

Kings Ash Academy Nurture Group Guidance

Introduction

At Kings Ash Academy we believe that children should be able to learn, and be successful in a happy and safe environment. 'The Hive' was set up in April 2018 to provide an alternative space for some children who find some aspects of their mainstream classroom challenging. 'The Hive' is located in our Pastoral base and is a warm and homely environment focusing on social and emotional skills and where children can access learning at a developmentally appropriate level.

Nurture groups at Kings Ash Academy are organised into the following areas of provision:

- EYFS provision- Baby Seal groups being ran 5 mornings a week by a Pastoral HLTA (Jenny Rider)
- The Hive provision- Core Nurture group being led by a Pastoral TA Alison Johnson and pastoral TA Jodie Cox- 5 afternoons a week.

- The Nurture Group is setup to provide a modified curriculum in an environment based on the nurture group principles advocated by Marion Bennathan and Marjorie Boxall.
- The Nurture Group is an intervention for those children who are unable to successfully access learning in their mainstream classes. This may be due to fragmented or deprived early childhoods or children whose emotional development has suffered an interruption or has not developed as expected.
- The Core Nurture Group (The Hive)) operates five afternoons a week. The children spend the mornings with their individual classes.
- The Core Nurture Group caters for a maximum of 12 children from Year One to Year Six.
- The group is managed by two experienced members of staff. In the absence of one of these team members a designated member of staff (from the pastoral base) will take their place. This will ensure consistency for the children within the provision.

Rationale

At Kings Ash Academy we recognise that not all children can cope with the demands of their mainstream classroom. They may:

- Lack confidence in making and sustaining friendships and in relating to adults.
- Struggle with skills such as listening, sharing and turn-taking.
- Find a large, busy classroom too stressful.
- Not be making progress in their learning.
- Display inappropriate behaviours that are obstacles to their learning, and the learning of those around them.
- Be withdrawn and unhappy.

Having 'The Hive' provides the alternative environment needed for these children to thrive.

Our Aims

- To offer nurturing care.
- To have a safe, predictable, calm and purposeful environment and timetable; our curriculum aims to meet identified social, emotional and developmental needs.
- To develop resilience, self esteem and social skills.
- To develop relationships between adults/children, build trust, confidence and reliability.
- To develop responsibility for self and others.
- To help children learn behaviours that will facilitate a positive and productive pathway through life.
- To help children learn to make decisions and good choices through understanding natural consequences of behaviour.
- To provide a small class setting where children can learn by re- experiencing nurturing experiences from caring adults, who actively work towards enabling their successful reintegration into a mainstream setting.
- To work in partnership with parents and teachers to achieve consistency of approach at home and school.
- To provide ongoing assessment using the Boxall Profile and observations throughout the school year.
- To promote social inclusion.
- To manage transitions

Setting

- The Core Nurture Group setting (The Hive) is a self contained environment.
- The setting has a homely atmosphere.
- The large room provides ample space for a designated learning area, several play areas, a role play area, a safe place, a snack area and an area for quiet activities.

The role of the adults in the Nurture Group

- The role of the adults is to develop attachments and sustain nurturing relationships with the children who attend.
- We provide good role models, demonstrating appropriate and positive behaviour and language that is consistent and continuous.
- We recognise that it is through a positive and affirming relationship that a child can perceive themselves as worthwhile.
- We also aim to develop positive relationships with the Parents and Carers of children who attend the group.

Nurture Group Curriculum

- The Nurture Group provides a curriculum that has been carefully planned to meet the social, emotional and developmental needs of the children in the group. Planned provision and activities are linked to the children's Boxall Profile targets.
- The Nurture Group Practitioner plans the Nurture Group curriculum in consultation with the Link Supervising Teacher and wider teaching staff. Knowledge, skills and content are drawn from the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters framework and the National Curriculum. Detailed planning documents are kept to show the intended outcomes of provision and progress against these.
- Mathematics and Literacy are covered in children's home classes.
- Where opportunities arise, the Nurture Group curriculum covers aspects of art, science, personal, social and health education, drama and physical development in particular.
- Children's reading, writing and mathematics attainment and progress data measured by class teachers is shared with the Nurture Group practitioner during class teacher conferencing times. These targets are taken into consideration when the curriculum for the group is planned.
- Following communication between class teachers, a child's parents and the Nurture Group leader, a child may spend designated Nurture Group time in the classroom if class based activities are taking place that the child does not want to miss i.e. trips, visitors, enrichment days.
- The afternoon sessions are divided into small chunks of time and each activity is planned to serve a purpose and to offer the children a range of experiences. When the children arrive, they check in and look at a visual timetable to see what is happening

during that session. The structure and format for each afternoon is always the same; repetition provides consistency and offers the children the security of familiarity.

The format is:

- 5 minutes 'busy time' at designated table activities planned through the boxall profile.
- Check in time
- Circle time- Nurture practitioner led circle time activity linked to boxall profile.
- Learning time- Learning activities linked to Nurture Group medium term curriculum planning with class teacher target links.
- Choosing Time
- Tidy up time
- 'just dance'- Physical Development activities
- Snack Time
- Celebration
- Home time

Assessment

- Children are assessed termly using the Online Boxall Profile Tool
- Subsequently we have a meeting with basis of individual Nurture Group plans. Each child's plan and subsequent targets are discussed with them, following class teacher conferencing, giving them ownership of the document and strategies to help them achieve their next step targets.
- We will contribute a written assessment to the child's SEN Annual Review and ILP, as appropriate or when requested to do so.
- In addition to this we complete observation sheets.
- The Link Teacher will monitor children's academic progress against their Nurture provision and report back to SLT and SENCO regarding progress and identify if any further support is needed.

Referral Procedure

The following are considered when a referral is made:

- Children who appear to be emotionally insecure, which may be shown through poor self-acceptance, low self-worth or lack of trust in others.
- Children who are very withdrawn and unresponsive to other children or adults.
- Children with poor social skills, who cannot share, are demanding or uncooperative.
- Children with a poor attention span or who are very restless.
- Children who behave aggressively, impulsively or who show inappropriate responses.
- Children who appear unable to manage or respond to the classroom situation.
- When a need is identified class teachers are invited to put forward prospective pupils. These are then assessed using a Boxall Profile to determine eligibility and referrals are

kept on file.

- Once a decision has been made the parents/carers are invited to an informal meeting with either the Link Teacher or SENCO, before going on to meet the Nurture Group staff.

Parental Engagement

- We operate an 'open door' policy where parents/carers can speak with a member of staff at the end of the day.
- Opportunities are sought to encourage and engage parents with events and activities to share with their child. Open Hive- Open Hive takes place each term where parents/carers are invited into the Hive to share quality time with their child in the Nurture environment. Learning experiences, photographs and diaries are shared with parents/carers. Visitors are also requested to take part in activities with their child in a relaxed, informal and positive manner. Staff are on hand to answer questions or address any concerns about their child as well as celebrate positive experiences and progress..
- Reintegration is personalised to meet each child's needs.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

- In the Nurture Group we recognise the importance of involving parents/carers in child's education.
- Each new parent/carer and child receives a copy of our leaflet about the Nurture Group, detailing who we are and what we do.
- We work closely with the parents/carers of children who attend the Nurture Group, keeping them informed of their child's progress and offering support and advice.

Inclusion

- At Kings Ash Academy we want all children to be able to learn, to be safe and happy, to be respected, to be listened to and to make their own choices when it is appropriate.
- In the Nurture Group we recognise that every child is an individual and respond to each child's particular needs, taking into consideration their:
 - cultural background
 - life experiences
 - strengths
 - communication needs
 - emotional/social needs
 - developmental needs
 - physical needs.

Success Criteria- We will be successful if:

- We adhere to the Nurture Group Principles
- Children are noticed and made to feel special
- the Hive offers a 'safe base' for children
- the children have more individual attention;
- the afternoon is broken into small chunks of time;
- the quiet 'time out' space provides a consistent space for 'thinking time'
- the incentives we use are desirable to children;
- the children are given unconditional warmth and acceptance;
- the routines provide security;
- any inappropriate behaviour is quickly spotted and addressed;
- the activities are selected to guarantee success;
- there is a focus on cooperative activities;
- the children can 'shine' in the group because of the different criteria for success;
- the children can be given a different identity to the one they have learnt in the classroom;
- the children gain confidence and are more willing to take on new challenges;
- the experience of success encourages the children to put more effort into their work;
- the definition of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is very clear;
- there is plenty of humour and fun!