

XII Apostles RCPS

Nurture Policy



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Person responsible	Jacqueline O'Boyle
Date ratified by Governing Body	October 2026
Version	3

XII APOSTLES' R.C.P.S.

NURTURE POLICY

SENCO: Mrs. O'Boyle

XII Apostles Primary School: 01942-674312

INTRODUCTION

The school's mission statement aims state:

- 1.To place Christ at the centre of everything we do**
- 2. To recognise that each child is unique and to ensure that each child is educated to fulfil their human potential**
- 3. To develop an understanding of Community; being able to recognise, respect and celebrate the diversity of all within it.**

Nurture provision at Twelve Apostles aims to live out the Mission Statement - six important principles underpin the organisation and ethos of the nurture group.

THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF NURTURE:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally – the foundations of learning begin at birth and develop via a close relationship with an adult. Independence develops through dependence. Social empathy as well as learning develops from being thought about, valued and encouraged. Staff in the nurture group respond to each child at whatever emotional or social age s/he appears to be with the appropriate degree of control and nurture. The quality of this response enables the child to move on.

2. The nurture room offers a safe base – there is a structure to the day which is predictable, adults who are reliable and firm and can set boundaries without being punitive. Children see two adults working together and supporting each other. This provides security and reassurance. The nurture group room offers a balance of educational and domestic experiences aimed at supporting the development of children's relationship with each other and with the staff.

3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing - nurture is listening, being responsive, remembering and engaging in reciprocal, shared activities such as play, having meals, reading, talking about events and feelings. Children respond to being valued and being thought of as individuals. This involves calling the children by their name, noticing and praising every small achievement; nothing is hurried in nurture groups.

4. Language is understood as a vital means of communication – Language is more than a skill to be learnt, it is the way of putting feelings into words. Nurture group children often ‘act out’ their feelings as they lack the vocabulary to ‘name’ how they feel. In nurture groups the informal opportunities for talking and sharing, e.g welcoming the children into the group or having snack together are as important as the more formal lessons teaching language skills. Words are used instead of actions to express feelings, and opportunities are created for extended conversations or encouraging imaginative play to understand the feelings of others.

5. All behaviour is communication Understanding what a child is communicating through behaviour helps staff to respond in a firm but not-punitive way by not being provoked or discouraged. If the child can sense their feelings are understood this can help to diffuse difficult situations. The adult makes the link between the external/internal worlds of the child. This principle underlines the adult response to the children’s often challenging or difficult behaviour. ‘Given what I know about this child and their development what is this child trying to tell me?’.

6. Transitions are significant in the lives of children – the nurture group helps the child make the difficult transition from home to school; however, on a daily basis there are numerous transitions the child makes, e.g between sessions and classes and between different adults. Changes in routine are invariably difficult for vulnerable children and need to be carefully managed with preparation and support.

Organisation and Routine

The nurture room is led by Mrs. O’Boyle BA (hons) PGCert SPLD, the school SENCo. She is supported in the nurture room by the Pastoral Mentor, Mrs. Stones and trained teaching assistants. The sessions usually run with 6-10 children from Key Stage 1 or 2, for between 1 – 5 sessions per week dependant on the needs of the child. This may be extended due to the presentation of need. Children follow a structure of routine and the group runs on consistency, positive reinforcement and praise.

A typical session in nurture would include English work linked to the national curriculum, shared play and snack time. Snack time provides an opportunity where the children share good news and can explore their thoughts and feelings. Importantly, speaking and listening takes priority in the sessions and various evidence based interventions are utilised throughout the year including: Socially Speaking, Talkabout, Nurture Talk, Time to Talk, EKLAN and Lego Therapy.

Identification and Assessment

The nurture group currently supports a range of children across school both in Key Stage 1 and 2. The identification process takes place in consultation with the SENCo, the Pastoral Lead and the class teachers. All children are assessed carefully on entry using the school's formal and informal assessments. The results are then discussed with the class teacher and applied to the child's individual support plan – the APDR, which is then shared with the parents. All sessions in nurture are underpinned by the targets identified in the assessment process. Alongside the formal assessment process is the informal, daily assessment through the record sheets and class dojo kept up to date by nurture group staff.

Involving Parents

Parental support is vital to the child's progress and communication between nurture group staff and parents is critical. Feedback is given to parents through Classdojo, at Parents' evenings or through informal conversations.

Re-integration

The most effective length of time to be a member of the nurture group is based on the child's individual needs. At any time throughout this, depending on the progress of the child, a re-integration programme may begin. This programme is developed on an individual basis for each child to slowly build them back into their mainstream class on a full time basis. The re-integration process is fully supported by nurture group staff, the pupil, class teacher and dependant on the child's need.

Agreed by the Governors:

Review Date: September 2027