



Nurture groups were originally developed in 1969 in London by educational psychologist Marjorie Boxall who saw that a large number of children entering school arrived with social, emotional and behavioural needs. These students were unable to form trusting relationships with adults or to respond appropriately to other children – in effect, they were simply not ready to meet the social and intellectual demands of school life. Nurture groups are now in over 1500 schools in the UK and offer the opportunity to experience the early nurturing experiences some children and young people lack, giving them the skills to do well at school, make friends and deal more confidently and calmly with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.

Nurture groups are developed around six principles of nurture:

- Learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in the lives of children and young people

By increasing the chances of having vulnerable and disadvantaged students remain in schools, nurture groups help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by removing the barriers to learning and succeeding in schools. According to the Office for National Statistics (2014), those with a low level of educational attainment are almost five times more likely to be in poverty now as those with a high level of education.

The role that schools play in promoting the resilience of their pupils is important, particularly so for some children where their home life is less supportive. School should be a safe and affirming place for children where they can develop a sense of belonging and feel able to trust and talk openly with adults about their problems. (Department for Education 2014)

The Broad Heath Nurture group is a small class of twelve to fourteen children. The group spends Monday-Thursday morning of each week in the group but remain part of their mainstream class. The group is designed to support the children, so they are able to confidently become part of the mainstream class. This includes using a variety of techniques and resources to support the children including ipads, talking tins, language masters etc. The group has two specially trained staff members, an assistant head teacher and a learning support assistant. We work closely with the class teachers as we feel dialogue is extremely important. Our task is to model courteous and supportive behaviour while making the children feel valued and accepted. Our motto is *'If I believe I can achieve'*.

There is a great emphasis on communication and the group has specific targets that include *Speaking and listening, Social skills, Reading, Writing and Maths*.

Children attend on a part-time basis for as long as is required. The children do not miss assemblies, guests in school, trips that they would normally take part in during the school day/week. We feel parental involvement is essential and always welcome the support and indeed questions of parents/carers. There will be 'specific' invites to parents/carers during special occasions.

*'It is very good because I like doing my Maths, Literacy and Phonics. I like reading my book'-Monalisa*

*'I enjoy learning in different ways and enjoy the group dance'-Anna*

*Everyone listens to what I feel and say, this is the Broad Heath Nurture way-Razvan*

*'I like doing the fish display, it's fabulous, even though we are different we are still a team'-Sharazat*