

# The National Nurturing Schools Programme

## Assessment Report



<b>Establishment</b>	Carstairs Junction Primary School
<b>Head teacher/Principal</b>	Jill Armour
<b>NNSP trained staff</b>	Michelle Martin
<b>Assessment date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021
<b>Assessor</b>	Julie Hall
<b>Trainer</b>	Kirsten Mann
<b>Review date</b>	March 2024

This report was written based on the evidence of provision given pre-pandemic and is awarded on the understanding the evidenced provisions will be reinstated post Covid19.

<b>1</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
<b>1a.</b>	<b>Children and young people</b>
<p><b>1a.1 The social and emotional needs of children and young people are assessed and tracked.</b>          The school has embedded the use of the Boxall Profile across groups and classes in the school to assess and track pupils' social, emotional, health and wellbeing. Staff talk knowledgeably about using observation and their understanding of children's development to plan individual pupil progress. A keen understanding of the importance of HWB to engagement, learning and progress leads to the routine use of Staged Intervention and assessment using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to identify early any need for support.</p> <p><b>1a.2 Nurture principles are defined and explained to children and young people.</b>          At Get Together (the school assembly) nurture principles are discussed and then referred to when appropriate. The Health and Well-being Committee meetings have a focus on nurture, and it was clear from the language used during the visit that the nurture principles are well understood. There are plans to create a display within the school to help ASN, younger pupils and ELC understand the nurture principles in child friendly language.</p> <p><b>1a.3 Children and young people are encouraged to develop responsibility for themselves and learn self-efficacy.</b>          Pupils spoke well about their learning, the support given and their own progress. Wellbeing monitoring, online learning journals and Additional Support Plans show a high level of pupil self-reflection and target setting in partnership with teachers and parents. The school is using a growth mindset approach and have identified one area of the curriculum, numeracy, in which to teach and practice the language of growth mindset before rolling this out across other areas such as BMW Behaviour, manners and working hard.</p>	

<b>1b.</b>	<b>Parents and caregivers</b>
<p><b>1b. 1 Parents and caregivers feel valued and welcomed by the service.</b>          The school organises meet the teacher events, Showcase/Assemblies, Nativity plays, Scottish celebrations and Leavers Assemblies to which all parents and carers are invited as well as curriculum events – including Book and a Blether, Read, Write, Count activities for P1-3 and a reading river for World Book Day          Parents are invited to help within the school throughout the year and take part in regular coffee mornings for the wider community. Staff and parents described formal and informal communication in the form of chats, home diaries and telephone calls. Parents felt the school had an open door and felt confident in approaching the school with their concerns knowing they would be dealt with and responded to promptly and sensitively.</p> <p><b>1b.2 Nurture principles are defined and explained to parents and caregivers.</b>          The school designed and shared a leaflet and banner to explain and showcase the school's approach to nurture. Parents talked of their child's development being understood, of them feeling safe at school and of their child's increasing use of language to communicate as well as their own increasing awareness of behaviour as communication. One parent particularly appreciated the steps the school took to welcome her child into school in the morning thus showing an understanding of how transitions are handled by the school.</p> <p><b>1b.3 Reports to parents and caregivers reflect children and young people's strengths and areas of need.</b>          In reporting to parents, staff use language which shows that they know and value the pupils as individuals, their comments are thoughtful, and specific to the child. HWB comments and targets reflect the teachers' knowledge of assessment tools and their use of shared language. There is a strong emphasis on strengths and progress.</p>	

<b>1c.</b>	<b>Staff</b>
<p><b>1c.1 There are systems and procedures to welcome, support and induct new staff and visitors.</b>          The school prides itself in having a welcoming ethos and culture and this was commented upon by members of staff who considered themselves very much a team. The specialist support teacher who visits several schools particularly valued her welcome at Carstairs Junction Primary School, where she felt part of that team. There is a welcome booklet for new staff members and booklets/information for the teaching of curricular areas including reading, active literacy and maths.</p>	

**1c.2 Nurture principles are defined and explained to all staff.**

Staff received training on nurture and attachment as well as a wide range of HWB subjects. It was clear through their language in discussions that they fully understand the 6 nurture principles and how they relate to their everyday practice. They gave examples of supporting transitions large and small, breaking down learning to small steps to increase inclusion, understanding development through the adoption of very focused assessment and a total communication approach across the school to allow every pupil to have a voice.

**1c.3 Staff are given opportunities to discuss, develop and review shared values.**

Staff at all levels were enthusiastic and engaged in meeting learners needs, they talked of roles and responsibilities which allowed them to use their talents and develop their own skills. There was clearly a shared understanding of and approach to the routines, predictability, expectations and support needed to create a strong, positive school culture and ethos. Staff described themselves as 'All singing from the same hymn sheet' and this has clearly created a safe and nurturing environment for all.

**1c.4 There are clear expectations of how staff relate to children and young people in all settings and events.**

Using shared school aims and values, staff and pupils were clear about expectations. BMW behaviour, manners and working hard created a clear and simple brand message which all pupils and staff could relate to. This has allowed a consistent and whole school approach to positive relationships and behaviour. There is a clear appreciation of the value of communication and restorative practice with one of the pupils saying that 'Fixing a problem might take half an hour but it is worth it.'

**1c.5 Staff are actively involved in The National Nurturing Schools Programme.**

It is evident that staff have and continue to be involved in the programme as part of their everyday practice and ongoing developments. During the accreditation visit they were hugely supportive of the work done by colleagues across the school in the development of targeted and whole school nurture.

**1d. The community**

**1d.1 The school works with all stakeholders.**

**Case Study One:** School and ELC work in close partnership with the local community group, first the community council and now the community led action group. School staff attend meetings. One project led to the refurbishment of the local playpark. Because of extensive consultation with pupils, they now feel ownership of the park, expressing great satisfaction at having designed it and much pleasure in their visits. They particularly appreciated visits facilitated by the school with their classmates who live out with the village area. The school plans to continue their involvement with the community led action group and to engage with another close village in this rural community to further enhance facilities.

**Case Study Two:**

The school meets throughout the year with the Community Action group and Community Action Lanarkshire. The Community Enterprise won a tender agreement to drive forward community development, this has resulted in several community events organised to promote community involvement, for example, a ceilidh and a Spring Tea. The steering groups consult children and gather their views about the area at both primary and secondary levels and what they would like to happen.

**1d. The community**

**1d.2 Nurture principles are defined and explained to stakeholders.**

The schools nurturing approaches are recognised in the community and there are plans to develop this through the community links post Covid 19.

**1d.3 The school is used as an established resource for stakeholders.**

School is a huge part of local community, given limited resources in such a rural environment – MUGA, community group, high school support classes and Healthy Valley sessions

**1d.4 The school is responsive and inclusive to their stakeholders.**

Views and opinions are sought and acted upon- *you said we did*. The school gathers feedback following events and through questionnaires. Parent council/PTA provide more formal links for more formal lines and the School Improvement Plan includes further developing links with community for 20/21.

<b>2</b>	<b>Delivery</b>
<b>2a.</b>	<b>Meeting the needs of children and young people</b>
<p><b>2a.1 Nurture principles are incorporated in curriculum planning and delivery.</b> The curriculum rationale/framework contains discrete lessons linked to relevant principles of nurture. The understanding of pupil development needs and the development of communication and language is evident as the staff talk about differentiation to meet the diverse needs of pupils in the school.</p> <p><b>2a.2 The social and emotional needs of children and young people are addressed.</b> Provision during the school day includes a wide range of whole school, class and individual interventions aimed at supporting and addressing the needs of children. Pupils access targeted support through the Sunshine Corner and Rainbow Room. HWB curriculum provides for physical, emotional and mental health needs. The school recognises the importance of movement, nature and the arts in promoting wellbeing. Staff talked enthusiastically of using their professional development such as Thera play, Nurture Talks, Draw and Talk to enhance the children's experiences.</p>	

<b>2a.</b>	<b>Meeting the needs of children and young people (continued)</b>
<p><b>2a.3 Consistent advice is given on supporting improvements in behaviour and emotional wellbeing.</b> Policies outline the expectations of all staff and pupils. There is a robust whole school approach to positive relationships and behaviour. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, manners and work. This is taught, modelled and supported through posters, assemblies and staff lanyards which support reflection and restorative conversations.</p> <p><b>2a.4 Children and young people are encouraged to be involved in developing and evolving their educational achievements.</b> Pupils are consulted on the content of their learning. Teachers actively respond to pupil ideas and interests. Pupils are aware of their progress and targets which are shared, they are supported to use self and peer assessment methods. Teachers talked of children being aware of their learning journey through learning journals. Pupils were able to reflect on their learning with one pupil telling me <i>'I used to be a closed book but now I can talk about how I feel'</i> and another <i>'I feel I have the skills to move to high school and I know I will be supported'</i>.</p>	

<b>2b.</b>	<b>Wellbeing: Children and young people</b>
<p><b>2b.1 Provision and strategies promote the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.</b> Improving the health and wellbeing of children is a key priority in the School Improvement Plan. The school provides support for children to develop their self-esteem, confidence, social collaboration and expression. School approaches include: nurture, attachment training, knowledge of trauma and bereavement, emotion works, SLC Give us a Break among others.</p> <p><b>2b.2 Children and young people feel safe and secure.</b> Children expressed feeling safe and happy in school, parents echoed this in that they knew their children were safe and cared for. Pupils reported being confident to approach adults to talk or seek help. This sense of safety is due in part to well-planned transitions, enhanced transitions, continuity of staff, meeting and greeting, predictability and routine promoted through visual timetables, photographs and signs etc.</p> <p><b>2b.3 Children and young people feel valued, respected, included and listened to.</b> Pupils vote to contribute to a wide range of pupil groups in normal school time and know that this will continue after Covid. They were able to articulate that their voices were valued, and staff took time to explain decisions concerning them. Pupils are supported to reflect on their own wellbeing using SHANARRI each month.</p>	

**2b.4 Children and young people are prepared for transitions in life.**

Transitions are planned and organised with additional support, as necessary. Routines, procedures and classroom practice are explained to children. Enhanced transition arrangements are made for children who are identified as being at risk, and pupils with ASN joining the ASN classes in the school.

**2b. Wellbeing: Staff**

**2b.5 Provision and strategies promote staff welfare and wellbeing.**

The wellbeing of staff is taken seriously, and the genuine care of staff for each other was evident throughout the virtual visit. Even online the strong sense of cohesion, cooperation and genuine concern for each other came across. The Senior Leadership Team has an open-door policy and provides comprehensive pastoral support to all staff members. Staff expressed a similar approachability from staff at all levels on a formal and informal basis citing that they felt they could go to any other staff member for support.

**2b.6 Staff feel valued, respected, included and listened to.**

During discussions it was clear that all staff are proud of their school, the children they care for and the relationships they have fostered within the school community. There was a sense of energy and enthusiasm for the future plans and development.

**2b.7 Staff access relevant professional development.**

There are multiple opportunities for quality CPD, and staff are encouraged and supported to access training. Staff are empowered and continue to develop their leadership and strategic skills and share their own interests and learning with colleagues. One staff member talked with obvious pride about the initiatives she was taking forward and the opportunities she had for leadership.

**2b. Wellbeing: Staff (continued)**

**2b.8 There are opportunities for reflective collaborative problem solving for staff**

Systems in place to ensure that staff can reflect and communicate with each other, for example: an open-door policy, whole staff meetings, updates at staff meetings, inset discussions, working groups, CATs

**2c. The environment**

**2c.1 Nurture principles are reflected in the development of the workplace environments.**

Evidence shows an attractive engaging environment in a modern well maintained building. The staff have created a welcoming nurturing atmosphere with imaginative use of display areas such as the front window area. This changes seasonally and welcomes visitors to the school. All staff and pupils talked about the Rainbow Room and how inclusive this sensory space is, open to all.

**2c.2 The environment is safe and welcoming for all stakeholders.**

Child Protection for the children, staff and community is a priority. There are a variety of systems in place at entrances and exits and at transition times. Evidence shows that visitors have commented on the friendly, welcoming and nurturing environment, including members of the community group. Banners at the front door display the Nurture Principles and the school Vision and Values and there is a comfortable waiting area including a library for young children

**3 Leadership and management**

**3a. Policy**

**3a.1 Organisational processes and service development policies reflect and support nurture principles.**

There is a clear commitment and passion to place the needs of the children at the heart of school practice. The organisation and policies promote a nurturing ethos. The vision, values and aims for the school are established, there is a clear commitment to a consistent whole school approach.

**3a.2 Stakeholders are involved in the development and review of policies.**

There exists a wide range of opportunities and meetings for parents and carers, school staff, governors and children to inform plans and procedures.

**3b. Partnership**

**3b.1 Partnership working reflects a nurturing rationale.**

As a Scottish Attainment Challenge school with 3 mainstream and 3 ASN classes, the school has received support from the SEBN Outreach. The Enhanced Support Team from Keir Campus have supported the school in various ways. They have provided Pivotal MAPA training to most staff. This has allowed the staff to enhance their understanding and management of distressed behaviour and ensures that all involved maintain the Care, Welfare, Safety and Security of pupils. They have also provided Theraplay Informed Practice training to the school support staff. This is now used throughout the school, particularly in the afternoon, to help address the Health and Wellbeing needs of specific children.

**3c. Resources**

**3c.1 There are clear development priorities regarding nurture principles and practice.to develop nurturing principles and practice.**

The school identifies priorities for their context and systematically and meticulously plan to have the maximum impact upon the children, families and community. There is an understanding of the processes and commitment by the staff who attended the NNSP training. Structures and systems have been followed and adhered to during the two year period.

**3c.2 Resources are deployed to develop nurturing principles and practice**

Evidence throughout the assessment visit and within the evidence file include interventions and strategies aimed at delivering improved mental health and wellbeing for the children, staff and the community.

**3d. Monitoring and evaluation**

**3d.1 Monitoring, and evaluation protocols include evidence of planning, reviewing and evaluating processes for the National Nurturing Schools Programme.**

The evidence within the folder and during the assessment visit indicate that there are clear and robust systems in place monitoring the impact that the programme is having upon the whole school.

**Assessors Summary**

Carstairs Junction Primary School is a rural school in the village of Carstairs Junction in the South Lanarkshire Council area. The school role is 76 and it has six classes. The school serves the local community as well as the wider area for pupils with additional support needs (ASN). Pupils have a range of needs which are met in three ASN classes.

It is likely that this arrangement has led to the caring and inclusive atmosphere which was evident even in a virtual visit. The senior management team and nurture lead showed a clear understanding of pupils needs and a determined focus on meeting those needs through whole school nurturing approaches. They have created a whole school 'brand' BMW, Behaviour, Manners and Working Hard and through these clear, well understood expectations they have provided a safe, consistent and understanding environment where adults can support pupils to learn and grow. Emotional literacy and the vital role of language are evident with an impressive commitment to enabling pupil voice. Through a 'total communication' approach Board Maker is used across the school as well as Makaton. Signs are taught and practised in Get Together, the school assembly.

Through the Tree of Life, achievements within and out of school are celebrated and staff sensitively identify pupils who would benefit from the added opportunities provided by extracurricular activities and clubs. This approach to *noticing* was an impressive feature of the visit. Concerns such as a slip in attendance are noticed and immediately acted on, HWB is monitored monthly although the HT emphasised that 'Nothing should come



as a surprise' in doing this thanks to the staff's continued vigilance on a day-to-day basis. Pupils' needs are met proportionally through a staged Intervention approach meaning the emphasis is on planning, evaluation and measuring the impact of strategies and interventions.

### Assessors Summary (continued)

This report cannot reflect the work that goes on at the school every day. An evidence portfolio and related documents have been provided as part of the assessment process. Highlights of the assessment visit include:

**Pupils:** The pupils who joined the meeting were comfortable, confident and friendly. They talked not only about their learning but also about support they had received. The staff member who was leading the visit welcomed them with genuine affection and pride. Due to the current lockdown, it was not possible to meet a wider group of pupils however throughout the day adults commented on pupils' sense of belonging and care for each other. Children, some of whom have many challenges in their lives have clearly been embraced by the school community.

**Relationships:** Relationships were at the forefront of every discussion whether that be curriculum, environment, behaviour or learning. The staff were aware of the needs of children, staff, parents and carers and the wider community and it was apparent that there was a clear commitment to do the best for them all.

**Support for pupils and families:** It was evident from my visit that there was a focus on how best to support all children and their families. Parents who spoke to me were aware of the responsiveness of the school and talked of what they had learned about their own children and their needs. It struck me that there was an extraordinary level of trust in the staff and school by parents experiencing difficulties and that this came from well established relationships and sensitivity.

**Supportive staff:** Staff are open and welcoming and feel part of a close team. There is clearly an unwavering, supportive ethos within the school. The staff understand the importance of having an holistic approach towards the children in their care and within the community. As a staff team there was a clear sense of warmth and mutual support shown through humour, kindness and collaboration.

**School Leadership Team:** A virtual visit to a school is unique to the challenging times we are experiencing and yet the feeling was of welcome and warmth. Using a power point the Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher shared their vision, systems and practice for creating and maintaining whole school nurturing approaches. What struck me was the attention to tracking and monitoring of HWB and the recognition of the associated impact on learning and progress. They placed a high value on the morning welcome, sharing food, Get Together, shared voice, access to quality interventions and safe calming spaces. The overwhelming theme was of timely and appropriate support for development.

The improvement comments below reflect this. They are based on continued self-evaluation to ensure all members of the school community continue to contribute to whole school nurturing approaches.

### Recommendation

I am delighted to be able to recommend Carstairs Junction Primary School for the National Nurturing Schools Award

Areas for development	Timescale
Continue to monitor and evaluate the provision within your setting completing the National Nurturing Schools self-assessment on an annual basis.	Ongoing
Continue to use the Boxall Profile alongside other appropriate assessment tools, targeting children, tracking their progress and evaluating the impact. Continue to make use of Beyond the Boxall and Beyond the Boxall Whole Class Strategies to access the practical strategies and ideas.	Ongoing
Continue to promote and embed nurture group principles throughout the school.	Ongoing
Continue addressing the needs of all stakeholders: children, staff, parents and carers and the community collating examples of practice and outcomes evidenced to the standards.	Ongoing
Continue to share and develop practice with partners.	Ongoing
Engage with the re-accreditation process for the National Nurturing Schools Programme.	March 2024