



James Bateman Junior High School

Nurture Group Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- Our nurture group provides a modified curriculum in an environment based on the principles advocated by Marion Bennathan and Marjorie Boxall.
- The group is an intervention for those children who are unable to access learning successfully in their mainstream classroom. This may be due to fragmented or deprived early childhood experiences, learning difficulties, social and/or emotional difficulties or disorders on the autism spectrum.
- Our group meets on three mornings a week, one afternoon a week and weekly Family SEAL sessions, with children spending the remaining time in their own classes.
- The group caters for up to twelve children from years 5 and 6.
- Two experienced members of staff run our group with the ongoing support and supervision of a member of the Senior Management Team.

2. OUR AIMS

- To provide a small-scale setting in which children can experience nurturing care from two/three caring adults, who actively work towards enabling their successful reintegration.
- To have a predictable, calm and purposeful environment and timetable, free from curriculum pressures.
- To develop self-esteem and social skills.
- To develop relationships between adults and children, building trust, confidence and reliability.
- To develop responsibility for self and others.
- To help children learn appropriate behaviour.
- To help children learn to make decisions and wise choices through understanding the consequences of certain ways of behaving.
- To work in partnership with parents and teachers to achieve consistency of approach at home and school.
- To provide an on-going assessment using the Boxall Profile.
- To prevent possible exclusion.

3. THE CURRICULUM

- The nurture group provides a modified curriculum that is suited to the children's needs.
- The group covers mathematics, literacy, science, PSHE, art and PE. Areas such as cooking and gardening are also included/
- The group sessions are divided into small chunks of time with each activity serving a clear purpose.
- Each session offers the security of a consistent and familiar structure as follows:
 - Greeting ritual;
 - Circle-time activities;
 - Designated activity of the day;
 - Free play;
 - Laying table and tidying up equipment;
 - Refreshments;
 - Washing-up;
 - Reading;
 - Ending ritual.
- Circle-time activities focus on the following valuable activities:
 - Turn-taking;
 - Watching and listening;
 - Using expressive language;
 - Learning from others;
 - Trying new experiences;
 - Developing a positive attitude to participation;
 - Forming positive relationships;
 - Using agreed codes of behaviour;
 - Initiating activities with other children;
 - Learning to respond to sanctions;
 - Considering the rights and needs of themselves and others.
- Activities are designed to offer children criteria for doing well that guarantees success with the aim of boosting a child's self-esteem and sense of identity.

4. INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

In the nurture group, we recognise that every child matters and we aim to respond to each child's needs, taking into consideration their:

- 1 Cultural background;
- 2 Life experiences;
- 3 Strengths;
- 4 Communication needs;
- 5 Emotional and social needs;
- 6 Developmental needs;

5. SETTING

The nurture group meet in a self-contained setting with kitchen facilities. The room provides space for a formal work area and play area in which to celebrate the children's achievements. There is space outside the nurture room to allow time-out for children to address emotional and behavioural difficulties.

6. THE ROLE OF THE ADULT WORKERS

- The role of the adult is to sustain nurturing relationships with the children who attend.
- They should be good role models, demonstrating appropriate and positive behaviour that is consistent and continuous.
- They need to recognise that it is through a positive and affirming relationship that a child can perceive themselves as worthwhile.

7. ASSESSMENT

- Children involved in the group are assessed using the Boxall Profile on a termly basis.
- After an assessment, findings are discussed with the school's Inclusion Manager and linked to a child's targets, both within the group and their classroom.
- A written assessment is provided at a child's annual review, if appropriate.
- In addition, half-termly records of each child's social and emotional development are kept.

8. REFERRAL

The following types of children are considered for inclusion in the group:

- Those who appear to be emotionally insecure, which could present itself as lack of self-acceptance, low self-worth or a lack of trust;
- Children who are withdrawn and unresponsive;
- Children with poor social skills, who cannot share or are demanding or uncooperative;
- Those with a poor attention span;
- Children who demonstrate immature behaviour;
- Children who behave aggressively, impulsively or inappropriately in other ways;
- Children who find change upsetting;

- Children who appear unable to integrate into a mainstream classroom setting.

9. REFERRAL PROCEDURE

- Year 4 teachers from feeder first schools are invited to put forward children whom they feel will benefit from the group on arrival in Year 5 and asked to complete a Boxall Profile.
- Class teachers and Year Leaders are invited to put forward children whom they feel will benefit from the group.
- All children are assessed using the Boxall Profile to determine their eligibility.
- If a decision is made to invite a child to join the group, a letter is sent home to inform their parents/carers of the offer of a place.
- A parent's guide is sent home and following receipt of a completed consent form, the child is invited to join the group.

10. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

- We recognise the importance of involving the parents/carers of a child in their education.
- Each parent/carer receives a copy of our Parents Guide giving details of the staff involved and what we do.
- We aim to keep parents/carers informed of their child's progress and provide them with support and advice.
- Parents/carers are invited to join the group periodically to see what their children are doing and to join in some activities.
- The nurture group staff can be contacted via the school office to discuss any concerns or issues that parents/carers may have.

11. REINTEGRATION

- A reintegration readiness questionnaire is completed for each pupil alongside the Boxall Profiles. This charts their improvements and progression towards reintegration.
- When ready for reintegration, pupils are supported in mainstream classes by a member of the Nurture Group staff.
- Support for mainstream provision will be for 3 lessons for the first week, 2 lessons for the second week and 1 lesson for the final week before full reintegration into mainstream classes takes place.
- Following reintegration, pupils will be further supported by means of drop-in sessions available at lunchtimes by Nurture Group staff and the School Nurse.
- A mentoring system is in place if additional support is required or identified via Year Leaders or Faculty Leaders.

12. SUCCESS CRITERIA

- We provide affirming, positive and manageable sessions;
- Time-out is seen as an effective sanction;
- The incentives used are seen as desirable by the children;
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is made clear;
- Any inappropriate behaviour is spotted quickly and dealt with;
- A session's routines provide security;
- The activities are tailored to guarantee success;
- The children are given unconditional warmth and acceptance;
- There is a focus on group-building activities;
- The children have greater attention in class;
- The children can gain a more positive identity than the one they 'learned' elsewhere;
- The children gain confidence and are more willing to take on new challenges;
- The sense of success enables the children to put more effort into their work;
- There is plenty of humour and fun.