

Thongsley Fields

Primary & Nursery School



A parent's guide to

Nurture Provision

Inclusion

Nurture Support at Thongsley Fields

Nurture groups operate in many different schools around the country and come in many shapes and sizes! The idea is well established having originally begun in the 1970s and the range of care and provision has grown from then. Our nurture group takes place in our beautiful new room called The Nest and is staffed by Miss Hester and other members of our Teaching Assistant team. Miss Frampton, our school's Inclusion Lead, oversees all aspects of the provision.

The Nest is designed to be a bridge between home and school; a place where children can feel safe and secure and therefore develop their individual strengths and areas of need. The Nest has a kitchen style table to share breakfast in the morning; quiet areas to have individual calming space; role play and small world areas to play and learn collaboratively in addition to a kitchenette to help prepare food and wash up afterwards! It also has access to a generous and secure outdoor space.

What is the purpose and philosophy behind a nurture group?

Our nurture group usually consists of a small group of children with between 4 and 6 in any one session. Its composition is carefully thought-out in order to create a balanced and functional group where each individual child is able to contribute strengths and learn from each other in a positive atmosphere. The nurture provision at Thongsley Fields is an important part of the school's wider Inclusion and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) provision. Its purpose is to offer children opportunities to re-visit early learning skills and promote and support their social and emotional development. Research tells us that children's learning is most effective when there is a strong sense of emotional well-being, self-esteem and a feeling of belonging within their school community. The Nest provides children with this opportunity and so helps to develop their maturity and resilience in a fully supported and safe environment. The Nest is a place of learning.

The philosophy behind The Nest and the operation of our nurture group is drawn from the principles established by Marjorie Boxall among others, and exemplified by the work of 'The Nurture Group Network' (www.nurtureuk.org).

The Nurture Group Principles:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in children's lives
- Has an adult/child ration of 1:3, and provides lots of opportunities for speaking and listening
- Builds a child's self-esteem, confidence and a sense of well-being
- Builds skills for classroom learning
- Has daily crafts, play, games, a 'mini-tea or mini-breakfast' and more!
- Language is a vital means of communication



Taken and adapted from: Lucas,S., Insley,K. and Buckland,G. (2006) Nurture Group Principles and Curriculum Guidelines Helping Children to Achieve, The Nurture Group Network.



Which children is The Nest designed to support?

Children may attend sessions in The Nest for specific reasons, for example:

- Those experiencing friendship difficulties i.e. keeping/making friends
- Those who appear quiet, shy or withdrawn
- Those who find it hard to listen to others or join in
- Those who are disruptive towards others in class
- Those who find it hard to accept losing a game
- Those who find it hard to share and take turns
- Those who find it difficult to settle into class
- Those who have experienced significant bullying or are displaying bullying behaviours
- Those with low self-esteem
- Those who have poor relationships with adults in school
- Those who have or are suffering bereavement
- Those experiencing significant family illness or break-ups.

How will The Nest help my child?

Our nurture provision is designed to boost confidence and self-esteem and provide children with the extra help and support sometimes needed to improve social skills and independence. This might include help with:

- Joining in
- Settling to routines and classroom learning
- Listening to others
- Concentration
- Sharing and taking turns
- Accepting that it is OK to lose games
- Building meaningful friendships with peers

Nurture boosts children's chances of success and helps to encourage a more positive profile among themselves, their peers and the wider school community.

Does this mean my child is naughty?

No, these sessions are designed to help them manage situations more appropriately and give them the skills required to become more successful learners.

How long will my child attend sessions in The Nest?

Children usually attend on a part-time basis for a period of approximately 2 terms depending on their individual needs and progress. However, we ensure that the children do not miss special



assemblies, guests in school, outings or anything else that may be different from the normal routine of the week.

Are parents and carers involved in decision making?

Our door is always open and therefore, we welcome parents and carers to visit and join the sessions in The Nest at any time. Invitations to special events will also be sent out periodically, for example, open afternoons, Mothers' Day Breakfasts or simply for afternoon tea and a chat!

What does a typical morning in The Nest consist of?

Children follow a structure and routine that is clear to both staff and children and usually includes having breakfast together - group listening and speaking activities; work tasks such as phonics, reading, writing and maths; individual and shared play and social skills activities. The group sessions operate with a high level of consistency, positive reinforcement and praise.

A typical morning in the The Nest would focus on a theme for the session or week. All pupils would understand what they were going to learn and improve on during that session or week. Children have the opportunity to share good news, explore thoughts and feelings and work collaboratively on a practical task. Children work with new peers regularly, encouraging cooperation and confidence building and reinforcing the key skills. Within the sessions, opportunities are tailored to the needs of the particular individuals, group and age range. Outdoor learning is also an important part of the sessions. Children learn to share a breakfast together and the opportunity is given to choose and try new food; even baking them first! Children learn to share and talk together with peers and adults in a mutually respectful environment.

Careful consideration is given to the individual children and combinations who will benefit from the support of The Nest and our inclusive nurturing provision. Your child has been chosen and we will look forward to working with them and yourself this school year.

If you would like to talk to a member of staff who will provide support for your child in The Nest, please contact the school office in the first instance. We will be more than happy to meet with you at any point throughout the year.

Miss Frampton & Miss Hester
The Nurture Team

The nurture
group network ®
helping children and young people to succeed

