

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY

NURTURE POLICY



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St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Nurture Time Policy

What is Nurture Time?

Nurture Time is a series of 1:1 sessions which give children the opportunity to talk about their thoughts and feelings, learn about mental health and emotional wellbeing, develop coping skills and strategies, practice mindfulness, breathing techniques, growth mindset and resilience skills, and develop their ability to self-reflect and express themselves.

Who provides Nurture Time?

Nurture Time sessions are provided by our School Counsellor Mary Kelly, who is employed by CARITAS Diocese of Hallam and works in St Mary's Catholic Primary School two days a week (currently Tuesdays and Wednesdays).

How do children access Nurture Time?

Stage 1: Referral

There are three referral pathways:

1. Young person referral: a child might reach out and ask for help
2. Parent/carer referral: a person with parental responsibility for the child might contact school expressing concerns for their child
3. School staff referral: a member of staff (usually the class teacher) might raise concerns where they notice a change in the child's mood or behaviour

To make a referral, the referral form must be completed and passed to the Wellbeing Team. The Wellbeing Team comprise of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENDCo, Family Support Worker, School Counsellor.

Stage 2: Consent

When a young person or staff referral has been received, school will attempt to contact parents of the child to inform them that they have received a referral for Nurture Time support for their child. A consent form will be sent to both parents, and at least one signature will be obtained before the referral can progress to the next stage. Every effort will be made to gain consent from both parents, however, where this is not possible or, where it is deemed, by the Wellbeing Team, to be in the best interests of the child, the referral can progress to the next stage without the consent of both parents.

When a parent referral has been received the 'parent consent to sessions' form should also be sent in FAO: wellbeing team along with the referral form.

Stage 3: Triage

The referral will be discussed at a Wellbeing Meeting.

If the Wellbeing Team feel that the sessions would be beneficial to the child, then an initial session will take place with the School Counsellor (*see Stage 4*).

If the Wellbeing Team do not feel that Nurture Time is the best type of support to offer, alternative support may be found. This may be in situations where:

1. Another form of school support for example class LSA support, mindfulness sessions, Nurture Group, Positive Play etc. might be more suitable.
2. Another form of support from external organisations such as Compass UK, The Elm Foundation or CAMHS might be more suitable.
3. The case needs to be escalated to Starting Point where more intensive support could be sought.
4. The child is thriving and so they would not benefit from any support/ School does not have any concerns about the pupil.

If it is the case that Nurture Time is not deemed to be the most appropriate form of support at this stage, parents will be contacted to inform them of the decision not to proceed and to offer further information about alternative options.

Stage 4: Initial Session

An initial session will be held with the young person and the School Counsellor. The purpose of the session is to hear the thoughts and feelings of the child, understand their experiences and how this is impacting them, as well as to enable the School Counsellor to decide whether Nurture Time is the best way to support the young person, devise a plan for support, risk assess, build rapport with the young person and offer some immediate support for improving wellbeing. Questionnaires may be sent to parents and/or completed with the young person during their initial session to assess mental health and emotional wellbeing and better understand their experiences. Young person consent to sessions will also be obtained.

Young person consent to sessions

During the initial session the school counsellor will talk with the young person about all aspects of the support process in an age/ needs-appropriate & child-centered manner, give the young person a chance to ask questions and ensure that they are comfortable with coming to sessions. The counsellor will then request the young person's consent to sessions either verbally or using a child friendly consent form.

When a child has been referred by a parent or member of staff but says that they do not wish to attend or do not need to talk the school counsellor will explore with them any concerns, potential barriers to talking for the young person, however ultimately if the young person does not consent to participating this will be respected, the sessions will not commence and the school counsellor will feedback to the Wellbeing team where a decision would be made about how to continue to monitor the situation or any other support potentially available for the young person and/ or their family.

Stage 5: Decision

At the Wellbeing Meeting, the outcome of the initial session will be discussed.

There are 4 possible outcomes:

1. Nurture Time is the best way to support the child and so sessions will commence once a session space becomes available. (The child may have to join the waiting list.)
2. Another form of school support would be more appropriate, for example LSA support, mindfulness sessions, Positive Play or external support, for example Compass UK or CAMHS would be more suitable.
3. The case needs to be escalated to Starting Point where more intensive support could be sought.
4. The child is thriving and so they would not benefit from any support. School does not have any concerns about the pupil.

The decision-making process and outcome will be communicated to parents.

The decision-making process and outcome will be communicated to school staff via CPOMs.

How are parents communicated with regarding Nurture Time?

Any information shared during Nurture Time sessions will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Parents will be contacted to information share and update as appropriate and necessary. For example, this might be at half term/ Christmas/ Easter break to discuss progress and whether further sessions are needed.

Specific details of what their child has said during sessions will not be shared with parents. Weekly written reports or verbal updates will not be provided. This is to protect the young person's right to a confidential, safe space and to ensure a positive therapeutic relationship of trust is maintained between the young person and the counsellor.

Where it is deemed necessary for the safeguarding of the child and/or to meet their mental health or emotional wellbeing needs then information from sessions will be shared with other professionals and with parents. This will be done on a need-to-know basis whilst prioritizing the young person's wellbeing.

When a child requests that something be shared on their behalf either with school staff or with their parents the counsellor will ensure to do so.

If further referrals are required for the young person the school counsellor will share information with permission from the young person and their parent(s), in order to enable them to access the best additional support available.