everyone involved. The Nurture staff, Inclusion Manager and Class Teacher will meet to plan the reintegration programme for the child. The length of time will depend on the individual child and the amount of time they have been in the group but would be expected to be between 2 and 6 weeks. When a programme is being planned it is vital that consistent expectations and strategies are put in place to ensure continuity and successful reintegration. It can be an unsettling time for children as they will have formed close relationships between themselves and staff members. Therefore, Nurture staff will find time in the week to catch up with the children to make sure everything is going okay for them. Class Teachers will discuss reintegration with parents as they too may be feeling a little unsettled and concerned themselves about the end of this provision for their children.



