

# The 6 Principles of Nurture



## Children's learning is understood developmentally

Children are all at different stages of development – **socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually** – and need to be responded to at their developmental level in each of these areas. Responding to children 'just as they are', with a non-judgemental and accepting attitude, will help them to feel **safe** and **secure**.

Social, emotional and behavioural development tools such as **the Boxall Profile**, help staff to assess and track a child's needs and put strategies in place to support positive development.



## The classroom offers a safe base

A classroom environment must be **inviting** and **nurturing** for all. It must offer a balance of educational and social, emotional and mental health experiences to support the development of children's relationships with each other and with staff.

Adults must be **reliable** and **consistent** in their approach to children and must understand the important link between emotional regulation and learning. Where possible, **predictable routines** should be explained and practised. **Clear expectations** and **positive models** of how all adults in school relate to children, both in and out of the classroom are essential.



## The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing

Nurture involves **listening** and **responding**, with adults engaging with pupils in shared activities. Children feel **valued** and thought of as individuals. This involves **noticing** and **praising** small achievements – nothing should be hurried.

Provision and strategies are put in place to promote the **welfare** and **wellbeing** of children, as well as staff. Achievements and attainments are celebrated, and **pupil voice** is valued.

## Language is a vital means of communication

It is vital for children to be able to **understand** and **express** their **thoughts** and **feelings**. It is also crucial for adults to understand the importance of their own language towards children, and how this can impact them.

Children often 'act out' their feelings as they lack the **vocabulary** to name how they feel. Teaching children to **name their emotions**, enables words to be used instead of actions to express their feelings. Imaginative play can also be used to help children **understand** the feelings of others to promote **empathy**.

Pupils' voices must be heard, and pupil language should be assessed, developed and embedded in all aspects of the curriculum at the appropriate level for the child.

## All behaviour is communication

Everyone **communicates** through behaviour. It is the adult's role to help children to **understand** their feelings, express their needs **appropriately**, and use **non-threatening** and supportive language to **resolve situations**. Our first responsibility in dealing with difficult or challenging behaviour, (after safety), is to try to **understand** what the child is trying to tell us.

Adults need to be **calm** and **consistent**, and understand that children may communicate their feelings in different ways. Children need to be encouraged to **reflect** on their behaviour, and understand how to express their emotions appropriately.

Having a quiet area to help students to become **calm**, and giving them time before a discussion is crucial, as well as recognising potential triggers and anxieties that could be avoided or reduced.



## The importance of transitions in children's lives

Children experience many **transitions** throughout their lives and on a daily basis; transitions from home to school, from breaktime to lessons, or moving from primary to secondary school. Changes in routine may be difficult for children and therefore, school staff need to help children to transition with carefully managed **preparation** and **support**.

Pupils (as well as parents and carers where possible) should be included in the planning of support, and information should be shared at key transition points. Staff need to understand the emotions that may be triggered by small and large changes, and children should be made aware of changes to routines, using **visual timetables** to emphasise this.

