

Lynnfield Primary School
Nurture Policy

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1. What are Nurture Groups?

Nurture groups are aimed at 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 emotional and social development. The group builds on and gives the children the tools to make trusting relationships with adults or to relate appropriately to other children.

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 well-being
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in children's lives

2. Aims and objectives

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 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 pastoral policy.
- To develop awareness about the cause of behaviour and the effective management of behaviour problems in line with the school behaviour policy.
- 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.

3. Staffing

Nurture group staff consists of the Head of School Lynnfield who oversees the running of the nurture group and has completed the four-day Nurture Network certificate course. The group is led by a qualified nurture teaching assistant who has also completed the four-day Nurture Network certificate course and supported by a further nurture teaching assistant.

- The staff in the nurture group are supported by the Head of School, Assistant Head for Vulnerable Pupils and Class Teachers
- Nurture staff are not required to cover absent colleagues
- The group does not run with temporary staff and protocol for absence is in place; the identified TA will cover absences where possible or the children return to their home classes.
- Visits by other staff and outside agencies are carefully planned and need to give advanced warning if they are to access.
- Staff regularly liaise with mainstream school staff and outside agencies.

Formal supervision with the Head of School Lynnfield, Assistant Head for Vulnerable Pupils or Play Therapist will take place for the nurture team on a six-weekly basis or more frequently as and when requested.

4. Parental contact

As a school we recognise the fundamental role parents and carers take in ensuring the best possible outcomes for their child. We understand that parents are the first and most important caregivers for a child and therefore seek to work in partnership.

- Initial informal discussion takes place with class teacher and parent regarding the concerns that school have surrounding a child's social and emotional wellbeing. Information is gathered on parental views and the child's home circumstances and parental views.
- Parents are consulted by letter, invited to a meeting regarding the nurture provision and asked to sign an agreement prior to children attending the nurture group
- Parents are regularly invited to meet with staff and attend 'stay and play' sessions where opportunities for modelling of positive communication skills are available
- Staff support parents during non-contact time in the form of meetings, ad-hoc discussions at the start and end of the school day. To offer guidance, giving appropriate advice and interaction strategies.

5. Placement criteria

Each child will be selected for intervention in the nurture group for individual reasons, criteria include;

- Child's class teacher expresses concern to nurture staff
- Boxall Profile is completed by class teacher, nurture lead and or other relevant adults who know the child well and concerns are highlighted
- Parents have expressed concerns in relation to social and/or emotional wellbeing for their child
- Bereavement or loss
- Unaddressed relational traumatic experiences in their life
- Concerns raised by outside agencies and parents are considered when selecting children.

Additional considerations for selection process:

- Siblings are already in the group
- If they are currently in or about to go in to year 2 or 6 (however in extreme circumstances, placement may be considered)
- Places consist of 10 children from reception to Year 3/4
- Priority to those children on the Special Educational Needs Register for Social Emotional and/or Mental Health
- An appropriate balance of needs in the group

Placement process:

- Nurture staff meet with class staff to assess needs, gather background information and observe child in class setting.
- Nurture staff meet with parents alongside class teacher to express the needs that have been identified
- Meeting with Head of School to discuss placement of a child and any SEN implications.
- A formal meeting takes place with the nurture staff and parents to agree a placement and gain signed consent

6. Structure of the nurture group

The nurture group is well structured with a strong sense of routine and familiarity.

- Four full day sessions run from 9.45-11.30 a.m. and 1-3p.m. One member of the nurture team will be available daily on the yard from 8.30-8.45am and 3.30-3.40pm
- The day will include time spent on English delivered through the use of a fiction or non-fiction text, maths focussing on embedding the foundational maths skills, outside playtime, social

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breakfast, shared play, activities linked to the Boxall assessment and meet the needs of individual children. Circle time, yoga and news sharing is a key element to the smooth delivery of the day.

- Children from the group will still be able to attend swimming lessons, PE, and other extra special activities, which may occur during the school day, as a part of their base class.
- Phonics/reading sessions are seen as an integral part of the child's day and therefore children will access a phonics group that is appropriately matched to their individual level.
- There is a good link with the child's class through the celebration of achievement; we share the news of certificates, stickers or other awards.
- The rewards in the nurture group are consistent and structured, each day children are able to move around a positive choice cycle and over time receive a prize from the box.
- On returning to class, teachers are given positive news from the child's day and all staff are encouraged to acknowledge the achievement.
- The nurture group make time to celebrate birthdays with cake, candles and a card from their nurture group friends.

7. Monitoring

Monitoring of children's progress and the effectiveness of the nurture group is of paramount importance to maintain high standards of nurture provision.

- Children's progress is continually monitored with a daily review of the session, weekly observations of the children
- Individual files are kept with copies of the Boxall profile and SDQ questionnaire
- Half termly meetings with nurture staff and class teachers are arranged to review class progress
- Nurture team complete Boxall Profile assessments every 26 nurture days.
- Regular meetings are held with nurture lead and SENCo to review re-integration or other relevant issues.
- Assistant Head for Vulnerable Pupils regularly monitors and records the academic progress of children currently attending the nurture group and those who have re-integrated back.
- Observation of children in main class setting each half term to inform the boxall assessment
- Academic assessment in reading, writing and maths following the school's assessment policy

8. Reintegration

Careful plans are required to resettle children back into their mainstream class.

- Boxall profile is used as a guide to assess whether children are ready to spend more time in class.
- In discussion with class staff and nurture staff a plan to agree the pace of return, dates and assessment of in class support will be agreed.
- Parents are informed of the plans for reintegration and offered support if required.
- Children are given clear explanations of the plan using timetables and verbal reminders.
- The progress of reintegration is closely monitored and pace of return is arranged to suit the needs of the child.
- The child has a special 'wings' assembly to mark their achievements during their nurture journey.

9. Outreach

As part of the nurture work we do at Lynnfield Primary School, we share the good practice with other primary schools within Hartlepool and surrounding local authorities.

The service we provide offers other schools the opportunity to:

- Discuss their nurture needs with the team
- Advice and support offered to meet the needs of their individual school
- Guidance on the Boxall profile
- Visits to their school to offer support on environment and provision

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- Opportunities to moderate judgements against the Boxall profile

10. Monitoring and review

Review Date: September 2024

Reviewed by: C. Lakin

Approved by Governors:

Next Review Date: September 2025