

# Cheapside C of E Primary School

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'Achieving our best, in Thought, in Word, in Deed'

## Nurture Guidance

### Introduction

Cheapside Primary School is a nurturing school. The Nurture team has Nurture trained staff and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). Nurture is a model that is widely used throughout many schools across the United Kingdom including the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and are an important part of many Primary and Secondary Schools.

Nurture groups were started in London in 1969 by Marjorie Boxall, an Educational Psychologist. They use a modified curriculum, in a smaller group environment, based on the principles created by Margorie Boxall and Marion Bennathan (both Educational Psychologists). Nurture groups have been working successfully for more than 40 years in the UK and are now in other countries including Canada, New Zealand and Romania, and have been praised, supported and recommended by organisations such as Ofsted.

### What is Nurture?

The concept of nurture highlights the importance of social environments – its significant influence on social emotional skills, wellbeing and behaviour. Nurture supports a child to do better at school, attend regularly, form meaningful friendships and encourage positive experiences physically and mentally.

The nurturing approach offers a range of opportunities for children and young people to engage with nurturing experiences, giving them the social and emotional skills to do well at school and with peers, develop their resilience and their capacity to deal more confidently with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.

### What is a Nurture Group?

Nurture groups are founded on evidence-based practices and offer a short-term, inclusive, focused intervention that works in the long term. Nurture groups are small classes of between six and eight children or young people in early years, primary or secondary settings, normally run by two members of staff, one of whom will have been trained as an ELSA or nurture support assistant. Children attend nurture groups but remain an active part of their main class group. At

Cheapside, nurture group sessions vary in time depending on the age of the pupil and the nurture being provided.

Nurture groups assess learning and social and emotional needs and give the necessary help to remove the barriers to learning. There is great emphasis on language development and communication. Nothing is taken for granted and everything is explained, supported by role modelling, demonstration and the use of gesture as appropriate. The relationship between the two staff, always nurturing and supportive, provides a role model that children observe and begin to copy.

Food is shared either at 'snack time' with many opportunities for social learning, helping children to attend to the needs of others, with time to listen and be listened to. As the children learn academically and socially, they develop confidence, become more responsive to others, learn self-respect and take pride in behaving well and in achieving.

#### Access to Nurture Across the School

Not all children will access nurture in a formal nurture group setting. Some children will have time with nurture staff on a regular timetable. This allows them to develop a relationship with a staff member where they can share worries, concerns and anxieties in a one-to-one or smaller group setting.

Some pupils will access nurture through a 'drop in' or 'touching base' session where a nurture trained staff member will informally meet with a pupil to check they are okay. Each class has a 'worries' box where children can communicate with staff that they need support. Some nurture is delivered on an ad hoc basis in response to something that has happened at school or something a child has shared about something at home.

Sometimes a nurture trained staff member will deliver an academic intervention, but a pupil may access their nurture training without it being explicit.

#### The Six Principles of Nurture

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom/learning environment offers a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development of Wellbeing
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in children's lives.

#### Our aims for nurture at Cheapside

To provide an environment in which children can experience nurturing care to access the curriculum and reintegrate successfully

- To enable a predictable, calm and purposeful environment and timetable, free from the distractions
- To develop social skills and self-esteem
- To develop relationships between adults and children, building trust, confidence and reliability

- To develop responsibility for self and others
- To help children learn appropriate behaviours
- 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 ongoing assessments of the impact of nurture
- To prevent possible exclusion and code sanctions.

Where does Nurture occur?

Nurture can take place anywhere throughout the school day. It may take place in the classroom or playground as a need arises. Nurture groups take place in various places around the school.

The Nurture Star Room

The new STAR room at Cheapside School is a nurture classroom – it is a room that has been developing over the last 3 years. It is a light and airy, homely room decorated brightly with therapy style toys and resources, a safe base where children can come for groups and individual 1-to-1 work with the Nurture staff members.

Forest School

The nurture team have developed nurture sessions in the Forest School. To distinguish this use of the forest from Forest School itself, these sessions are called 'Nature and Nurture'. Pupils share nurture group sessions alongside forest school activities that support the principles of nurture such as developing resilience or team building.

The Sensory Room

Cheapside School has a sensory room as part of the library development. This room provides a safe space for a child requiring it; perhaps those with a sensory need that can't be met in the classroom. It will also provide a safe place for nurture to take place at ad hoc times.

The Nurture Team

Our team consists of experienced and trained members of school staff who run and support groups, some have undertaken the Nurture UK training course and completed practical and written assignments others are ELSA trained. The team deliver and manage groups within key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) and all team members provide 1-to-1 support to individuals that need additional emotional support throughout the school.

In KS2, Nurture groups are run more as an Outdoor Learning Group in the Forest and Allotment spaces. These identified children spend 6-12 weeks in a small group working on a personalised programme focused around social and emotional skills.

### Inclusive Practice

All Nurture Groups are run in partnership with the class teacher and SLT within school.

When a pupil is identified to attend Nurture Provision, the class teacher will explain this to the parents and carers. The parents and carers will be asked to give written permission for their child to attend. They will be directed to a copy of these guidelines on the school website.

We aim to keep parents/carers informed of their child's progress and provide them with help and advice if necessary.

In Nurture Group, we recognise that every child matters and we respond to each child's needs, taking into consideration their:

- Cultural background
- Life experiences
- Strengths
- Communication needs
- Emotional and social needs
- Developmental needs
- Physical needs.

### The curriculum in Nurture Group session

The nurture group provides a modified curriculum from the child's main class that is suited to the child's needs. Mathematics and literacy are covered in the child's own classroom. The nurture group may cover art, science, PSHE, and drama. Other areas such as cooking, gardening and forest school time are also included. The group time is divided into small chunks of time with each activity serving a clear purpose.

Each session offers the security of a consistent and familiar structure that may include:

- Greeting ritual – 'check in' and 'feeling fans'
- Circle time activities – turn-taking, watching and listening, expressive language, trying something new, developing positive attitude and participation, forming positive relationships, using agreed codes of behaviour, initiating activities with other children, learning to respond to sanctions and considering the rights and needs of themselves and others
- Designated activity of the day
- Free play
- Laying the table, tidying up and washing up of refreshments
- Storytime
- Ending ritual - 'checking out'.

All activities are working towards the children's personal, social, health and education development, they are designed to offer children criteria for doing well and guaranteeing success. The ultimate aim is to boost a child's self-esteem and sense of identity. Each session is adapted to meet the needs of the children: the time and space available.

#### 10. Assessment and Referral

Children involved in nurture groups are assessed using either a baseline assessment or the Boxall profile at the start of a nurture intervention. After an assessment has been completed by the child's class teacher, the findings are discussed and linked to the child's targets, both in and outside of the classroom. These assessments can be provided for a child's annual review if appropriate and go towards attaining a EHCP. Records are kept of each child's social and emotional development along the way.

The following types of children are considered for a nurture group:

- Those who appear to be emotionally insecure, which could present as lack of self-acceptance, low self-worth and or lack of trust
- Children who are withdrawn and unresponsive
- Children with poor social skills, who cannot share or are demanding or uncooperative
- Children with poor attention spans
- Children who demonstrate immature behaviour
- Children who are aggressive, impulsive or inappropriate in other ways
- Children who find change upsetting
- Children who appear unable to integrate into a mainstream class.

When the group comes to an end, pupils will receive recognition for attending the nurture group from their teacher, key stage leader or Head teacher. The child/ren's class teacher will speak about the child's time in nurture group within class maybe in a show and tell or circle/carpet time that includes the child/ren in.

#### 11. Success Criteria

We will be a successful nurture group if:

- We provide affirming, positive and manageable sessions
- Thinking time is seen as a positive and effective sanction
- The incentives used are seen as desirable by the children
- It is made clear, what is unacceptable and acceptable behaviour
- Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly
- A session's routine provides security
- The activities are guaranteed to create 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 gain a more positive identity than the one they came with

- 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!

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