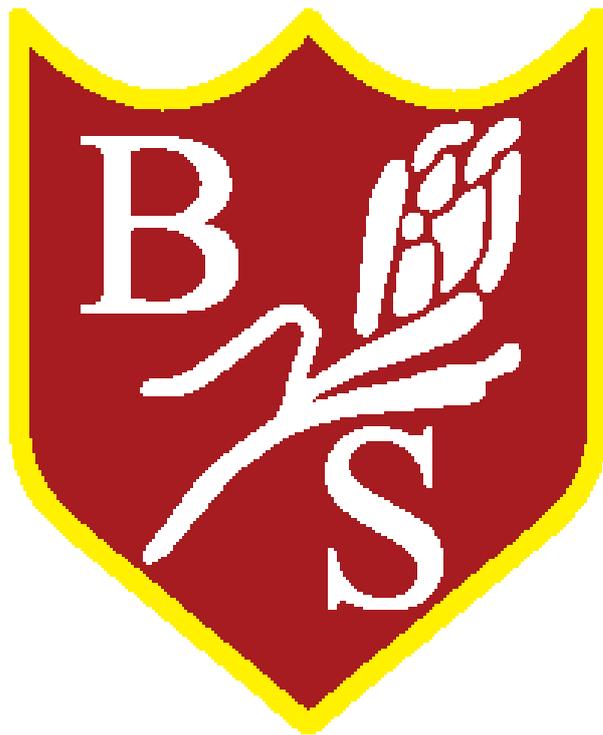


Brandhall Primary School



Nurture Policy

July 2021

Introduction:

“Sometimes children need just a little extra support to help them on their way to learning, making friends and growing into confident and successful young people. Nurture groups can help provide that support for children to give them the skills they need to do well at school, make friends and deal more confidently and calmly with the trials and tribulations of life, for life”.

The Nurture Group Network, helping children and young people to succeed.

The 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 begin at birth and develops 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 s/he appears to be with the appropriate degree of control and nurture. The quality of this response enables the child to move on. Children’s developmental progress is assessed in many ways including through the Boxall Profile handbook.
2. The nurture room offers a safe base – there is a structure which is predictable, adults who are reliable and firm can set boundaries without being punitive. Children see adults working together and supporting each other, this provides security and reassurance. The nurture group room offers a balance of educational and domestic experiences aimed at supporting the development of the 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 snack, 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 offering labelled praise for small achievements; nothing is hurried in nurture groups.
4. Language is 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 a shared snack 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 world of the child. This principle underlines the adult response to the children's challenging 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 invariably difficult for vulnerable children and need to be managed carefully with preparation and support.

Our aims are to provide:

- A small scale setting in which children can experience focused nurturing care from two adults, who actively work towards enabling their successful reintegration back into their base class full time.
- A flexible and holistic approach to education and care in response to the particular needs of the children attending our school.
- An environment that is safe, secure and with a home like atmosphere.
- An environment that aids the child's development emotionally and academically.
- The opportunity to help children learn to make decisions and appropriate choices through understanding the consequences of certain ways of behaving.
- Ongoing assessment and support for children exhibiting behaviours linked to emotional stress and attachment issues.
- An environment which will develop the child's self-esteem and confidence through planned activities.

The Nurture Group will:

- Strive to have a positive effect on children's attitude toward the school community, giving them strategies to cope with conflict and challenges.
- Help children to focus concentration levels, which will in turn impact on standards of attainment across the school.
- To support children who have emotional difficulties which prevent them from learning and making relationships.
- Help to improve the focus and quality of teaching and learning.
- Help children learn to regulate their emotions so they can make relationships and access learning opportunities.

The Nurture Room

The nurture group is available when required to meet the needs of our children. Our nurture provision ensures that identified children have access to specialist equipment to meet their individual needs and have time to focus on important life skills, problem solving and communication as well as English and Maths skills. Throughout each day, the children will have opportunities to work in class with their peers to ensure inclusivity. The children's learning will be differentiated and the children will receive 1:1 support during taught sessions.

All staff are appropriately trained and are passionate about supporting our children with SEN. Staff have received training in Autism, Intensive interaction, PECS and nurture provision. They also have a deep knowledge and understanding of how visual resources such as visual timetables, 'Now and Next' boards, choice boards and communication aids can have a positive effect children with SEN.

The children all have an assigned key worker (1:1) but will work with a range of adults to ensure that they experience and develop relationships with different adults.

Teaching and Learning

The nurture group has a themed curriculum that incorporates whole school approach and also has an emphasis on Personal, Social, Emotional and Mental Health. Activities are planned around a theme to provide a stimulating environment for the children. Weekly planning incorporates developmental and age appropriate skills. We also use the Towards Independency Hierarchy to make sure that the children's self-help skills and independence are a top priority. The children's individual EHCP's will also guide the provision with individual target work taking place to ensure that the children are achieving their full potential.

Nurture

Nurture sessions will take place within the nurture room. At Brandhall Primary we understand that children's learning should be understood developmentally and through this way of thinking we can support learning and progress. Our nurture room offers a safe base for the children to learn in a nurture rich environment that will develop the children's awareness of themselves and others and develop their self-esteem. At Brandhall we understand that all behaviour is communication and we support the children through challenging times with care and understanding.

Pupils may enter the nurture group for a number of reasons. For example, in order to access an environment that is more conducive to their needs, low self-esteem, attachment difficulties, bereavement and family illness or separation. The nurture group supports a range of children across all Key Stages.

The nurture group always begins with Circle Time, allowing the children to share news, talk about their feelings and develop their speaking and listening skills. This is usually followed by a themed task or activity, individual target work and a shared snack time, providing the opportunity to socialise with peers and adults and to learn how to work as a team.

The Role of the SENCO

The SENCO for Brandhall Primary is Jane Brewer. It is the SENCO's role is to ensure that the provision we provide for our children with SEN is the very best. It is the SENCO's role to ensure that children with SEN make progress in school and that they meet their individual targets, especially those set within the children's EHC plans. The SENCO will support the planning for the provision in nurture to ensure the children have access to a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum which meets their individual needs. It is also the SENCO's role to monitor the nurture group

provision. This will be done through observations, drop in sessions, data analysis and pupil voice.

The SENCO oversees the strategic direction of the nurture group. The SENCO also works closely with the nurture group staff to identify pupils in need of nurture support and assess pupils' progress.

Assessment

All children are screened using the Boxall Profile. This is a series of questions covering various aspects of a child's social and emotional development. It provides a clear and personalised picture of a child's areas of need. The SENCO and nurture group staff discuss the results and highlight areas of need.

During their time in the nurture group personal targets that are linked to the areas of need identified in the Boxall Profile are also shared with the children and the children will leave and join the group as progress is made. Pupils usually remain in nurture group for between 1 and 4 terms.

It remains the class teacher's responsibility however, to play an active role in the provision that each child receives and the progress that they make. Therefore, discussions regularly take place between the SENCO, nurture staff and class teachers to ensure that all assessments completed are accurate and that progress is made.

Involving Parents / Carers

Parental support is vital to our children's progress. Children's individual targets are shared with parents termly and parents are invited to nurture group events.

Involvement of Brandhall staff

Class teachers will be asked to contribute to discussions, review meetings, liaise with nurture staff, to share information and complete assessment questionnaires in relation to pupils in their class. Long term and medium term planning is also shared with all staff.

Teachers will continue to use strategies and resources as agreed in a child's Individual Provision Plan.

Staff will be invited to attend nurture sessions/parent workshops as appropriate.