

The National Nurturing Schools Programme
Assessment Report



Establishment name and address	Gloverspiece School, Ladywood, Droitwich Spa, Worcs, WR9 0AJ
Headteacher/Principal	Lynne Duffy
NNSP trained staff	Liam Allibone
Assessment date	23rd May 2025
Assessor	Carrie Thorne
Trainer	Adele Wilkinson
Review date	May 2028

STANDARDS

1. Stakeholders		1a. Pupils		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
1a.1	The social and emotional needs of pupils are assessed and tracked.			✓
1a.2	Nurture principles are defined and explained to pupils.			✓
1a.3	Pupils are encouraged to develop responsibility for themselves and learn self-efficacy			✓

1. Stakeholders		1b. Parents and Carers		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
1b.1	Parents and carers feel valued and welcomed in the establishment.			✓
1b.2	Nurture principles are defined and explained to parents and carers.			✓
1b.3	Reports to parents and carers reflect pupils' strengths and areas of need.			✓

1. Stakeholders		1c. Staff		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
1c.1	There are systems and procedures to welcome, support and induct new staff and visitors.			✓
1c.2	Nurture principles are defined and explained to all staff.			✓
1c.3	Staff are given opportunities to discuss, develop and review shared values.		✓	
1c.4	There are clear expectations of how all adults in school relate to children when in or out of class.			✓
1c.5	Staff are actively involved in The National Nurturing Schools Programme.			✓

1. Stakeholders		1d. The Community		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
1d. 1	The establishment works with stakeholders within the community.			✓
1d. 2	Nurture principles are defined and explained to stakeholders.			✓
1d. 3	The establishment is used as a resource within the community.			✓
1d. 4	The community is included in development plans.		✓	

1. Delivery		2a. Meeting Pupils Needs		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
2a. 1	Nurture principles are incorporated in curriculum planning and delivery.			✓
2a. 2	The social and emotional needs of pupils are addressed.			✓
2a. 3	Behaviour is dealt with consistently by all staff.			✓
2a. 4	Pupils are involved in developing and evaluating their learning.			✓

2. Delivery		2b. Wellbeing: Pupils		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
2b. 1	Provision and strategies promote pupil welfare and wellbeing			✓
2b. 2	Pupils feel safe and secure.			✓
2b. 3	Pupils feel valued, respected, included and listened to.			✓
2b. 4	Pupils are prepared for transitions in life.			✓

2 Delivery		2b. Wellbeing: Staff		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
2b.5	Provision and strategies promote staff welfare and wellbeing			✓
2b.6	Staff feel valued, respected, included and listened to.			✓
2b.7	Staff access relevant professional development.			✓
2b.8	There are opportunities for reflective collaborative problem solving for staff			✓

2 Delivery		2c. Environment		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
2c.1	Nurture principles are reflected in the development of the environment.			✓
2c.2	The environment is safe and welcoming for all stakeholders.			✓

3. Leadership and Management		3a. Policy		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
3a.1	Organisational and curriculum policies reflect and support nurture principles.			✓
3a.2	Stakeholders are involved in the development and review of policies.			✓

3. Leadership and Management		3b. Partnership		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
3b.1	Partnership working reflects a nurturing rationale.			✓

3. Leadership and Management		3c. Resources		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
3c.1	There are clear development priorities regarding nurture principles and practice.			✓
3c.2	Resources are deployed to develop nurturing principles and practice across the setting.			✓

3 Leadership and Management		3d. Monitoring and evaluation		
Standard		Developing	Establishing	Enhancing
3d. 1	Monitoring and evaluation protocols include evidence of planning, reviewing and evaluating processes for the National Nurturing Schools Programme (please include attendance and exclusion data from the first self-assessment and in all subsequent self-assessments).			✓

Assessors Summary	
<p>This report cannot reflect the hard work that goes on at school every day. A comprehensive evidence file, video and related documents have been provided as part of the re-assessment process by the school. This includes attendance and exclusion data and Case Studies for Partnership and Community work. The Reaccreditation Report and assessment visit evidenced the ongoing impact of Groverspiece nurture-based initiatives in alignment with The Six Principles of Nurture.</p> <p>Current Context: Groverspiece remains a highly unique education setting. Catering for 25 students, all with EHCP's. This is a school where nurture is literally the cornerstone on which everything else is built. In 2023, Groverspiece School were judged as winners of the 'SEN Provision of the Year' in the Worcestershire Education Awards – this nomination referenced and celebrated the schools outstanding work pertaining to Nurture.</p> <p>Since achieving the National Nurturing Schools Award in January 2022 there have been considerable changes at Groverspiece. Staff teams have been restructured which has included changes/developments of roles for the original Nurture Leads. There has been and continues to be movement within the staff. However, since the initial assessment, the school has maintained a 'Nurture Team'. It consists of 11 staff (two nurture assistants and 8 Nurture Team members) efficiently led by Liam Allibone who explained, "Of course, the members of this team have changed however, the objectives, aims and purpose of this team have remained the same. Each member of the nurture team is</p>	

allocated a caseload of students, with whom they engage in individual weekly ‘nurture check-ins’.”

There have also been adaptations to the physical environment and there are plans to further develop the school. There will be two schools over two sites creating a primary and secondary setting. Throughout all this change and uncertainty, the consistent factor is the delivery of a curriculum and quality of experiences that continue to have nurture at their very core. The approach of nurture has evolved and deepened to become a core part of the school values, culture, ethos and provision.

Despite the challenges Lynne Duffy, Head Teacher, and Liam Allibone, Deputy Head Teacher and Nurture Lead, have continued to be fully committed to developing and consolidating the National Nurturing Schools Programme at Gloverspiece School. In fact, in 2024, they changed the school strapline to ‘Nurture. Grow. Achieve’ to reflect the fundamental importance of nurture in the lives of their students. Liam explained, “We wanted it to highlight the importance we place upon nurture and its role as an integral prerequisite to social, emotional, behavioural and academic growth and achievement at our school.”

Areas for development from initial assessment:

- Involve stakeholders in the development and review of policies.
- Nurture Principles – to be shared more comprehensively with stakeholders particularly parents and wider community members. Add more detailed information to your website on The Six Principles of Nurture and how they are interwoven in daily life at Gloverspiece
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the provision within your setting completing the National Nurturing Schools self-assessment on an annual basis
- Engage with the re-accreditation process for the National Nurturing Schools Programme.

These areas for development have been a focus for Gloverspiece with a view to building on the nurturing practice that was already evident. Through the Self-Assessment, evidence provided and the assessment visit, it was clear that Liam and Lynne have worked hard with all their stakeholders to address these areas. Examples are outlined below.

Examples of excellent practice include:

A strong and committed leadership team.

The commitment and passion of the leadership team towards the development and work around The National Nurturing Schools Programme has been remarkably unwavering. Liam’s opening comments on assessment day were, “We have put nurture on a pedestal to give it the status it deserves.” It is this strong mindset that has not only kept nurture

alive at Gloverspiece School but has enabled it to successfully grow from strength to strength. All new staff are trained in The Six Principles of Nurture and are provided with a ninety minute 'Theory and Practice of Nurture' training session delivered by Liam as part of their induction process. There is a clear development path as The National Nurturing Schools Programme sits alongside safeguarding and health and safety.

With an eye on reaccreditation and a strong fundamental belief in nurture they have enhanced and expanded their nurture provision so that it forms the main part of their core offer. Lynne commented, "Nurture has become even more of a focus, it was the way we wanted to go and Liam has continued to steer us there." Liam's personal enthusiasm and dedication to nurture is contagious throughout the school and no doubt a contributing factor to its success. This combined with Lynne's transformational leadership style has been effective in driving innovation and achieving ambitious goals.

Teaching and support staff are clearly invested in the National Nurturing Schools Programme. One teacher told me, "Gloverspiece is very unique. Nurturing the child is at the centre of everything and we have the time to do this. It is so refreshing to work here and be able to do that." This was reiterated by a support member of staff who said, "I whole-heartedly believe in what we do. We are proactive rather than reactive. We are one big nurture team who look for strengths and are really good at identifying them."

It is not just those attending Gloverspiece that have benefited from Liam and Lynne's strong leadership, they have been pivotal in supporting and nurturing other stakeholders to embark on a nurturing journey. The care farm element of the provision continues to be used as an alternative provision for students from other local schools who struggle to engage with their educational placement and are in need of support for the emotional and mental wellbeing of their students. The multiple benefits of a more nurturing approach are highlighted and the staff receive induction training surrounding nurture and continued CPD around this. The Six Principles of Nurture and the schools nurturing ethos are clearly outlined on their school website and stakeholders (e.g. social workers, external professionals, prospective parents, visitors etc.) regularly signposted to that information.

Embedding The Six Principles of Nurture

At Gloverspiece each of The Six Principles of Nurture have been carefully considered, they provide direction for growth and development, examples of excellent practice in each area are highlighted below.

The importance of transitions in pupils' lives – On the last assessment the school was able to share how they supported pupils who had experienced multiple difficulties in previous education settings through a successful transition process to become learners at Gloverspiece. As part of the reaccreditation process they proudly shared how they have taken many students, who arrived at Gloverspiece unable to access learning, sit in

a classroom, read or write and have nurtured them into successful learners. Since initial accreditation, all students who have left Gloverspiece to transition into post-16 education, have done so having achieved multiple qualifications in functional skills and vocational qualifications.

The robust induction period is still in place to support transition into the school, but has been enhanced. The school recognises it is incredibly important as most pupils have experienced 'educational trauma'. As a setting they also recognise how transitions in daily life can be triggers for behaviour and therefore the individualised nurture sessions address identified needs such as moving house or bereavement.

In addition to the above developments there has been increased community cohesion which has helped consolidate a feeling of belonging within the local community and equip pupils with the skills required for successful integration into society, post Gloverspiece. The staff have helped their pupils identify continued sources of nurture for them to draw upon throughout their life journey. Liam explained, "There has been a long process of building community relationships. We have made ourselves more visible to break down barriers. We have been developing a network of nurture in the local community."

The use of language as a vital means of communication - since the initial accreditation, Liam has widened lines of communication. Within the timetabled weekly nurture sessions, students are encouraged to verbalise feelings around their successes, achievements and worries. The content of these check-ins is communicated and reflected upon within staff weekly nurture team meetings enabling any emerging areas for additional support to be identified and actioned. The allocated key individual plays an important role in helping pupils identify emotions, interpret them and convey information to staff, parents and other pupils, as well as being a figure of support during difficult times. A further layer of support is also in place. Liam explained, "Despite all of our students receiving either 1:1 or small-group-based teaching assistant support, pupils have an additional support figure who is 'detached' from their daily student."

Learning should be understood developmentally - since the initial accreditation, they have developed and implemented an alternate way of assessing the academic progress of their students. Rather than grouping students by year group and delivering content in line with age-related expectations, they assess students against a bespoke framework of 'progress ladders'. As an alternative to continuously presenting students with national curriculum targets/expectations, they support their development through sets of ladders across English and Maths which aim to equip them with the skills they require to access functional skills and achieve formal qualifications. The use of Boxall Profile Online tool is a collective effort involving all staff who have a "global understanding" of its results. It is done on balance across the school life of all pupils.

The importance of nurture for the development of well-being - since the initial accreditation, processes and systems have been implemented to enhance the well-being and welfare of students and staff alike. Examples include: the implementation of a dedicated 'mental health and wellbeing team', a nurture team, weekly individual nurture check-ins for students, a TA representative for each pupil, termly staff appreciation awards, staff wellbeing surveys and 'Nurture Breakfasts' during assembly each morning, in which all students are offered toast and a drink.

All behaviour is communication - due to the complexity of the students and their SEN profiles, the school do face a relatively high frequency of behaviours yet since the last assessment visit the school report that 'the proportion of students who present with high levels of needs has reduced across both developmental and diagnostic strands'. This is reflected in the behavioural data at Gloverspiece. The reduction is perhaps owing to several factors including, regular staff nurture training which encompasses the neuropsychology underpinning behaviour encouraging them to ask the question '*based on what I know about this student, what is it they are trying to communicate with their behaviour?*' The introduction of post-incident interventions/reflections with staff and copious amounts of work with students developing and reinforcing the understanding that '*all behaviour is communication*'.

The classroom is a safe base – the environment is no doubt the initial draw for the majority of the pupils who attend the school. Located on an 18-acre care farm, students have access to a wide range of animals, both within timetabled lessons and during more flexible free time and structured interventions. It is perhaps in this area that the ethos of nurture really flourishes and provides the opportunity for children to reflect what they have learned in nurture sessions as they demonstrate an unwavering desire to care for and nurture the rescue animals on the farm.

On the initial assessment nurture was centralised around a 'Nurture Room'. However, since then the environment has been updated. Liam explained, "We have recognised the importance of (literally) breaking down the walls between this space and the wider school environment. After all, nurture needs to be embedded throughout the physical environment and school community, not only accessible in one room alone!"

They have introduced different spaces in response to the evolving needs of current cohorts. Examples include: - 'Nurture Bugs' classroom – a dedicated classroom for younger students to act as a natural stepping-stone between the nurture room and the main classroom, a 'Nurture Lounge'- a calm, sensory-related space which students could access when needing time away from their usual learning environment, a 'Nurture Nook' - a quiet space in the corner of the main classroom that students can access when needing a break from learning or to make their learning more accessible for them, a Forest School area in which nurture is intrinsically and purposefully woven throughout the experiences, horticulture lessons which enable teachers and support staff to foster and model environmental nurturing. Liam explained, "By providing our students with a

range of safe, nurturing and therapeutic spaces, both indoors and outdoors, we support the implementation of the principle *'the classroom/school should offer a safe base'*. The students feel a sense of belonging at Gloverspiece, an environment in which people and animals interact to bi-directionally nurture."

Pupils explained, "There are multiple spaces which help us such as, the farm, Forest School, the nurture room and the tyres."

"We have Phil, the health and safety man who helps us feel safe."

Within policy and practice.

All policies at Gloverspiece School are developed using The Six Principles of Nurture. Especially the curriculum and behaviour policies which have been reviewed to ensure they offer a detailed focus on nurture and the approach. Nurture has been refined as the school's core offer, underpinning their daily offer especially in the main areas of their provision e.g. classroom-based learning, animal-assisted learning and farm-based learning. Nurture is threaded throughout.

Staff explained, "Nurture is identified in our curriculum and lesson planning documents which all prompt teachers to reflect on and consider the principles of nurture and identify how these are considered and met in our planning and delivery." Extensive work has been done around the new ethos/strapline for both staff and parents – explaining the role nurture plays at the setting. The school views nurture as the first step in what they set out to achieve with the students. Liam explained, "Rather than having a dedicated, standalone 'Nurture Group', we recognise that due to the characteristics and complexities of our students each pupil would benefit from nurture. Therefore, nurture is a core part of our timetable, each student has a weekly group nurture session and most students have individual nurture programmes. This is fluid and evolves in response to student's needs."

Family support and Community engagement.

Staff at Gloverspiece are very mindful that their pupils don't exist in a vacuum, and they ensure that support offered from the school is extended beyond the pupils. Relationships and collaboration with parents and wider family are crucial, "as a small school they are at the heart." Parents/carers continue to be invited to attend events throughout the year and are informed about any changes to the school relating to nurture such as the nurture topic for the term. Liam shared, "Periodically delivered Nurture Workshops for Parents/Carers support us in developing understanding and appreciation of the nurture approach and how we embed this at Gloverspiece."

Parent voice is gathered regularly, a recent parent/carer survey identified the nurture aspect of Gloverspiece emerged as one of the most commonly identified and referenced aspects of the school. A parent commented, "My child feels comfortable there and he hasn't felt comfortable anywhere before. They've helped us through the process and been by our side every step of the way."

A parent commented “It’s like a family, they care so much about your child. They couldn’t do anything better.”

On the initial assessment visit, community relationships and the school's place within the community was explored. Liam explained, “We have sought to bolster our partnership and community links. These were evidenced in the excellent case studies. Links with the key community figures, local charities, police and support organisations have allowed the school to develop the tapestry of support and community belonging of which our students and staff are a part.” In-school visits from the local police service support the development of positive attitudes and relationships with this service. The staff explained “Many of our students have misconceptions of the police so we aim to break that down and show they’re a nurturing organisation and can be a beacon of nurture in the community.” They have explored volunteering opportunities and examples include the local church in which students engage in activities which support the church in maintaining its grounds. These foster a sense of belonging within the local community and provide opportunities to enrich the lives of the students since the initial accreditation.

Pupils.

The evidence gathered from pupils, parents and from the assessment visit demonstrated that the children are benefiting from the implementation of The Six Principles of Nurture and the use of The Boxall Profile. Pupils were able to identify what it feels like to be in a nurturing school and what staff do to make them feel safe and valued. There were lovely interactions between staff and pupils, and it was clear that developing positive relationships with their children is of the utmost importance at Groverspiece. They generously shared their lunchtime with me and the conversations were sincere, heart-warming and honest. They really breathed life into the application and evidence documents describing a school that changes the trajectory of lives.

“Everyone’s nurture session is unique; I find all the nurture really useful, it helps us change.”

Summary

The Reaccreditation Report submitted by Liam stated, ‘Overall the three years since our initial accreditation have been a period of continued evolution, adaptation and change. Despite this, we feel that we have been successful in maintaining nurture as being the beacon which has continued to guide us to where we are today. Moreover, we feel that we have fostered an ethos of nurture so that it has grown from a fringe approach within our school [during our initial assessment period] to being the foundation on which our provision and practice are now built.’

There was a wealth of evidence in support of this statement and they demonstrated an unwavering commitment to enhancing nurture at their school. The Six Principles of Nurture are deeply embedded in curriculum, policy and relationships. It is true to say that nurture is the starting point and steadying force of everybody’s journey. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone with whom I had the privilege of spending time

with during the assessment morning. You all portrayed a clear reflection of school life through honesty and pride. Your dedication to nurture clearly stood out and is inspirational and commendable, I wish you much luck in your future endeavours as the school continues to grow.

Quotes from the assessment day:

“The school uses multiple nurture strategies to help us.” Pupil voice

“I find having someone you can trust really helpful.” Pupil voice

“Nurture is a calm place where you can let your emotions out.” Pupil voice

“Do you know what they could do better – up the age so we can stay.” Pupil voice

“Communication is so high – they always inform us.” Parent voice

“The nurture Zoom sessions for parents to join and learn about The Six Principles of Nurture, give us a good insight into how it all works.” Parent voice

“There is a feeling of calmness now – there is a lot more laughter and humour.” Staff voice

Recommendation

We recommend Gloverspiece School for the National Nurturing Schools Award

Areas for development	Timescale
Further enhance your nurturing environment to include a commemorative garden to serve as a dedicated tranquil and reflective space for pupils to visit to remember and honour those who have passed away. Perhaps pupils could be involved in the design and incorporate personal touches or symbolic elements that evoke the memory of the individual being honoured. Start this journey soon in honour of the recent loss.	Ongoing
Consider widening Boxall Profile Online training to include more staff members.	Ongoing

<p>Consider including pupils in the interview process to help get the right person and ease transition between staff change.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate the provision within your setting completing the National Nurturing Schools self-assessment on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Engage with the re-accreditation process for the National Nurturing Schools Programme.</p>	<p>2028</p>