



## Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit

“Nurture, Inspire, Flourish”

# Nurture Policy

Date reviewed	Summer Term 2020
Next review Date	Summer Term 2022

Chair of Board of Governors	Roy Rainey	<i>R Rainey</i>
Principal	Emma Quinn	<i>E Quinn</i>

**In Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit our Nurture Policy acknowledges that:**

- ✓ The Nurture Groups is a unique, preventative resource based on well documented psychological theory and research.
- ✓ The Nurture Room should have the ambience of a supportive 'home'.
- ✓ The Nurture Group is based in the Rainbow Room with a home-like area and an area set aside for experiential play and more formal learning.
- ✓ The Nurture Room has a kitchen facility with access to hot and cold water, a cooker, and simple cooking equipment.
- ✓ Play materials as well as educational equipment for more formal work will be available in the Nurture Room.
- ✓ The routine of the Nurture Room must be structured and predictable with a regular pattern to the day. This should include eating together, formal work, story time, play etc. with the adults attending carefully to each child's individual needs.

## **Arrangements of the Nurture Group**

- The Nurture Group will consist of between 6 and 8 children. Enrolment can occur for a maximum period of up to four terms. Children will continue to be on the register of their mainstream class during this time.
- Focus will be on children in P2, however individuals with assessed need from P1-P3 may also be included where appropriate.
- The Nurture Teacher shall welcome pupils at the front door to support this early transition to school and to class (8.50am to 9.20am approximately).
- Children selected for the Nurture Group will begin their day in their own class base, with the support of the Nurture assistant and/or teacher.
- Children will then attend sessions in the Rainbow Room during the morning. These will be planned around core-curriculum activities in their mainstream class(es).
- Children will return to their mainstream class(es) before midday, enabling peer social interaction during lunchtime and afternoon activities.
- The Rainbow Room will be staffed with one full-time Nurture Teacher and a Nurture Teaching Assistant who will work as a team, model positive relationships, and ensure continuity for the children.
- Friends may be invited to the Rainbow Room for special activities throughout the year.
- 'Drop in' sessions may also operate to support other children who are experiencing difficulties at home and/or school.
- Afternoon support sessions may be timetabled to support those most vulnerable in the whole school. These may take the form of small groups or individual work.
- The structure of the Nurture Group is flexible and may be reviewed to reflect the needs of the group of children as evidenced by the school.

## **Principles and Aims**

- ✓ We will offer a short term, focused, intervention strategy which addresses barriers to learning arising from social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- ✓ We will plan sessions focused around the core philosophy of attachment theory to enable the child to form secure and happy relationships in the formative years of their life.
- ✓ We will provide children with an opportunity to re-visit early nurturing experiences.
- ✓ We will provide a flexible and preventative resource that is responsive to the specific needs of the children attending our school.
- ✓ We will provide on-going assessment and support for children showing signs of emotional, stress and behavioural difficulties with the aim of enabling the child to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.
- ✓ We will provide a secure and predictable small class setting where children can learn by re-experiencing pre-school nurture from caring adults who actively work towards their successful integration into their mainstream class.
- ✓ We will help children to learn to behave appropriately, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem, and develop confidence through close and trusting relationships with adults.
- ✓ We will work in partnership with class teachers and parents to enable a consistent approach both at home and at school.

## **Identification and Assessment Procedures**

At Rathcoole Primary School we have accepted the challenge of inclusion and will constantly seek to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation.

We aim to identify children and their suitability for placement in the Nurture Group by using a variety of assessment procedures. These will include the Boxall Profile, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, along with appropriate academic assessments.

Formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist is not a pre-requisite for admission, but consultation and discussion of relevant factors may be necessary.

A decision will be made within 4 weeks as to a child's inclusion within the Nurture Group. Parents will be kept fully informed in all aspects of the process.

### **Entry/Admissions Criteria**

Parents will always be consulted prior to their child being offered a place in the Nurture Group. Parental agreement is necessary including 'corporate' parents or those with parental responsibility. A standard referral form will be used with all relevant documentation attached.

Children attending the Nurture Group will have a Personal Learning Plan and should be at Stage 2 or 3 of the Code of Practice of Special Educational Needs (NI).

Children attending the Nurture Group must have their needs assessed and progress monitored using the Boxall Profile. Placement should be considered for children who are underachieving for social, emotional or behavioural reasons, including:

- children who are very restless, distracted easily, behave impulsively or aggressively.
- children who are withdrawn and unresponsive, and/or have difficulty relating to others.
- children whose early or recent history suggests they may be at risk.

### **Group dynamics**

The balance of the needs within the group must always be carefully considered.

Arrangements should be put in place to systematically monitor the progress of each pupil in the Nurture Group, through the Boxall Profile on a termly basis.

Records of appropriate outside agency involvement such as from the Educational Psychologist, Autism Advisory Intervention Service or the Behaviour Support Team etc. must also be consulted.

## **Arrangements for Review of Pupil in Nurture Provision**

Each child should be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis with consultations with other professionals as appropriate. Regular monitoring of the pupil's progress must also take place by the mainstream Class Teacher(s) and Nurture Teacher.

Parents will be regularly updated on their child's progress via parent consultations. This will take the form of a bi-annual Parent consultation with the class teacher and Nurture Teacher. The Nurture Teacher will also organise regular sessions with the parent(s) throughout the child's placement.

Records of these meeting will be taken and secured in the child's file as per Data / GDPR guidelines.

## **Exit Criteria**

Reintegration will be planned with the SENCO, parents, Class Teacher(s), Nurture Group team and other Key Adults, consulting with the School Educational Psychologist where appropriate.

Where reintegration is not considered appropriate, an alternative action plan will be agreed with the Principal and SENCO. This may involve referral to the next stage of the Code of Practice.

## **Monitoring and Review of Provision**

The Nurture Group will be evaluated through the school's internal monitoring systems e.g.

- Pupil observations by Nurture Teacher and Class Teacher
- Pupil entry / exit questionnaires
- Parent entry / exit questionnaires
- Boxall Profiles
- SDQ
- Return to Class Readiness Score
- School Attendance Records
- Standard of classwork and class contribution
- General demeanour/ attitude of pupils in variety of environments e.g. break/ lunchtime, assembly, school outings etc.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors have a responsibility to:

- secure that necessary provision is made for any pupil in the Nurture Group.
- have regard for the Code of Practice.
- have regard for the school's Nurture Group Policy and ensure the policy is kept under review.

### **Principal**

The Principal has a responsibility to:

- inform governors about current Nurture provision.
- work closely with the SENCO.
- manage provision for pupils of the Nurture Group.
- reflect on the implementation of the Nurture Group in the School Development Plan.
- support capacity development for all staff across the school focusing on nurturing principles and approaches with a shared understanding of nurturing.
- regularly liaise with other school principals involved in Nurture to discuss common issues and obtain guidance and support.
- facilitate supported cluster sessions.

### **SENCO**

The SENCO has a responsibility to:

- liaise with the Nurture Group Teacher and Class Teacher(s) to support the development and implementation of Personal Learning Plans.
- be involved with the Class Teacher(s) and the Nurture Group Teacher in the identification, assessment and re-integration of children in the Nurture Group.
- be a member of the school's Nurture Steering Group.

## **Nurture Teacher**

The Nurture Teacher has a responsibility to:

- maintain the Nurture Group principles by providing carefully planned daily sessions ensuring a balance of learning and teaching, affection and structure within a home-like atmosphere.
- ensure the Nurture Group operates within the agreed Nurture Group Policy and Operational Guidelines, and all other school policies i.e. The Child Protection Policy, and The SEN and Inclusion Policy.
- organise and plan activities with consideration to the needs of the children.
- liaise with the child's Class Teacher(s) and other professionals when appropriate to plan focused objectives.
- observe children in less structured sessions e.g. the mainstream classroom and in the playground.
- provide parents with guidance and parenting strategies through parent information packs, stay and play dates, and displaying information on the Rainbow Room Parent Noticeboard.
- actively work in partnership with parents in the development of their children.
- participate in INSET days within school and with the Nurture Group Network.
- keep records of individual children's progress and provide progress reports to the Steering Group.
- participate in cluster sessions arranged by Education Authority.
- carry out and contribute to school policies and procedures.
- Support a whole school nurture ethos.

## **Nurture Teaching Assistant**

The Nurture Teaching Assistant is employed in the Nurture Group full-time and works under the direction of the Nurture Group Teacher with the Principal as overall Line Manager.

This role is to assist the Nurture Teacher in necessary tasks including planning and preparation, and to participate in appropriate INSET.

Non-contact time will be available (minimum of half a day per week) for the Nurture Room staff to:

- plan and prepare together.
- meet and work with parents.
- attend case conferences where appropriate.
- keep records and carry out observations.
- meet with school staff and other professionals.
- attend INSET and Staff Development days.
- continue their own professional development through attendance at relevant courses and keeping up to date with relevant research.



- participate in regular monitoring/review meetings with the Nurture Steering Group and the Education Authority clusters.

The Nurture Teacher and Nurture Teaching Assistant will not ordinarily be required to cover other absent staff within the school.

### **Pupil**

The Pupil has a responsibility to:

- be involved in a self-reviewing process (depending on age and functioning level).

### **Parent**

The Parent has a responsibility to:

- contribute to their child's development, gain awareness and understanding of how they can help and support their child and reinforce the learning at home.

## **Nurture Provision Steering Group**

It is recommended that a Steering Committee is established within the school to deal with strategic planning in relation to the policy of the Nurture Group's staffing and finance.

Members of the Steering Group are to include the;

- Principal
- SENCO
- Nurture Group Teacher
- Class Teacher (as required)
- Representative from Social Services (as required)
- School Psychologist (as required)
- Education Welfare Officer (as required)
- Board of Governor (Champion Governor / Chair Governor)

The Steering Group should develop an Action Plan for the planning, implementation and delivery of nurture provision. The Steering Group should continue to meet regularly to review progress.

### **Outreach Support**

The Nurture Group will continue to build on existing multi-agency outreach work. Training, advice and support for colleagues in the local area and/or in other schools will be offered. Nurture Group staff will develop links with other professionals as appropriate and work with them to enable the child and the family to be offered the most effective package of support.

The Nurture Group will be subject to ETINI inspections.