

## Appendix 3 (b): Observation Profile – the playroom

### Background

This Observation Profile is designed to be used to support self-evaluation of a nurturing approach in a playroom and should be used alongside *Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach: A Framework to support the self-evaluation of nurturing approaches in early learning and child care (ELC) settings*. The features contained in this Observation Profile have been developed through research into Nurture and nurturing approaches as well as through extensive discussion and focus groups with practitioners and learners who have had some experience of a nurturing approach. It is divided into two categories for ease of implementation:

- Environment and Relationships
- Learning and Teaching

It also links practice to each of the Nurture Principles which are outlined below in a colour coded key for your convenience.

### Implementation

This Observation Profile can be used in several different ways. Staff should always familiarise themselves fully with the profile before using it. It can be completed by a member of staff who is observing practice in a playroom that is not their own, (for example, member of SMT/SLT) and would be followed up by a learning conversation with the practitioner with a focus on feedback from the observation as well as a shared discussion about next steps. It can be also be used as self-completed task to direct self-evaluation by a practitioner in their own room. They may then choose to discuss this with colleagues to support their own next steps. A recording sheet is provided to allow practitioners focus on their individual strengths and areas of development if they choose to.

Nurture Principle	Colour code
NP1: Learning is understood developmentally	Red
NP2: Environment offers a safe base	Orange
NP3: Nurture is important for Wellbeing and Self-esteem	Yellow
NP4: Language is a vital means of communication	Green
NP 5: All behaviour is communication	Blue
NP6: Transitions are important in children's lives	Purple

## Observation Profile: the playroom

Name of Observer

Classroom Observed

Date of Observation

Date of feedback and agreed next steps

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
There are clear routines visible in the playroom for example, welcome, check ins, review of activities.	NP 2			
	NP 6			
Clear and consistent expectations and boundaries are set within the playroom – orally, visually, written.	NP 2			
	NP 5			
The playroom has designated safe areas that children can go to if they find the general playroom areas overwhelming or challenging. Children have a choice in how they use these areas.	NP 2			
Staff use language that supports co-regulation with the children when needed, for example, I am here to help and support you.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff are aware of their own reactions and take steps to try and help themselves to feel calm, for example, walking away from situations, seeking support.	NP 2			
	NP 5			
De-escalation practices are evident within the playroom, for example, staff member waits for the child to calm down before discussing incidents, language is kept to a minimum.	NP 2			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff member pays attention to body language and cues of the children and knows when to intervene to avoid situation escalating, for example, may use humour or distraction.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff are aware of their own body language and non-verbal cues and adapt these to the situation, for example, do not invade children's personal space, turn to the child and nod when approached.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Success is acknowledged and celebrated in a way that is supportive of the children, for example, through displays, feedback, encouragement.	NP 3			
	NP 4			
Language of emotion is modelled by staff in the playroom and used with children, for example, "I am feeling very cross today as a big loud dog kept me awake all night."	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff use restorative language, appropriate to age and stage, to promote a positive ethos within the playroom.	NP4			
	NP 5			
Opportunities are given for restorative meetings between staff and between staff and other agencies or parents and carers so that all involved have an opportunity to voice their feelings and thoughts.	NP 4			
	NP 5			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff consult with children when there are changes to the routine, for example, "We are going to have a visitor to our playroom today later – are you all happy with that?"	NP 2			
	NP 6			
Staff model positive relationships with other members of staff in the room, for example, "Hello... how are you feeling today? What are we planning to do today?"	NP 1			
	NP 2			
	NP 4			
Staff model positive relationships with the children in the room, for example, "Jack, I would really happy if you help me to give out the snack today."	NP 1			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff make use of the attunement framework to build up positive relationships with children and parents.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff speak in appropriate tones of voice and volume within the playroom. A usual tone would be calm and warm but a firmer tone may be used when appropriate so that children see appropriate firmness being modelled.	NP 2			
	NP 4			
Appropriate adult support and structure is provided to children who need it, for example, staff stay closer to children in playroom who may require additional support.	NP 2			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Language used by staff in the playroom clearly communicates to all children that they are welcome and will be supported to achieve and feel safe and happy within the playroom, for example, "Hello Carol, it's lovely to see you."	NP 2			
	NP 3			
	NP 4			
Staff take a step back from a situation when they are aware that they may be responding in an overly emotional or inappropriate manner. They may ask another member of staff to step in or may try to diffuse the situation themselves by moving on from situation.	NP 5			
Staff demonstrate their understanding of the fact that behaviour is communication, for example, they give the opportunity to the child to explain what has happened if appropriate or discuss possible reasons for behaviour with other staff and family members where appropriate.	NP 5			
Staff support conflict resolution by giving children the opportunity to find their way back from situations. Children are also supported by staff coaching them in how to step back from a situation, for example, "Let's take a little rest over here for now."	NP 5			
Staff move on from challenging situations after they have occurred by behaving in a calm and fair manner with the child.	NP 5			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Where any consequences are applied to behaviour – these are fair, proportionate and logical.	NP 5			
Staff make good use of positive relationships to help encourage and guide children in appropriate behaviour and avoid an over-reliance on rewards and punishments as a way of managing or controlling behaviour.	NP 2			
	NP 3			
	NP 5			
Relationships within the playroom are built on trust and staff take time to develop relationships with children and their families.	NP 2			
	NP 3			
Staff are able to stay calm and patient when children are distressed to help them feel emotionally contained when their feelings are overwhelming.	NP 5			
Staff recognise that children may be unable to comply with external rewards and reinforcements so support them to comply with requests, for example, “I see you need help with...”.	NP 5			
Staff acknowledge when a child has done something well by commenting on what they have done rather than any personal characteristic of the child which they may find difficult to accept. It can be helpful to deliver this in a neutral way for some children.	NP 3			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff either guide children to seek out 'cool down' or allow children the choice to seek this out for themselves.	NP 5			
There are clear plans for the day in the playroom which helps children to know what is coming up.	NP 6			
Learning and Teaching				
There is a high degree of differentiation and personalisation in the curriculum. Children are also given some choices about curricular tasks.	NP 1			
Tasks are differentiated around social and emotional competence as well as around curricular ability, for example, children who have difficulties working with others on tasks may be grouped with other children who can be a role model OR are given adult support and guidance on working with others.	NP 1			
	NP 3			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff build up resilience in children by helping them to achieve small successes in tasks before setting them more challenging tasks – feedback is given on how they have managed to achieve this.	NP 2			
	NP 3			
Individualised targets are set for children where appropriate – children/parents are aware of these and they are either reinforced orally or in a visual or recorded way.	NP 1			
	NP 3			
There is evidence of the promotion of health and wellbeing aspects within most learning experiences, for example, Within a group session, children are encouraged to work together, listen to each other and share their own views.	NP 1			
Negative beliefs are challenged by staff in a sensitive way, for example, do you remember the last time we did this and you were able to complete it?	NP 3			
Staff promote a growth mindset in children by helping them to see that they can achieve things by effort and perseverance.	NP 3			
	NP 4			



## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
There is clear evidence that staff have differentiated what is expected of children in response to assessment and background information, for example, give breaks in learning if children find it difficult to stay on task for long periods.	NP 1			
There is explicit teaching of social and emotional skills within the playroom according to the stage and developmental needs of the children, for example, turn taking, negotiating, PAtHs programme.	NP 1			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Behaviours that are expected within the playroom are explicitly named and demonstrated by staff, for example, listening, sharing and helping others.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Language used by the staff in the playroom suits the developmental needs of the children, for example, instructions are broken down and understanding checked.	NP 1			
	NP 4			
Staff have an awareness of language development and modify the language they use depending on the children's needs.	NP 1			
	NP 4			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff do not assume that children understand the language of emotion and help to scaffold their understanding of this.	NP 4			
Transitions throughout the day are well managed, for example, children are given clear warning and opportunities to get ready to move on.	NP 6			
There are various opportunities for play based learning dependent on the developmental level of the children, for example, in the nursery there is an emphasis on imaginative play and role play games.	NP 1			
Holistic assessment information is made use of in all playrooms, for example, staff know about Wellbeing indicators and National Practice.	NP 1			
There is evidence that information is taken from assessment tools relating to wellbeing in the, for example, Wellbeing Indicators, National Practice Model, HWB plans.	NP 1			

## Observation Profile: the playroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Children are given opportunities for choice about the mode of learning they engage in, for example, active or passive, cooperative, individual.	NP 1			
	NP 3			
Staff recognise that children need opportunities to practice the skills needed for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management and support children in the development of these skills.	NP 3			
	NP 4			
Staff provide running commentaries on what the children are doing and thinking to help them make sense of the world around them (Note: this is more effective for an adult who has a relationship with a child.)	NP 3			
	NP 4			

## Attunement Profile: Recording Sheet

Date of Focus (Observation)	Key Strengths	Areas of Development
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li><li>3.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li></ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li><li>3.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li></ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li><li>3.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li></ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li><li>3.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2</li></ol>