

SS JOHN FISHER & THOMAS MORE  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Group Policy and Operational  
Nurture Guidelines

A central illustration featuring a bright yellow sun with rays in the center. Surrounding the sun is a circle of approximately 18 stylized children in various colorful outfits (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) holding hands and jumping or dancing joyfully. The children are arranged in a circular pattern, creating a sense of unity and community.

November 2022

## **Rationale**

Over the past few years the school has identified children whose needs are not fully met by our current provision. The inception of a Nurture Group at Ss John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School is part of the continuum of support provided for children in our care. Nurture Groups are a unique preventative resource based on well-documented psychological theory and research and we wish to have this resource within our school.

## **Aims of the Nurture Group**

- To provide a flexible and preventative resource that is responsive to the particular needs of the children.
- To 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.
- To provide a secure and reliable small class setting where children can learn by re-experiencing pre-school nurture from two caring adults who actively work towards enabling their successful integration into their mainstream class.
- To help the children learn positive behaviour, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem and develop confidence, through close and trusting relationships with adults.
- To work in partnership with class teachers, outside agencies and parents to enable consistency of approach both at home and at school.

## **Organisation**

The location of the room is important. Our Nurture Groups are based in the Romero Centre. The room provides a home-like area and an area set aside for formal learning. The home area is furnished with a sofa, cushions, armchairs and a carpet. There is a kitchen facility with access to hot and cold water, a cooker and cooking equipment. Play materials at pre-school level as well as educational equipment for more formal work are available. Children also have access to all the facilities usually available to children of their age within the school. There is access to washroom and toilet facilities.

Children attend for a maximum period of up to four terms – planning for reintegration or further assessment is essential. There will usually be between 7-9 children in the Nurture Group at any one time. The children will be on the register of their mainstream class and they will join their class for appropriate activities. The children will spend lunchtime and playtimes with other children in the school. Some children may need extra support at these times.

## **Resources**

The Nurture Group is funded from the school's delegated budget. This allocation is reviewed annually.

## **Referral procedures**

All referrals will be made in consultation with parents. All referrals will be discussed at a meeting with the headteacher, SENDCO and members of the Nurture Group team in

collaboration with parents and the class teacher. Formal assessment by an outside agency is not necessary but such agencies may be consulted if thought necessary.

### **Entry criteria**

Parental agreement is necessary.

Nurture Group placement will be considered for children who are underachieving for social emotional & mental health (SEMH) reasons. These children will initially be identified by their class teacher who will request a Boxall Profile be carried out. Their entry into the Nurture Group will be based mainly on the outcome of this Profile. A class teacher may initially identify children who exhibit the characteristics listed below:

- Children who are very restless, cannot listen, behave impulsively or aggressively
- Children who are withdrawn and unresponsive and who have difficulty relating to others
- Children whose known early or recent history suggests that they may be at risk.

The balance of the group will need to be considered at all times.

### **Arrangements for Review of Pupils**

Each child will be monitored and reviewed by the Nurture Group team on an ongoing basis. Consultations with outside agencies will be arranged as appropriate.

Formal reviews with parents will take place on a termly basis as outlined in the Code of Practice for SEND.

### **Reintegration**

Although most children will be reintegrated into their mainstream class during their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> term, a few will be identified as needing specialist provision.

Reintegration will be planned in consultation with the headteacher and parents, class teacher and Nurture Group team.

Where reintegration is not considered appropriate, the relevant staff (SENDCO, etc) will agree an alternative action plan in consultation with parents and other involved professionals. This will often involve assessment at the next level or Stage of the Code of Practice for SEND.

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 'SEND Support' as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. The school will be expected to work in partnership with parents of pupils in the Nurture Group. The headteacher will be responsible for dealing with any complaints from parents concerning the Nurture Group. Complaints that remain unresolved will be referred through the school's normal procedures.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The Governing Body will maintain an overview of the effectiveness of the Nurture Group.

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
- management of the Nurture Group staff
- oversight of the curriculum planning and monitoring of work within the Nurture Group
- ensuring that the Nurture Group staff participate in the school's agreed Performance Management/Appraisal procedures
- ensuring the Health and Safety procedures are followed in accordance with the school's policy
- ensuring that the Nurture Group operates within the guidelines of this policy.

The SENDCO provides information to the Nurture Group, additional to the Boxall Profiles and

- liaises with the Nurture Group staff and class teacher – this includes the development and implementation of IEPs
- is involved in formal reviews as outlined in the Code of Practice
- supports curriculum planning
- is involved with selection and reintegration

### **Staffing**

The Nurture Group will always be led by a fully trained member of staff. We recognise the need for continuity and will endeavour to avoid Nurture Group staff being used to cover staff absences.

In the absence of one of the Nurture Group team, the headteacher will attempt to organise cover. If cover cannot be arranged then the group will not function however, children will be supported in their mainstream class where possible.

Non-contact time will be available (e.g. a minimum) of half a day per week for the Nurture Group team to:

- see parents
- attend case conferences, where appropriate
- keep detailed assessment records
- carry out in-class observations
- meet with educational psychologists and social care and other agencies
- liaise with the school's SENDCO and other staff
- attend INSET

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 principles. This is to provide a carefully routinised day, where there is a balance of learning and teaching, affection and structure within a home-like atmosphere.

- To discuss the children regularly with the Nurture Group team and other professionals involved
- To actively work in partnership with parents in the development of their children
- To liaise with the child's class teacher and SENDCO and to attend regular reviews under the Code of Practice
- To observe children in the classroom, playground and at lunchtimes to help them operate successfully in non-Nurture Group sessions.
- To participate in INSET and joint planning with the class teacher and school SENDCO re IEPs

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Nurture Groups will be evaluated through OFSTED inspection and as part of the annual school self evaluation process. We will also invite parents and governors to visit the group and regular reports will be provided for the school governing body.

### **Review**

This policy was initially drawn up in February 2012.

All staff and Governors will be involved in the consultation process. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Last updated – November 2022