



# Nurturing School Policy

**Name of school: Ash Croft Primary Academy**

**Date of policy publication: May 2018**

**Approved by: SLT**

**Date of next review: May 2020**

## Policy review dates and changes

Review date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date of Approval



## ***Purpose of this Document***

- To outline the principles guiding Ash Croft Primary Academy
- To identify what Ash Croft Primary School offers with regard to Nurturing activities as a whole school, group and individual level.
- To identify access criteria for focussed group and individual intervention.
- To support the identification of specific children who may benefit from focussed intervention, ensuring equality of access, and identifying any gaps in provision.
- To support the development of evidenced-based evaluation methods to measure outcomes when specific interventions take place. This process will feed back into the development of further interventions, and whole-school practice.

## **1. Purpose/aim of the Nurturing School**

The six principles on which our Nurturing school is built:

- 1. Children's learning is understood developmentally**
- 2. The school offers a safe place for learning**
- 3. Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem**
- 4. All behaviour is communication**
- 5. Language in all forms is a vital means of communication**
- 6. Transition is important in children's lives**

## **The Aims and Vision of Ash Croft Primary School**

- We will actively provide individual, high quality opportunities for inclusion for our pupils.
- We will provide training, advice and support to teachers, staff and pupils in mainstream provisions to facilitate full access for all our pupils.
- We will work inclusively with the other Derby Hub Learning Network to ensure optimum outcomes to all.
- We will provide an environment where pupils feel valued and have equality of opportunity.
- We will encourage lively and enquiring minds, where pupils are independent learners, who are able to argue, discuss and ask logical questions.
- We will encourage the development of moral values, respect for differing beliefs and tolerance of others.
- We will develop an active partnership between the school, the community, parents/carers and other schools, working together as an interdisciplinary team in ensuring that each child's holistic needs are fully met.
- We will provide an environment in which pupils feel emotionally and physically secure.
- We will have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, achievement and progress.
- We will meet every pupil's individual needs through partnerships with parents, community and professionals
- We will offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is delivered through a variety of teaching and learning styles, accounting for the differing needs of our pupils so as to enhance their experience, knowledge and understanding and inspire them to fulfil their full potential
- We will provide opportunities to develop understanding, knowledge and skills relevant to adult life, so as to encourage pupils to enter the world as active citizens in society, as contributors with effective skills of self-advocacy and decision making.



We welcome cutting edge innovation in raising attainment in particular.  
We aim to:

- Provide a secure and reliable environment where children can learn by re-experiencing nurture from caring adults who actively work towards their successful participation in school life.
- Help children to improve their self-esteem and develop confidence through close and trusting relationships with adults and children.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to enable consistency of approach, both at home school and other settings e.g. respite.

## **2. Description**

Our Nurturing school creates a positive and supportive approach, based on well documented psychological theory and research. The whole school operates practices and follows principles that are supportive in developing secure attachments, creativity in play, and emotional resilience.

### **Nurture Room**

The school has a dedicated Nurture Room as a sanctuary for specific children. This has soft furnishings, restful lighting, music/aromatherapy scents as required. The room was named 'Woodland' by the children. The Nurture Room provides a space where the children can register in that group, talk through issues as appropriate with staff, and where possible then join their peer teaching group for the first session.

### **The Nurture Group**

The Nurture Group has one designated lead teacher to give the opportunity for children to develop a trusting relationship with an adult with whom they can spend time and carry out supportive nurturing activities. The adult greets the children as a group every day, and is available to support if any child needs reassurance or space during a teaching session. The lead teacher attends meetings about the child whenever possible in order to have a complete understanding of the child's needs. The lead worker is our Inclusion Manager who has received training on play, Nurturing schools, as well as Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.

Nurture Group time is recorded to monitor attendance and input each week. Activities during Nurture Time time or at other times may involve any activity as a medium for supporting Nurture group principles such as communication, developing self-esteem and positive relationships. These activities include cooking, gardening, crafts, construction, pampering, according to the child's interests and strengths. These may take place in the Nurture Room (Woodland), as well as going outside to play, garden or walk; or using the school hall. Social stories may be used to help children understand and identify their needs.

The Inclusion Manager uses questionnaires as a baseline for the child's needs and uses it to assess progress during the year. The Boxall Profile is available to assess areas of developmental need. Other children may be identified by school staff as those who would benefit from extra support to raise their self-esteem, self-confidence, improve their self-control, attendance and or relationships with others. Techniques used in this session are planned in advance and implemented carefully. At the end of the session the Inclusion Manager evaluates the effectiveness and progress made. This takes place through pieces of collected evidence that is recorded in each child's individual story.



**Inclusion Manager:** Our Inclusion Managers support the Emotional Wellbeing of children on a daily basis. This includes daily meetings with some children to explore issues identified as having a potential to cause anxiety, supporting them in developing strategies, and to work with any strategies devised by external agencies such as CAMHS. The Inclusion Managers meet those presenting at a low level of crisis to prevent escalation, as well as with those children in a crisis. Young people will often self-refer and bring peers too when the issues involve relationships in school. The Inclusion Manager aids the development of individual timetables for appropriate pupils to support their engagement, as well as continuing to foster excellent relationships with families.

### **Outdoor Learning**

Playtimes/ break times are well staffed and adults join in play with the children. Children have the opportunity to play their own games with friends and benches are provided for quiet activities.

Ash Croft Primary Academy has an Outdoor Classroom enabling teaching staff to plan lessons to take place outdoors when this will enhance the children's learning, provide opportunity for engagement with nature and environment, and have the opportunity to feel the positive impact of being outdoors. It is also used for social groups, interventions, and music therapy.

We have a number of bikes available to improve health, and well-being in an enjoyable way.

### **Enrichment Activities**

We have an Emotional Wellbeing Week planned during the year.

- The school has garden areas and raised beds. Horticulture sessions are available throughout the year to give children the opportunity to plant, tender and harvest vegetables. When possible, the harvested food is used to make food that can be shared with the whole school, or is taken home by the children to share with their families.
- We know that Bereavement and loss can have a major impact on the Emotional wellbeing of all children. Therefore, at Ash Croft Primary School we have the Inclusion team to respond to children who are bereaved, under the guidance of our Educational psychologist/ and a counsellor as identified by Children Services.
- Cookery is offered in various areas during the year – in Primary for special times and as part of curriculum areas. Children may share their cooking with one another, or take it home to share.
- Ash Croft Primary School has an active programme of engagement in a range of sporting, dance and cultural activities alongside peers from other mainstream schools.

### **Transitions**

Transitions are a part of everyday life and children may require support to enable them to learn that they can make transitions successfully. We support children by having a timetable that is predictable and structured to provide a secure base. Changes to the timetable are planned whenever possible in advance so that children can be made fully aware of and are prepared in advance of the change. Children are supported in making transitions during the day through high levels of adult supervision where appropriate and expectations being made clear.



## **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

The Nurturing school has an ethos which supports the special efforts required to ensure that all groups of children participate and prosper as reflected in the Equality Policy.

### **Assessment**

Ash Croft has access to and uses assessment tools as appropriate.

The Boxall Profile is available to assess levels and progress before and after Interventions and to support the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) target setting and review process. (SEND Policy link).

**Parent/ Carer:** A Parent / Carer Questionnaire is distributed annually a year to capture their views on, for example, how their child is cared for, and their child's emotional wellbeing in school.

## **3. Staff Wellbeing**

Ash Croft Primary Academy recognises the crucial role of staff wellbeing in the ability to 'nurture' our children. As such we are committed to ensuring staff:

- have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- have recognition of their work-life balance and are able to access proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term
- have their mental health and well-being reviewed regularly
- feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes and celebrate and recognise success
- are able to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively and are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- have time to reflect

## **4, Family Wellbeing**

Ash Croft Primary Academy recognises the crucial role of wellbeing in a family's ability to 'nurture' our pupils in partnership with school. As such we are committed to ensuring parents/ carers:

- are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- are welcomed, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed
- are signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with school
- have their opinions sought, valued and responded to
- have their strengths and difficulties recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

## **5. Monitoring and review of provision**

The Nurturing ethos will be evaluated through the school's internal monitoring systems and through OFSTED inspections. This will include evaluations of individual activities carried out by pupils, staff, (formal and informal observations) and feedback from parents/ carers about the Emotional Wellbeing of their children.