

Nurturing Schools Project

Developing Locality Nurture Hubs & Promoting Nurture Approaches in Walsall Schools



Walsall Virtual School Offer



Walsall Council



Nurture Provision

Walsall Virtual School believe that having nurture provision in our school represents our commitment to the holistic development of our children. We believe that education extends beyond textbooks and classrooms; it's about nurturing the social, emotional, and behavioural well-being of children. Nurture provision creates a safe, supportive, and caring environment where students can grow not only academically but also as individuals.

Through small group settings, personalised support, and a strong emphasis on building positive relationships, we can empower our children to develop essential life skills, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

We understand that every child is unique, and our individualized plans ensure that each student receives the tailored support they need to thrive. Our goal is to prepare our children to confidently succeed in mainstream education, armed with the emotional intelligence and social skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

Nurture Hubs

Nurture Hubs are in-school, teacher-led psychosocial interventions focused on supporting the social, emotional, and behavioural needs of children and young people. They are founded on evidence-based practices and offer a short-term, inclusive, targeted intervention that works in the long term (Nurture UK).

Nurture Hubs need:

- A school committed to a nurturing ethos.
- Two caring and affectionate nurture practitioners
- A group of no more than 12 students

Why Nurture Hubs are needed

- Every day in England, 40 children and young people are being permanently excluded from school, and more than 2,000 pupils receive fixed period exclusions (Department for Education 2018/19). The most common reason pupils are being excluded remains persistent disruptive behaviour. Nurture Hubs and nurture principles can reduce the risk of children and young people being excluded.
- 1 in 8 children and young people have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem (Sadler et al. 2018), and half of those with lifetime mental health problems first experience symptoms by the age of 14 (Kessler et al. 2005). Nurture groups can help manage these detrimental cognitive, affective, or behavioural styles by helping children and young people develop the social emotional skills, resilience, and positive behaviours they need to do well in school and in life.
- Children and young people with special educational needs, poor mental health or living in poverty are much more likely to get excluded and to have lower educational outcomes (Gill, Quilter-Pinner, and Swift 2017). By increasing the chances of having vulnerable and disadvantaged students remain in schools, nurture groups help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by removing the barriers to learning and succeeding in schools.
- Across the UK more and more emphasis is being put on schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils (Department of Health and Department for Education 2017). Nurture groups, alongside whole school nurturing ethos, can have a real impact on all pupils' wellbeing, not only on children and young people with social and emotional difficulties needs but across the whole school population, by making everyone feel safe, heard, and valued.

Nurture Group Outcomes

Improved Social and Emotional Skills

Children and young people develop confidence and self-esteem and learn to take pride in their work and in behaving positively (Kearney 2005). They become better at managing their emotions (Cooper and Whitebread 2007) and at empathising with others (Sanders 2007), and as a result can form more positive relationships with peers and teachers.

Improved Attendance

As pupils feel safe in the nurture group and in school, they can enjoy school more (Sloan et al. 2016) and their overall attendance increases (Estyn 2014; Sanders 2007).

Improved Attainment

Studies have also found that children and young people's academic performance increases following nurture provision (Sanders 2007; Reynolds, MacKay, and Kearney 2009; Seth-Smith et al. 2010), including language and literacy skills (Hosie 2013).

Improved Behaviour and Reduced Exclusion

Children and young people's behaviour significantly improves (Sloan et al. 2016). They feel more settled in their mainstream classroom and are better able to cope with the challenges of the school day, reducing the risk for anger outbursts and disruptive behaviour. This in turn leads to a reduction in the number of exclusions (Ofsted 2009; March and Kearney 2017).

Improved Parent-Child Relationship

Nurture groups also have a positive impact on the parent-child relationship (Pyle 2015), with children being more affectionate and communicative at home, and parents feeling more confident in being able to help their children (Ofsted 2011).

Impact on the Whole School

Nurture groups help develop affective bonds between teachers and pupils and help create a whole school nurturing ethos (Binnie and Allen 2008; Cooper 2001).



Nurturing Schools Project

Support and Guidance

The project consists of:

- Identifying and developing locality Nurture Hubs to provide short term nurturing support to vulnerable children and young people in their own community. This includes the option for commissioned places within the Nurture Hub for children from other schools.
- A Virtual Team of Nurture Specialists to support the development and delivery of training to schools. This will include whole school training, school audits and support in setting up nurture provision in schools. This team will consist of Locality Nurture Hub staff, Specialist EPS, Nurture UK trained Practitioners from the Virtual School and Inclusion Hub.
- Training for all school staff to provide a basic awareness of and the impact of Nurture on a child's development and learning.

All approaches, support and guidance offered to schools will follow the Six Principles of Nurture:

- 1.Children's learning is understood developmentally.
- 2.The classroom offers a safe base.
- 3.The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
- 4.Language is vital as a means of communication.
- 5.All behaviour is communication.
- 6.The importance of transition in children's lives

Nurture Hub Services and Support

- Consultation for completing The Boxall Profile.
- Consultation for developing a Nurture provision in School.
- Staff training and development
- Advice and support
- Short term Nurture placements
- Exit Strategy and support for children returning to their home school

Title	Nurture Hub Costs
Advice and support	Free to Walsall Schools
Consultations	Free to Walsall Schools
Staff Training	Free to Walsall Schools
Short term Nurture Hub placements	£20 per hour
Exit strategy and support	Free to Walsall Schools

Nurture Hubs in Walsall

Location and Contact Details

Locality	Hub Location	Name of Lead	Contact Details
North	Lower Farm Primary	Sarah Rawlins	01922 710479
East Locality 1	Watling Street Primary	Donna Probert	01543 452320
East Locality 2	St John's CE Primary	Andy Mills	01543 452197
Central and South	Delves Federation	Amanda Arnold	01922 720754
West Locality	Shortheath Federation	Cathy Draper	01902 368499
Walsall Virtual School		Lorraine Thompson	01922 652837



The Nurture Hub Process Level 2 – Nurtured Informed Practices

Preplacement	Completed
Initial consultation between Nurture Hub Lead and Headteacher of the home school.	
A Boxall Profile to be completed.	
Initial meeting with all professionals to take place to agree placement	
Young person's view to be gathered	

Placement	Completed
Where possible and appropriate, a key worker from the home school will visit the child in the Nurture Hub provision once a week, this is to share information and to keep a connection.	
Nurture Hub and home school will develop a Learning Journey for the child	

Review	Completed
A review meeting will take place after 2 weeks in the Hub then again at 6 weeks.	
Review meetings can be requested by the Hub or home school at any point during the placement	

Post placement	Completed
Young person's view to be gathered at the end.	
A Boxall Profile to be completed to record impact.	
Exit Strategy developed	

Expectations of the home school

- Headteacher to attend meetings and to visit the Nurture Hub.
- Home school is responsible for recording attendance.
- A key worker from the home school to visit the young person throughout their time in the Nurture Hub.
- The Nurture Hub to develop a learning journey for the young person.
- Transport to be agreed before the placement starts

Becoming a Walsall Nurturing School

If you are a Walsall Virtual School Trauma & Attachment Award School, there will be opportunity to work through a funded accredited process as a school.

Level 1 – Whole School Awareness

Awareness of Nurturing Principles as a school

Criteria	Evidence: Evidence to be verified by Walsall Virtual School or Nurture Hub Accredited Practitioners	Date Verification Completed
1.1.	Senior Leadership Team and Governors to sign commitment to develop Nurturing Standards as a school / Setting.	
1.2.	Named Senior Leadership Team Member to have overall responsibility for linking Nurture into school developing planning.	
1.3.	At least one named Nurture Lead with at least Qualified Teacher Status	
1.4.	At least one adult with a keen interest in developing Nurturing Practices and supporting the lead.	
1.5.	Senior Leadership Team Member, Nurture Lead and supporting adult to lead and complete whole school nurtured informed practice Standards exploration.	
1.6.	Whole school or setting 4 -hour training on awareness of nurtured informed practices as a school. Date and number of attendees to be recorded.	
1.7.	Training evaluation to be provided as school evidence.	

Level 2 – Nurtured Informed Practices

Knowledge of and Use Nurtured Informed Principles as a school.

Criteria	Evidence: Evidence to be verified by Walsall Virtual School or Nurture Hub Accredited Practitioners	Date Verification Completed
2.1.	Senior Leadership Team and Governors reporting updates to wider community (this can be via newsletters, website information).	
2.2.	Named Senior Leadership Team Member demonstrates clear visible Nurtured Informed Practices clear links to the School Development Plan with at least one action for future development.	
2.3.	Nurture Lead to have CPD Plan: one action to have been completed is evidence of training and using the Boxhall Profile.	
2.4.	Named supporting adult for Nurtured Informed Practices to have supported one young person in a Nurture Hub and developed personal profile.	
2.5.	Senior Leadership Team Member, Nurture Lead and supporting adult to have completed an action plan based on Nurtured Informed Practice Standards exploration previously completed.	
2.6.	Whole school or setting to have attended additional 4 -hour training on Nurture Informed Practice. Date and number of attendees to be recorded.	
2.7.	Training evaluation to be provided as school evidence.	

Level 3 – Nurture Group Established

Criteria	Evidence: Evidence to be verified by Walsall Virtual School or Nurture Hub Accredited Practitioners	Date Verification Completed
3.1.	Senior Leadership Team and Governors reporting updates to wider community (this can be via newsletters, website information).	
3.2.	Named Senior Leadership Team Member demonstrates clear visible Nurtured Informed Practices clear links to the School Development Plan with new actions and longer term planning on School Development Plan.	
3.3.	Nurture Lead (with at least Qualified Teacher Status) to have completed Nurture Group Leader Accredited Training.	
3.4.	Named supporting adult for Nurtured Informed Practices to have completed Accredited Nurture UK Training.	
3.5.	Senior Leadership Team Member, Nurture Lead and Supporting Adult to review Action Plan based on Nurtured Informed Practice Standards.	
3.6.	Nurture Group established in school and is embedded into whole school approach.	
3.7.	School have achieved Gold on Walsall Virtual School Attachment Aware, Trauma Informed Pathway.	

Consultation Form

Request Form

Section 1: Child Details

Surname: First Name(s):

Previous Names (AKA):

Male ☐ Female ☐ Date of Birth: Unique Pupil No:

Year Group:

Name & Address of School/Setting: Current Attendance %:

Current SEN Status Main Area of Need (if applicable)

Current Banding (if applicable)

No. of Suspensions

No. of exclusions

Section 2: Parent/Carer Details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other: Full Name:

Address:

Telephone Number/s: Email Address

Relationship to child:

1st Language: Interpreter/signer required for Parent/Carer: Yes ☐ No ☐

Does this person have Parental Responsibility: Yes ☐ No ☐ **if No:**

Name of person with Parental Responsibility:

Telephone Number/s:

Relationship to child:

Social Worker Details:

Section 3: Special Educational Needs

Details of any diagnoses – please send any supporting documents e.g., EHCP, medical reports, SDQs, Boxall profiles completed etc

Section 5: Outside agencies involved.

Agency	Name	Date of last involvement
Educational psychologist (EP)		
Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)		
EYSEN		
Virtual School for Young People who are Care Experienced		
Education Welfare Service		
Children with Disability team		
Family Support and Child Protection Services (Social Worker) – please state which threshold		
Integrated Youth Support Service		
Occupational Therapist		
Physiotherapist		
Paediatrician		
Medical Professionals		
CAHMS		
Other		
Other		
Other		
Other		

Section 6: Current school attainment data (please tick appropriate box)

Attainment descriptors	English: Reading	English: Writing	English: SPAG	Maths
Working below age related expectations				
Working towards age related expectations				
Working at age related expectations				
Working above age related expectations				

Section 7: Current situation

What are your concerns? Please be as specific as possible.

Section 8: Strategies used

Referring to the Walsall Right4SEND Guidance Document for schools - describe the strategies that have already been used to support the child, including whole school, class and individual approaches. Please state how effective they have been.

Please attach any useful or related information/documents

Area of Need	Strategies Used	Outcome

Section 9: Desired outcome of involvement

Please describe how you feel the Nurture Provision can be impactful

Section 10: Parents / Carer Views:**Section 11: Child's Views**

These can be dictated, written, visuals or indirectly via observations.

Section 12: Parent/ Social Worker agreement

I agree to this referral being made to the Nurture Provision to work with my child to support their barriers to learning.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Privacy Notice

When a referral is made to the service we collect and process information about your child under Article 6(1)(e) and Article (9(2)(c) of the GDPR, to fulfil our statutory obligations under the Education Act 1996 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

We have a duty to make sure that we only ask you for personal information that is relevant to our role and the work we are doing; that we only record and keep information about you if we need it for the purpose of our work and to store your personal information safely so that others can't access it.

For more information on becoming a Nurturing School please contact
Lorraine Thompson on: **01922 652837** or **lorraine.thompson@walsall.gov.uk**



