



Newton Park Nurture Policy

Our Policy for nurture is driven by our Vision and Aims, supported by the nurture principals and the Highland Council Promoting Positive Relationships Framework.

Aim of this policy is –

- To create a nurturing and predictive environment that promotes positive behaviour.
- To support children to create positive relationships.
- To help our children to understand their own feelings and the feelings of others.
- To promote and develop the children's self-esteem, self-worth, self-regulation and social skills.
- To ensure a consistent response to all behaviour within the school environment.

The 6 principles of nurture –

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe space
3. The importance of nurture for the development of well-being
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is a form of communication
6. The importance of transitions in children's lives

Children's learning is understood developmentally

The following allows staff to fully understand the development of each child and plan to meet individual needs at the correct level -

- Robust staff and pupil relationships which allow staff to gain a good understanding of each child's developmental levels and plan and communicate appropriately.
- Continuous observation and assessment carried out to ensure staff work with children on a developmentally appropriate level and provide supportive next steps for learning whilst removing barriers through early intervention.
- Staff recognise that experiences impact on a child's development and support and care is offered at an appropriate level.
- The school staff continue to communicate effectively with families to support their understanding of child development and give practical ideas for families to support development at home.

The classroom offers a safe space

Staff strive to create an environment which reduces anxieties and supports positive well-being through –

- Routine and structure – although we encourage children to make choices, we ensure elements of structure are kept throughout the day. Visual timetables and visual aids allow for predictability and thinking time.
- Positive relationships – staff are reliable and consistent in their approach to the children and great care is taken to develop and model positive relationships between staff and families.
- Staff encourage creativity and problem solving approaches to learning.

- The environment is well planned to incorporate safe places for self-regulation, including a Family Link Worker room where children are able to go if they need to.
- Staff will carry out regular evaluations on the effectiveness of the environment in regard to nurture.
- Family Link Worker is available for both children and their families, as a support within the school environment to allow children to talk about any issues that arise.

The importance of nurture for developing well-being and self esteem

Nurture involves listening and responding to our children as we look to develop the children's well-being and self-esteem in the following ways -

- Getting to know each child and their family as individuals. Providing comfort, advise and support where required.
- Taking children's views and ideas into account – when planning and when setting goals and next steps.
- Celebrating individual achievements that take place within the school or at home.
- Promoting resilience through well-established programmes such as Resilient Kids and Circle of Friends.
- Working closely with families to support a child's well-being and learning within the home environment.

Language is a vital means of communication

Language is more than a skill to be learnt, it is a way of putting our feelings into words. Supporting and developing children's language through the use of the following strategies enables the children to further develop their vocabulary, as appropriate to age and stage.

- Taking a whole school approach to literacy, language and communication (HLP website includes detail of Emerging Literacy; Phonological Awareness; Pre-teaching Vocabulary; Words Up/Key Messages; Sequence & Narrative Skills; Supporting Working Memory).
- Emotional literacy – Staff help children to understand and label their feelings throughout session times, including emotional checks ins where required, Health and Wellbeing sessions, discussions and classwork based around the Wellbeing Wheel and by discussing feelings as they arise.

All behaviour is a form of communication

We understand that a child's feelings are reflected in their behaviour and that inappropriate behaviour is a sign that a child's needs are not being met or the child is having difficulty coping. The following strategies are in place to support staff to identify and remove barriers to learning.

- Close relationships with families allow information and concerns to be passed forward and acted upon at the earliest opportunity, allowing for consistency in the approach both within school and the home environment.
- Regular observation and assessment to highlight and monitor progress and allow for early intervention as required.
- Children are listened to and encouraged to express how they are feeling and what has caused such emotions, through talking or drawing.

Importance of transition

By the time a child reaches school age they will be exposed to many different transitions. Some big such as beginning their nursery education, moving on to school or the arrival of a new sibling and some smaller transitions such as break times in a new playground.

At Newton Park we understand the positive impact well planned transitions can make on a child's well-being and have the following strategies in place to support transitional periods.

- Routine –Children are brought together at the start of each day to discuss the visual timeline to ensure they are aware of transitions which are expected to occur throughout the day.
- For those children moving into school, a robust programme for transition is in place to support children which includes regular visits from their new teacher, visits to the classroom, lunch hall and a strong Primary 7 buddy system.
- Robust transition system, including detailed teacher notes, are passed on as children move from year to year.
- The school works closely with Wick High School to ensure a smooth transition for pupils moving from P7 to S1. This includes an enhanced programme for those with Additional Support Needs.

Managing feelings and resolving conflicts using a nurturing approach

Focus should always be on the emotion or behaviour displayed not the actual child.

When children struggle to manage their feelings or conflict arises, staff will use the following strategy to support the children and resolve a situation –

Conflict resolution steps, appropriate to age and stage of the pupil:

1. Approach calmly, with an open mind and go down to the child's level
2. Acknowledge the feelings (I can see that you are feeling upset, hurt, cross, angry)
3. Gather information from both sides, by asking 'what's the problem'
4. Restate the problem back to the child to show you understand
5. Ask for a solution 'I wonder how we can solve this'.
6. Be prepared to give follow-up support, keeping an eye on what happens next and be ready to give further support

Developmentally not all children will have the emotional literacy to begin with, in order to respond to all 6 steps. It is however important that we provide the tools such as visuals to support their understanding as fully as possible. Using the same approach on a consistent basis will help to develop their conflict resolution skills.

The conflict resolution approach supports children to –

- improve their emotional literacy, communication and listening skills
- develop empathy for others
- build confidence
- foster creative problem solving
- understand how to evaluate situations

Where a child's behaviour is raising regular concerns or putting others at risk-

- Staff will carry out observations to help identify and remove barriers, unmet needs and potential triggers.
- At the earliest opportunity, Staff will work with the child's families to develop a Form1 (GIRFEC procedure) to ensure a child's needs are fully met and put in place a personalised approach to support a child's behaviour.
- Staff will work closely with other agencies to best meet the needs of all our children.
- Support plans will be shared with key adults (as appropriate for the child) to ensure any member of staff working with the individual child is aware of the plan and the actions to take to ensure the approach is consistent.

Nurture Policy written September 2020
Written in line with ELC Nurture Policy to ensure whole school approach