

Bexhill Academy is working towards the National Nurturing Schools Award. The work at the academy includes a Year 7 Transition Nurture Provision, (led by our trained Nurture Practitioner), therapeutic techniques (including Lego Therapy) within our ASPie Facility and the focus on Nurture Principles within our KS3 New Opportunities Project.

If you wish to find out more about the National Nurturing Schools Programme please explore some of the links below.

What is Nurture?

Follow this useful link to the Nurture UK Website for more information

<https://www.nurtureuk.org/nurture/what-nurture>

What are Boxall Profiles and how are they used?

A short film produced by Nurture UK

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxkuNLs1FOMg-tfcvaYOUAQ>

How to develop Nurture Principles within the home

Principle 1: Learning is understood developmentally

Each of us experiences life in our own way, and children grow and develop at different rates. In nurture groups, staff work hard to find out where a child may have gaps and give opportunities to fill them through appropriate play and learning tasks. At home you may find your child wanting to play with toys that you think are too babyish, but it is likely that your wise child is trying to fill a gap for themselves. It may also be that children need to recycle learning from earlier developmental stages, such as reading picture books. Allowing children to take part in activities they enjoyed when much younger is enjoyable for them and gives them the opportunity to revisit concepts from an earlier stage which helps to consolidate skills. And it's fun!



Principle 2: The classroom is a safe base

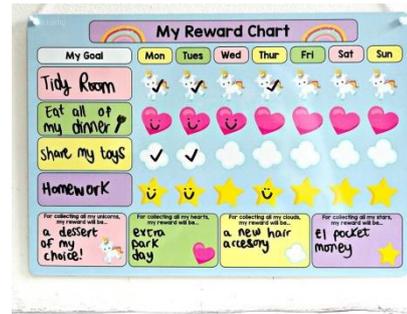


The nurture room and the adults within it become a place where the student feels emotionally safe. As activities are chosen to match the student's needs, they experience positive feelings and a sense of mastery. At home, this is likely to be a feeling that children have anyway but you can help your child to use their bedroom, for example, as a safe space by enabling them to have a high level of control about

what the environment is like, asking people to knock when they come in etc. You can help your child to think about what would help them feel calm and happy in the space. Things like a cosy blanket, a few drops of a favourite scent or a photograph can add to the soothing effect. For children who share a room, finding a small space elsewhere that can be theirs can also help; even a box of things to make a calm camp would be great.

Principle 3: Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing

In the nurture group, students have clear targets and are rewarded for achieving them. Praise is given clearly so that the students know what they have done well. This leads to improved self-esteem and a greater belief that they are capable and able to achieve. This principle is easily transferred to home. It will be helpful to think about each child as an individual – just because his brother could tie shoelaces in Year 3, he himself may need longer to master the skill. Praise effort and resilience when a task is challenging.



Principle 4: All behaviour is communication

Students in nurture groups sometimes have unexpected behaviours, and the adults in nurture become very skilled at working out what the behaviour means and why the student uses the behaviour rather than language to explain what they need. This is a powerful strategy, and when we realise that the behaviours we see have a function for the student, it helps us to choose the correct response. We have seen the acceptance of the word *hangry*, and we all now understand that a child may be grouchy because they need to eat. We can tailor our response from telling the child off for being angry to an attuned response that gives the child a banana!

Principle 5 : Language is a vital means of communication

The nurture group is a language rich environment – everything is verbalised. By speaking to your child and encouraging simple conversational skills, you are supporting them to be more confident to articulate what they feel or think rather than having to show you through behaviour (see above) or bottle it up. You can do this at home using a simple technique – wondering aloud. For example “You are frowning and look thoughtful, I wonder if you are worried about your test tomorrow.” The great thing about this is, if you are correct, you can talk about what is bothering your child, and if not, they will probably correct you! In nurture rooms you will also see visuals to support understanding and the development of language, and you can use these at home as well.

Principle 6 : The importance of transition in children’s lives



Some adults find change difficult and we sometimes expect children to manage change and transition better than we would! Nurture group staff put a lot of effort into making sure that the

student learns the skills needed to cope with transition and change without becoming anxious or upset. This includes talking through changes and using a visuals to ensure that the student's time in nurture is consistent and what the student expects – no surprises. At home, you could also use a visual timetable, for the time before school so that your child knows what has to be done before leaving. This could also work well at weekends so that your child feels that there is some structure. A timer will also be useful to help your child transition between activities, for example, finishing watching TV before having to help cook dinner.