



SCHOOLS' FORUM

30 November 2023

NURTURE PRACTICE AND UPDATE TO CONTRACT

Report from Mrs Penny Rawlings, Head of School, Edith Weston Academy

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Schools' Forum:

1. Notes the updated information on nurturing performance and practice change across the schools.
2. Approves an increase in funding to £190k for Edith Weston as the lead school to accelerate and further develop Rutland schools' practice.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update members of Schools Forum on the progress of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Recovery Plan initiatives related to Nurture practice and contract revisions designed to reduce the pressure on the Designated School Grant (DSG) High Needs Block:
 - To receive updated information on nurturing performance and practice change across the schools
 - To endorse an increase in funding to £190k for Edith Weston as the lead school to accelerate and further develop Rutland schools' practice.

2. Background

- 2.1 **NurtureUK** is evidenced based practice that can help children who struggle due to poor attachment and or trauma. Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing can lead to improved self-esteem and enhanced school achievement and attainment. Nurturing approach involves supporting specific children to grow and develop their own emotional wellbeing.
- 2.2 More detailed information can be found on a nurture approach and the associated Boxall Profile in Appendix A.
- 2.3 Rutland's piloted nurture approach started midway through the academic year in 2019 with the purpose of modelling excellence in social, emotional and mental health support to children through the use of a nurturing approach as developed by NurtureUK.
- 2.4 Edith Weston Academy, part of the Brooke Hill Academy Trust, received a grant of £26k capital investment through the DfE Special Provision Capital Allocation, administered by Rutland County Council, to modify the classroom and create a purpose built outside

area for Edith Weston to enable children to be effectively supported throughout their school day.

- 2.5 A yearly revenue budget of £99,100 from the SEND Recovery Plan provided for the pilot period and the Schools' Forum opted to continue the successful programme in September 2021. It was identified that the nurture provision required increased funding to ensure we were able to offer effective and appropriate support, including the outreach service. This funding has allowed the provision to grow from strength to strength and the positive impact is evidenced in the number of children and schools that have been supported this academic year, through placements and outreach work.
- 2.6 The overall intention is to foster an evidence based nurturing approach using the Boxall Profile to assess initial needs and track progress. As part of the outreach support, we aim to encourage as many schools in Rutland as possible to adopt a nurturing approach in order to identify and support SEMH needs at an earlier stage and prevent an unnecessary escalation, enabling children to continue to access their education within their mainstream setting. This includes working with parents, external agencies, professionals, upskilling mainstream school staff and creating individualized support plans.
- 2.7 Outreach support to schools is coordinated by Caroline Crisi so that overlap is minimized and monthly meetings take place to enable this. Best intelligence provided on children's situations and practice is in line with the School Support Partnership standards.

3. Current situation with Nurture Nest interventions

- 3.1 Edith Weston Academy employs a small team including a full-time equivalent (FTE) qualified teacher as the Nurture Lead Practitioner, a Nurture HLTA and Teaching Assistants. The Nurture Lead Practitioner oversees and leads the running of the Nurture Hub and delivers the successful outreach service to schools across Rutland, upskilling staff and helping to increase their confidence when supporting children with SEMH needs. The nurture provision continues to offer 4-6 in-house educational placements (subject to an appropriate mix of needs).
- 3.2 The facilities at Edith Weston Academy are known as the 'Nurture Nest' and specifically support children who present with challenging behaviours that require more focused support as they are at risk of permanent exclusion otherwise.
- 3.3 Places at the Nurture Nest are allocated through the multi-agency SEND panel in collaboration with Edith Weston Academy, with the presumption that any sending school be available for the child's return unless they have been permanently excluded. There is a flowchart stipulating the process to access both outreach and a placement. An agreement has been developed which must be agreed and signed by all stakeholders including the referring school and parents.
- 3.4 It is not the intention that Edith Weston Academy's mainstream classes would absorb children who complete their Nest interventions, but instead that they transition back to the mainstream school that referred them initially.
- 3.5 In reality, parental preference and, in some schools, staff actions have led to children being placed full-time at Edith Weston Academy. While this had been anticipated as a risk from the start of the pilot, as more children come through interventions, it is not sustainable for them all to stay at Edith Weston Academy or helpful for family schedules that children move schools permanently.

3.6 Nurture practice at Edith Weston Academy continues to develop and has been highly successful in maintaining children in Rutland over the past four years

- All children were either on part-time timetables or at risk of exclusion/ had been excluded from their school.
- Outreach to Rutland schools - 32 children at 10 primary schools.
- On-site Edith Weston Hub interventions:
 - 6 children who had been at mainstream Rutland primaries have accessed Nest interventions
 - 3 children from out of county/country
 - 1 as part of a transition from independent specialist to mainstream
(We are currently working with a child to transition back to his referring school. This will be the first instance of a children returning to the mainstream school and not being absorbed into Edith Weston Academy's mainstream school).
- 1 child has gone on to require a special school place.
- 2 children have successfully transitioned to mainstream Secondary at UCC (for one child, the SEND team are currently deciding whether to cease his EHCP as he has made a successful and settled transition with no difficulties in his first year).
- 9 exclusions have been averted.

4. Proposal

4.1 The Rutland Nurture approach, led by Edith Weston Academy is reliant on the commitment of all schools to upskill and implement nurturing schools practice and help children with attachment and trauma to thrive in their educational community with the help of outreach from practitioners at Edith Weston Academy.

4.2 There have been great instances of schools keen to change practice, based on best nurture advice, and a desire to train in NurtureUK practice and to grow more practitioners with Nurture expertise in Rutland. If we wish to seize this opportunity and grow expertise then more capacity is required.

4.3 Resources are needed to increase the capacity and speed for outreach and enhance the package of professional development of NurtureUK practice ('Nurturing Schools' Practice) so that Rutland schools' staff gain the confidence and classroom practice to assist children as soon as needs emerge. Speed of response has been shown to be a significant factor as part of all School Support Partnership interventions.

4.4 It is proposed that the Schools' Forum increases the financial commitment, providing a further £18,470 funded from additional pressure on the High Needs Budget so that Edith Weston Academy has the capacity to respond to situations quickly before any window of opportunity is passed and help staff in wider Rutland schools to accelerate their inclusionary response. A breakdown of costs is included in Appendix C.

4.5 This sum will support the 2 children currently in the Nurture Nest (both excluded from other settings) who are both making progress but are currently working through their individual transition plans to achieve their next steps.

4.6 Additional Nurture Nest support is needed at times for children who have had previous access to this specialist provision but who on the whole can cope in a mainstream classroom. The transition requires the referring school to designate a member of

support staff to work at Edith Weston at the beginning of the transition to upskill them and allow them to fully understand the child's needs and how to support them effectively (TA support for this included).

- 4.7 The Nurture Outreach Service has supported 10 schools this academic year. There has been bespoke school training in nurture as well as countywide sessions for Early Years and Primary Schools.

Head of School Update - September 2023

During the 2022-2023 academic year, we spent £142,786 on staff salaries. Due to pay increases, our staffing costs this year will be £153,754, which is an increase of £10,968.

This increase includes a reduction in staffing with the Nurture Team now consisting of the Nurture and Outreach Lead Practitioner, the Nurture HLTA and 2 Nurture TA's.

The new leadership team has embedded a new structure to the provision which means we are able to effectively support the children with the current staffing levels. This means we are able to allocate more funding for external specialists to support our children including (but not limited to) play therapy, Educational Psychology, SALT and Occupational Therapy.

When the Nurture Provision was initially developed, we were able to dig out and create an outdoor space, directly from the Nurture room. This space requires further resources and development to make it the best and most effective provision it can be. Our children require a space that is warm, inviting, engaging and safe to explore whilst they are in the Nurture Nest. We would be able to achieve this with the funding we have requested.

In addition to this, we aim to be a centre of excellence and encourage visitors to our school to model the gold standard in nurture and offer support for other professionals.

Appendix A – NurtureUK evidence-based practice and Rutland’s approach

The proposed theory of change underpinning Nurture Groups is that if children’s attachment relationships can be enhanced then their emotional and social wellbeing will improve and this, in turn, will lead to improved behaviour that will better place children to access learning opportunities with the end result that their academic progress should increase. Whilst there is some variation in Nurture Group provision, they are all underpinned by the same long-term aim to improve children’s educational outcomes.

The Classic Boxall Model (an assessment tool used to understand the actions required to help a child’s educational and health and wellbeing) is a short-term intervention grounded in Bowlby’s attachment theory, which aims to address barriers to learning arising from unmet attachment needs that can lead to Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs escalating. Work is also undertaken with parents to help them support their child.

The Nurture Outreach Service, led by Edith Weston Academy, is dependent on the commitment from all school leaders to upskill staff and implement a nurture approach in each school. The approach is designed to support children who have SEMH difficulties as a result of childhood trauma or attachment difficulties.

Rutland has also chosen to develop an on-site Nurture Nest for 4-6 children at Edith Weston where children need more intense interventions for a specified period of time. This provision also aims to be a centre of excellence.

It was always the intention to scale up the ability of the Hub to influence and respond to other schools to prevent any exclusion for this reason and help children to be maintained in school locally, rather than children be moved to Edith Weston Academy permanently.

Appendix B – Data related to the children who have received nurture interventions in Rutland since 2019, both in the Nurture Nest at Edith Weston Academy and through outreach to other schools.

In total, 5 mainstream Rutland schools have accessed support and 24 children have been supported by the Nurture arrangements since it started.

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022- 2023
3	11	10	17

- 15 children at 7 schools have accessed outreach support.
- 3 children who had been at mainstream primaries have accessed Hub Nest interventions. None of these transitioned back to the sending school following closure of the intervention.
- 1 child has gone on to require a special school place.
- Secondary placements

School supported / school that child was transferred from	Occasions / children supported		Total
	Hub	Outreach	
Out of the Country	1		1
Out of county	2		2
Wilds Lodge- <i>supported move</i>	1		1
Brooke Hill	2	6	8
Cottesmore Academy	2	1	3
English Martyrs		2	2
Langham	1	2	3
Oakham CofE	1	6	7
Ryhall		3	3
St Nicolas		3	3
Uppingham		5	5
Whissendine		3	3
Leighfield		1	1
Grand Total	10	32	42

Appendix C – Nurture Costs 2022-2023

Nurture Project 2019-2020 Academic Year Expenditure		
Itemised Cost	2022-23	Notes
Nurture Practitioner training	£2,400	
Whole school training including Boxall Profiling	£5,000	
Ongoing training RCC schools	10,000	
Leadership costs- Head teacher	6,600	0.1 FTE
Staff: 1 Qualified teacher level 6 with potential TLR	£55,000	
Staff: 1 Nurture practitioner (TA Level)	28,533	
Staff: Additional staff cover e.g. TA/ trained back up	17,551	
	17,551	
	17,551	
RCC approved items such as;	4,000	
Therapeutic Support e.g. Educational Psychologist, Thera play, group work.		
General resources	3,500	
Total	£171,186	

Appendix D – Nurture costs proposed 2023-24

Itemised Cost	2023-24	Notes
Nurture training and Marjorie Boxall Award	1400	
Whole school training including Boxall Profiling	1000	
Ongoing training RCC schools	10,000	
Leadership costs- Head teacher	7,777	0.1 FTE
Staff: 1 Qualified teacher level 6 with potential TLR	58,781.98	
Staff: 1 Nurture practitioner (TA Level)	36,422.03	
Staff: Nurture TA	25,387.70	
	25,387.70	
Consumables	1000	
Outreach expenses	1500	
Home visit support (out of hours)	2000	
Play therapy	8,000	
EP	6,000	
Classroom and outdoor environment	5,000	
Total	£189,656.41	