



Highfield Community Primary School

Nurture Group Policy

Overview

The Forest Room provides an opportunity to facilitate the development of confidence, self-esteem, social skills and academic learning in a secure, caring and safe environment. The group consists of children with a wide range of needs who are not, for whatever reason, achieving their full potential. The group has high expectations with clear defined boundaries, positive reinforcement, consistency, structure and predictability.

The History of Nurture groups

Nurture Groups were started in the 1970s in inner London as a response to the large number of children reported with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) on entry to primary school. Nurture groups can broaden the horizons and life opportunities of our most vulnerable children and young people. Research has suggested that children have become more socially adept, emotionally resilient, self-confident and learn to enjoy life because of their nurturing experience. Every nurture group will look a little different, reflecting the differences in the location of the school, the age and design of the buildings, the organisation of the nurture group provision, the particular children in the group and the character and skills of the adults in charge.

The Forest Room structure

The Nurture Group is based in a room in the centre of the school with a home like area and an area set aside for formal learning. The home area is furnished with sofas, cushions and a carpet. There is a kitchen facility with access to hot and cold water, a microwave and simple cooking equipment.

Play materials as well as educational equipment and games for more formal work are included in the room.

Children will attend for a period of up to four terms – planning for reintegration or further assessment is essential and will be decided by the class teacher, parents and nurture staff.

The children will be on the register of their mainstream class. The nurture group will run in the afternoon. The children will stay within the Nurture room for the whole session.

The group has a maximum of ten children and its composition is carefully structured to create a balanced and functional group.

The group operates within all school policies and is an integral part of our school. The staff members that work in the nurture room are the same staff for every session. The two members of our nurture team will work closely with the children across school.

The Nurture Group is staffed at a minimum level of two full time Nurture Group assistants who work as a team. Neither adult should be available to cover for absent staff within the school as the success of a Nurture Group depends on the continuity it provides for the children.

In the absence of one of the Nurture Groups' team, the group would not normally function; however children will be supported in their mainstream class where possible. Where possible the children should be told in advance if it is a planned absence. If another suitable member of staff is available to support the group the sessions would be able to go ahead.

Placement Criteria

Each child will be selected for the Forest Room for individual reasons. Children may be selected where they would benefit from support with their social, emotional and behavioural development. Class teachers will complete a referral form if they feel that a child would benefit from being part of the group. A panel meeting will take place termly where discussions will take place between nurture group staff and Headteacher to decide whether they can be placed in the group at that time. A Boxall profile questionnaire will also be completed by the class teacher to identify the main areas of need. The nurture group staff will discuss with the parent/carers the reasons why their child would benefit from attending the Forest Room in a drop in session that will take place before the child starts in the group.

Assessments

A Boxall Profile assessment is completed every term to monitor progression. From the information gathered targets are set and are recorded on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which are referred to throughout the term. Assessments towards targets will take place and are recorded on a weekly basis.

Reintegration

Re-integration will be planned and discussed with the parents, the class teacher, Nurture Group team and the child. Sessions will be shortened and reduced over a 2/4 week period. If for any reason the child is not reacting well to reintegration, the process may be slowed down or stopped completely until a more appropriate time. All children attending the Nurture Group are likely to need resources beyond those usually provided by the school. They will be at a minimum of School Support of the SEN Code of Practice.

Roles and responsibilities

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the functioning of the Nurture Group within the school. He is responsible for:

- the operational management of the Nurture Group including the arrangements in the case of absence of the Nurture Group staff or closure of the Nurture Group
- oversight of the curriculum planning and monitoring of work within the Nurture Group
- ensuring the Health and Safety procedures are followed in accordance with the school's policy
- ensuring that the Nurture Group operates within the school policies.
- To be involved with selection and reintegration.

Role of the School SENCO

- To liaise with the Nurture Group assistants and class teachers – this will include the development and implication of IBPs
- To be involved in formal reviews as outlined in the Code of Practice.

Role of the Nurture Group Staff

The Nurture Group staff are responsible for the day-to-day management of the class. They have the following duties:

- To carry out, and contribute to, school policies and procedures, including child protection procedures where appropriate.
- To organise and plan the activities and curriculum of the classroom, bearing in mind the individual needs of each child.
- 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 keep daily individual records of the children's progress and intended programmes of work
- To discuss the children regularly with other professionals involved
- To actively work in partnership with parents in the development of their children
- To observe children in the classroom, playground and at lunchtimes in terms of managing less structures sessions, helping children manage successfully
- To participate in INSET and joint planning with the class teacher and school SENCO re IEP/IBPs

Time is available for the Nurture Group team to:

- plan suitable provision based on various assessments (Boxalls, strengths and needs analysis) to allow children's social, emotional or behavioural needs to be met
- attend meetings, where appropriate
- keep detailed assessment records
- carry out in-class observations
- meet with Educational Psychologists and social workers or other agencies
- liase with the headteacher, SENCO and other staff
- attend INSET or Nurture Group support meetings
- see parents or run parent workshops
- support pupils in the classroom

Partnership with Parents / Carers

Parents / Carers are a vital part of the child's placement. An information booklet will be given to parents/carers when their child starts. Parents are encouraged to come in and speak to the nurture room staff, wherever possible.

Link with external agencies

The Forest Room staff work closely with lots of external agencies to help support your child.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Nurture Group will be monitored by the governing body and the Head Teacher. Evaluations involve important viewpoints from children, parents, staff and external agencies.

Reviewed Sept 2019

Review Due Sept 2021

