



Inspire Learning, Ignite Curiosity

Marlow C of E Infant School Nurture Policy January 2023

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, in our likeness" Gen 1:26

Rationale

At Marlow Church of England Infant School our curriculum vision is to inspire learning and ignite curiosity, within a welcoming Christian and spiritual community. We embrace the uniqueness of everybody and are inclusive of all. Our values of respect, kindness, perseverance, forgiveness, thankfulness and service guide all that we do and our aim is for every child to feel nurtured, supported and safe.

Our belief is that every individual is created in God's image and therefore is precious and valuable. We believe in treating everybody with respect and dignity because we acknowledge everyone's God given value and unique identity.

We aim to achieve this by providing children with the opportunity to work towards achieving their full potential by:

- Embracing the uniqueness of everybody and be inclusive of all
- Empowering all to be enthusiastic learners
- Ensuring that every child feels nurtured, supported and safe
- Enriching learning through progressive teaching methods and technology
- Being responsible to and for society
- Being good citizens of the planet

As a school we support the rights of children and these rights are encompassed in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. This policy focuses on helping to realise Article 28 *All children have the right to a good quality education*

Nurture Intent

For the purposes of this policy Nurture support includes Nurture group and ELSA (Emotional Literacy support Sessions).

The aim of our nurture support is to provide a safe, secure and reliable environment where children can develop and explore missed early learning opportunities (nurture) with trained adults. These specialists actively work to support children to develop the skills and confidence they need to improve their social and emotional development, which will ultimately improve their 'overall' learning outlook.

Nurture groups and ELSA (Emotional Literacy support) interventions aim to help children with a range of needs and are not confined to those who are receiving SEN/EHCP support. Research suggests that a great number of children have moderate Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, which are much harder to identify, making their needs even more significant if unmet. As a result the impact on their academic learning and SEMH outcomes is much greater.. Our aim is to support these children before their needs become significant and have a greater impact on their learning and overall life outcomes.

Nurture and ELSA support follows the 6 principles of nurture:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The nurture room offers security and a safe base
- The development of self-esteem through nurture is implicit in practice
- Transitions in children's lives are understood as being of great significance
- Language is developed as a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication and is accepted as basis for teaching and learning

The Nurture Group at Marlow C of E Infant School

- At Marlow Church of England Infant School, all our children are equally important. This applies to all aspects of their education; teaching and learning, their achievements, their attitudes and wellbeing. We encourage all our children to aim for the highest possible standards, and we take account of each child's individual needs and experiences. The Nurture Group is an early intervention to meet the learning, social and emotional needs of any of our children.
- Our Nurture Group follows a part time model. The children attend the group for between 2 and 3 terms before being re-integrated back into their mainstream class. This group forms part of the whole school approach to inclusion and a whole school approach to nurturing all of our children.
- The Boxall Profile is used to provide a framework for the precise assessment of children who are presenting as having social, emotional or mental health (SEMH) and are falling behind at school. The Profile helps Nurture practitioners to select children for the group and additionally to plan focused intervention for those children who are attending the group. Nurture planning is designed to offer practical learning opportunities.
- The Nurture Group provides support for vulnerable children across the school regardless of whether they are receiving SEN/EHCP support.
- Children access the Nurture Group for 2 afternoon sessions. They follow a learning programme tailored to meet their individual learning needs, which were identified through questionnaires. This includes aspects of the National Curriculum and learning opportunities designed to promote social and emotional development and skills.
- Designated PPA time for Nurture staff, overseen by the Nurture Lead, ensures effective planning, monitoring and development. Regular meetings, held with the Class Teacher and parent/carers ensure effective and holistic monitoring and support

ELSA at Marlow C of E Infant School

Alongside our Nurture group we also offer Emotional Literacy support sessions, which are all led and planned for by a member of staff who is trained in Emotional Literacy. Children are selected for ELSA sessions for a variety of reasons, some of which being; trauma, bereavement, confidence, emotional difficulties, friendships...to name a few. ELSA is an alternative resource to nurture as it takes place on a once a week basis in a safe environment and lasts around 8 weeks. ELSA sessions can be held on an individual basis or a small group.

Staffing

Each Nurture Group is run by two experienced members of staff who have accessed a two-day session training course run by the Buckinghamshire Educational Psychology Service (EPS).

The Nurture Team

Mrs Sarah Downing
Mrs Jayne Moore
Mrs Jane Ross

Nurture Lead, Assistant Head and SENCO
Nurture Practitioner, HLTA
Nurture Practitioner, TA

Additional Members of staff who are nurture trained are:

Mrs Chandima Samaraweera
Mrs Cassie Hawkins
Mrs Jenny Britnell

Nurture Practitioner, HLTA
Nurture Practitioner and ELSA
Nurture Practitioner

The Nurture Group will continue to be supported by Educational Psychologists from this service. Data is shared with the EPS to ensure the effective running of Nurture Groups within Bucks. Planning is overseen by the Nurture Lead but written by the Nurture Practitioners. Class Teachers retain full responsibility for the children attending the Nurture Group.

Marlow C of E Infant School is fully committed to the nurture provision and principles. Nurture Practitioners are supported by the SLT and by all staff within school. The Governor lead for Nurture is: **Mrs Joanna White**.

Nurture Staff are not available to provide cover for absent staff at the time of a nurture session. If a member of the nurture staff is absent, every effort is made for a nurture trained member of staff to cover. In most cases this will be: **Sarah Downing (Nurture Lead)** but this could be one of the staff members mentioned above. Marlow CE Infant School will make every effort possible to ensure that cover in Nurture is only provided by a trained member of staff. It is of vital importance that the Nurture Group runs consistently every week in order for the children to develop.

We encourage visits by parents, members of staff and outside agencies, however these are carefully planned and will be by invitation. This will ensure that the children are prepared. Unexpected visitors, changes in routine or timetable can be distressing for children in the Nurture Group.

Nurture staff regularly liaise with Class Teachers and TAs to check on a child's progress or to discuss concerns. They also have meetings with any outside agency, such as Speech and Language Therapy, connected with the children in the Group, whenever this is possible. Children's nurture information, gained through the Boxall profile and SDQ scores, is shared and monitored with the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) via an end of year report. During transition, nurture staff will work with children to help them settle back into their own class group or, due to the nature of our school, help them in the transition to junior school.

The progress of the children is officially monitored at the end of every term. This takes the form of a repeated Boxall profile being completed by the class teacher and SDQs updated (Parent and class teacher). The children are closely monitored informally on a weekly basis by the Nurture Practitioners and noted in lesson plans and evaluations. The Nurture Lead will be kept up to date through meetings and informal conversations.

The children who are in the nurture room are asked to fill out a questionnaire at the start, middle and end of their nurture time to assess their feelings about school and learning.

Identification of children

At Marlow C of E Infant School we treat each child as an individual. Children may be offered a place in Nurture Group to support a wide range of needs. Children may be offered a place in Nurture even if their Boxall profile puts them 'not at risk', as an immediate need or crisis at home may indicate they need the extra support of the team.

Process for identification and selection of children:

- Class Teacher expresses concerns to Nurture Staff. Providing information on social, emotional and academic strengths and needs, support already in place, any contact with parents and specific outcomes wanted for the child.
- Boxall profile to be completed by the Class Teacher (with support as necessary).
- If a number of children are put forward, observations of these children in class may take place to determine the overall needs of the child.
- Nurture Team to meet to discuss children and strengths from the Boxall Profile. If the child is not offered a place in Nurture, the Class Teacher is offered advice on classroom support strategies based on the outcomes of the profile. It may be appropriate for a social group to be formed if numbers allow or ELSA support to be offered.
- The Headteacher, in consultation with the Nurture Lead, has the final decision on who accesses the Nurture Group.
- Class teachers usually have the initial conversations with parents to raise social, emotional and mental health concerns of a child in their class.
- Parents are contacted to discuss the offer of Nurture provision and an agreement is sought to include their child in the group. Following the conversation they will be offered (if it is felt needed) a face to face meeting, a letter, a leaflet on the nurture provision at Marlow C of E Infant School, consent forms, strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) and a parental questionnaire.
- Once all consent forms are back the children will be introduced to the room if they are all starting together. If a child is starting during a term the child will be introduced to the group and made to feel welcome.

The Nurture Room

Within the nurture room the children have access to toys, games and arts and crafts. If the group decided they would like to learn about a topic the class were doing during nurture time the practitioners would plan this into the session, however in general, the work will be planned in accordance with the needs of the children

from the discussions that have taken place or from the Boxall profile. The nurture sessions are carefully planned providing the high levels of routine and structure that children need to feel safe and secure in order that they can develop emotionally, socially and academically. It is essential, however, that the practitioners are flexible in the planned activities to address any concerns and worries the children have when they come into the Nurture Room.

Nurture Group Timetable

Welcome and register
Group discussion
Planned structured activity
Free time
Toast
Story Time
Return to class.

Parental Contact

Parents are essential partners in promoting children's development and learning. The Nurture team works hard to build positive and productive relationships with parents and carers. They are consulted about the strengths and needs of their child and supported to understand how the Nurture Group can be of benefit. Parents, carers and grandparents ('special person') are invited, at least once a year, to attend an afternoon snack session and/or "stay and play" session. This session is carefully planned to ensure **all** children in the group have a 'special person' attending. A multi-agency approach is used if it is appropriate.

The Nurture lead is available to parents/carers as and when it is needed. The Nurture team aims to meet with parents/carers at least once during their nurture journey. Other communication may take the form of emails and phone calls.

Children are able to take their 'nurture journey folders' home when they leave the Nurture Group.

Monitoring

The monitoring of children's progress and the effectiveness of the Nurture Group is vital to maintain the high standards and expectations across the school. Monitoring takes place through:

- Weekly PPA time is allocated for all Nurture Practitioners. This ensures that the children's progress and learning experiences are discussed and planned.
- Weekly SEN meetings will address any Nurture need that arises. If a matter is urgent it is not expected that either the Nurture Lead or the practitioners wait this prescribed time. The Nurture Lead will address any concerns raised with the SLT.
- Boxall profiles are completed each term by the Class Teacher.
- Parents and Class Teachers are asked to fill in the SDQ and questionnaires each term.
- The children are asked to fill in a questionnaire at the start and end of their nurture journey.
- If the child has multiple needs with outside agency a provision map is drawn up and used when supporting the child.
- If a child has a SEN support plan or EHCP areas of need will also be monitored by the termly SEN reviews. (Please see the SEN policy)
- The Nurture Groups will be evaluated through usual school procedures and practice and through OFSTED inspection. It is also monitored by the Bucks Educational Psychology Service and support is provided if needed. The SLT will ensure that nurture principles are being maintained, to monitor the success of the provision and to provide support and guidance.
- Governors will monitor the policy and whether practice matches policy through Governor visits and discussions with the Nurture Lead.

Reintegration

Transition times are critical points for Nurture children, embodied in the nurture principle "The importance of transition in children's lives". If required, reintegration back into the class is planned carefully and shared with all members of staff involved and parent/carers. Readiness for reintegration is also shared with the children. The Boxall profile, readiness for Reintegration guidelines and observations are used as a guide to show when a child is ready for this process to start.

The reintegration process is agreed in discussion with the child, parent/carers, SLT, Nurture Staff, Inclusion Team (if appropriate) and Class Teacher.

- Children are supported to feel a sense of achievement and to understand the process of reintegration. Nurture staff shift focus to support the child(ren) in class. Class Teachers are offered guidance and strategies to support them.
- We recognise that all children are individuals and the process of reintegration is monitored closely by all parties involved. The pace of return must be adapted to suit the needs of the child. The process can last up to a half term.
- Some children or parents/carers may need to retain links to the Nurture Group. This might be through a morning greeting or goodbye or an occasional invite to the Nurture Group. Children will be reminded that they have the support of the nurture practitioners or are welcome in the Nurture Room whilst in the school.
- If the reintegration happens to be the transition to another setting (particularly the change from Year 2 to Year 3) the focus of the group will be on this if it is a single entry Year 2 Nurture Group.

If it is agreed that reintegration is not deemed appropriate, an alternative plan will be agreed by the parents/carers, SENCO, Nurture Lead, SLT and any outside agencies involved.

Partnerships with other schools:

The Nurture team work closely with the school's junior feeder school, ensuring Year 2 nurture children are highlighted to the feeder school. At least 1 meeting will take place towards the end of the academic year with the nurture team and the SENCO from Holy Trinity C of E School.

Nurture practitioners, ELSAs and SENCOs (if applicable) meet locally at least twice a year to discuss any arising difficulty and share good practice.

Additional Partnership with the Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

As well as attending the termly training provided by the EPS, at least 1 member of the nurture team also attends an area supervision group run by the service. This occurs at various points throughout the year and the dates and times are determined by the EPS.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection
- SEN
- E-Safety
- Health and Safety
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years

Review Date: January 2023

Next review: January 2026