

Appendix 3 (a): Observation Profile – the classroom

Background

This Observation Profile is designed to be used to support self-evaluation of a nurturing approach in a classroom and should be used alongside *Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach: A Framework to support the self-evaluation of nurturing approaches in schools*. The features contained in this Observation Profile have been developed through an analysis of 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. It can be completed by a member of staff who is observing practice in a classroom that is not their own (for example, by a member of SMT/SLT or by a colleague.). It can then be followed up by a learning conversation between the classroom practitioner and observer 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 class. They may then choose to discuss this with colleagues to support their own next steps. It can also be used to direct Learning Rounds, where the practitioner can choose one or two areas for discussion and focus on these. This would then be followed up by professional discussion. A recording sheet is provided to allow practitioners to 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 classroom

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 classroom, for example, welcome, check ins, review of lesson.	NP 2			
	NP 6			
Clear and consistent expectations and boundaries are set within the class – orally, visually, written.	NP 2			
	NP 5			
The classroom has designated safe areas that children and young people can go to if they find the general classroom areas overwhelming or challenging. Children and young people have a choice in how they use these areas.	NP 2			
Staff use language that supports co-regulation with the children and young people 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 classroom, for example, staff member waits for pupil to calm down before discussing incidents, language is kept to a minimum.	NP 2			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff pay attention to body language and cues of the children and young people and know 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 and young people personal space, turn to pupil and nod when approached.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Success is acknowledged and celebrated in a way that is supportive of the pupil, for example, through displays, feedback, encouragement.	NP 3			
	NP 4			
Language of emotion is modelled by staff in the classroom and used with children and young people, for example, I am feeling a bit annoyed today as the traffic was very bad coming into school.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Restorative conversations and language are used when incidents occur, for example, what happened, what were you thinking at the time?	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Opportunities are given for restorative meetings after an incident so that all involved have an opportunity to voice their feelings and thoughts.	NP 4			
	NP 5			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff consult with children and young people when there are changes to the routine, for example, "We are going to change the planned lesson today – is everyone ok with that?" OR "We have a visitor to our class later – are you all comfortable with that?"	NP 2			
	NP 6			
Staff model positive relationships with other members of staff in the room, for example, "Hello Mrs..., how are you feeling today?" OR "It would be really great if you could help me to distribute these books to the children and young people Mr..."	NP 1			
	NP 2			
	NP 4			
Staff model positive relationships with the children and young people in the room, for example, "Jack, I would really appreciate it if you could give me a hand to distribute the scissors today:"	NP 1			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff make use of the attunement framework to build up positive relationships with children and young people,for example, noticing – "I can see that you are taking time with that piece of work" OR "Did you want to speak with me about something."	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Staff speak in appropriate tones of voice and volume within the classroom. A usual tone would be calm and warm but a firmer tone may be used when appropriate so that children and young people see appropriate firmness being modelled.	NP 2			
	NP 4			
Appropriate adult support and structure is provided to children and young people who need it, for example, adults stay closer to children and young people in class who may need regular checking in and feedback.	NP 2			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
The language used by staff in the classroom clearly communicates to children and young people that they are welcome and will be supported to achieve and feel safe and happy within the class, 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 for the pupil to explain what has happened – either at the time when appropriate or after a situation has occurred	NP 5			
Staff support conflict resolution by giving children and young people the opportunity to find their way back from situations. Children and young people are also supported by staff coaching them in how to step back from a situation, for example, "At this stage, it might be helpful if you took a wee minute to cool down."	NP 5			
Staff move on from challenging situations after they have occurred by behaving in a calm and fair manner with the pupil.	NP 5			

Observation Profile: the classroom, 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 and young people 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 class are built on trust and staff take time to develop rapport with children and young people by discussing interests, talents, and so on, when appropriate.	NP 5			
Staff are able to stay calm and patient when children and young people are distressed to help them feel emotionally contained when their feelings are overwhelming.	NP 5			
Staff recognise that children and young people 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 pupil has done something well by commenting on what they have done rather than any personal characteristic of the pupil 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 classroom, continued

Environment and Relationships				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff either guide children and young people to seek out 'cool down' or allow children and young people the choice to seek this out for themselves. There are clear plans for the day in the classroom which helps children and young people to know what is coming up.	NP 5			
There are clear plans for the day in the classroom which helps children and young people to know what is coming up.	NP 6			
Learning and Teaching				
There is a high degree of differentiation and personalisation in the curriculum. Children and young people 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 and young people who have difficulties working with others on tasks are grouped with other children and young people who can give support OR are given adult support and guidance on working with others.	NP 1			
	NP 3			
There is a clear balance between support and challenge within the curriculum, for example, children and young people are given work that they are comfortable doing alongside some tasks that may be more challenging. Adults mediate this learning and provide a safe base for learners when learning is more challenging.	NP 1			
	NP 2			
	NP 3			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff build up resilience in children and young people 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 and young people where appropriate – children and young people 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 lessons, for example, within a literacy lesson, children and young people are encouraged to discuss and work together.	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 and young people by helping them to see that they can achieve things by effort and perseverance.	NP 3			
	NP 4			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
There is clear evidence that teaching staff have differentiated what is expected of children and young people in response to assessment and background information, for example, give breaks in learning if pupil finds it difficult to focus for long periods.	NP 1			
There is explicit teaching of social and emotional skills within the classroom according to the stage and developmental needs of the children and young people, for example, turn taking, negotiating.	NP 1			
	NP 4			
	NP 5			
Behaviours that are expected within the classroom are explicitly named and demonstrated by staff, for example, listening, sharing, helping others.	NP 4			
	NP 5			
The language used by the teachers in the classroom suits the developmental needs of the children and young people, 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 and young people needs.	NP 1			
	NP 4			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Staff do not assume that children and young people understand the language of emotion and help to scaffold their understanding of this.	NP 4			
Transitions between different parts of the lesson and different lessons are well managed, for example, children and young people are given clear warning and opportunities to get ready to move on.	NP 6			
There are opportunities for play based learning dependent on the developmental level of the children and young people, for example, in early years there is an emphasis on imaginative play, in the upper school this may involve role play, games, drama.	NP 1			
Holistic assessment information is made use of in all classes, for example, teaching staff know about HWB levels as well as other areas of the curriculum.	NP 1			
There is evidence that information is taken from assessment tools relating to wellbeing in the class, for example, wellbeing Indicators, National Practice Model, HWB assessments.	NP 1			

Observation Profile: the classroom, continued

Learning and Teaching				
Features of effective practice	Nurture Principle	Code	Discussion Points/Feedback	Agreed Next Steps
Children and young people are given some level of choice about the mode of learning they engage in, for example, active or passive, cooperative, individual.	NP 1			
Staff recognise that children and young people need opportunities to practice the skills needed for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management and support children and young people in the development of these skills.	NP 3			
	NP 4			
Staff provide running commentaries on what the pupil is 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
	1. 2 3.	1. 2
	1. 2 3.	1. 2
	1. 2 3.	1. 2
	1. 2 3.	1. 2