



From mountain to sea

Nature Nurture Practitioners

Guidance for Schools

May 2024



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Version	Status	Date	Reason
1.0	Guidance	January 2023	Original version
2.0	Guidance	May 2024	Information included on activities which take place out with Aberdeenshire Council educational establishments and the use of EVOLVE.

Overview

Nature Nurture is a holistic therapeutic intervention that combines the theory and principles of the nurture approaches that are widely promoted across Aberdeenshire, with the recognised benefits of outdoor learning and child-led play.

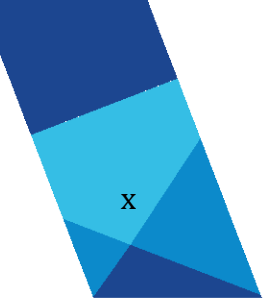
The Nature Nurture Practitioner post is Grade H (Practitioner Family) on the Local Government Employee Payscale.

The post is funded through the Scottish Government Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Grant.

The allocation of Nature Nurture Practitioner time to each cluster is based on a formula which takes account of the number of schools within each cluster. Clusters may opt to use Pupil Equity Funding to enhance this allocation see Appendix 12

Nature Nurture Practitioner Role

- Deliver targeted Nature Nurture outdoor intervention work that aims to foster positive relationships, emotional resilience, and enhanced self-esteem and self-awareness for children
- Liaise with teaching colleagues concerning the health & wellbeing of individual pupils and contribute to implementation of individual and/or group Nature Nurture support programmes
- Draw on the theory and principles of nurture to identify and develop support strategies within the context of Nature Nurture work, taking account of the needs of individual children
- Work directly with individual children or groups of children aged 5-11 years. This may be extended to age 12-13 years if appropriate to the needs of the young people.
- Where appropriate, to include individual parents, or small groups of parents in Nature Nurture intervention work.
- Direct provision of group/individual work sessions in conjunction with Nature Nurture theory, principles and practices
- Work with named person / lead professional in accordance with Aberdeenshire GIRFEC guidelines
- Identify and evaluate Nature Nurture sessions relative to identified need, and in accordance with Aberdeenshire guidance



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- Work as part of the cluster support team to share data and outcomes as part of wider evaluation of Nature Nurture programme
- Work collaboratively with other Nature Nurture practitioners to share learning and develop practice
- Attend Nature Nurture professional learning sessions, as determined by Aberdeenshire Council.

Line Management

Nature Nurture Practitioners are part of a continuum of supports within Enhanced Provision Primary Schools. As such, they are line managed by the Head Teacher of the Enhanced Provision Primary School within the cluster.

Arrangements for the induction of newly appointed Nature Nurture Practitioners will be made by their line manager. An induction checklist is included in Appendix 1.

Strategic management of the Nature Nurture Team as a whole is the responsibility of the Principal Educational Psychologist / Service Manager (Inclusion, Equity & Wellbeing).

Referral Process

Staged intervention is key to assessing learners' additional support needs. Pupils who are to be considered for the Nature Nurture Programme should already have been identified through single or multi-agency Child's Plan processes. Nature Nurture is not a crisis intervention.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher of the pupil who has been identified as requiring support to ensure a referral form has been completed by the named person or lead professional.

To ensure equity of access, referrals for the Nature Nurture Programme should be made either

- to the Enhanced Provision Head Teacher who will consider them with 2 other Head Teachers from the cluster.
- or
- to the Local ASN Forum.

If it is decided that it is a trio of Head Teachers within a cluster who consider referrals, the Enhanced Provision Head Teacher will always be part of the trio whilst the others will rotate annually so that all Head Teachers within the cluster take a turn. The referral form is included in Appendix 2.



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Monitoring and Exit

The impact of the Nature Nurture Programme should be monitored and reviewed as part of the single or multi-agency Child's Plan process. Continued support and tracking of the learner's progress will be the responsibility of the class teacher, Head Teacher and other members of the team around the child in accordance with their role.

An exit strategy and timeline for the Nature Nurture Programme should be discussed and agreed prior to the work starting. The programme will generally run for one term, with August to December being regarded as a single term.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of the Enhanced Provision Head Teacher, will the Nature Nurture Programme continue for a second term.

Deployment

A flexible approach needs to be taken with regard to the deployment of Nature Nurture Practitioners. Allocations of time should be needs led, based on identified and agreed priorities. Time is unlikely to be distributed around all schools in a cluster, and it would not be appropriate to split time equally between large numbers of schools. The Enhanced Provision Head Teacher should work with members of the Local ASN Forum to ensure that Nature Nurture Practitioner's time is appropriately targeted.

The number of pupils supported by the Nature Nurture Practitioner at any one time must be carefully considered and frequently reviewed to ensure that the caseload is manageable and sustainable. Consideration will also need to be given to the balance of work with individual children, group work and family work.

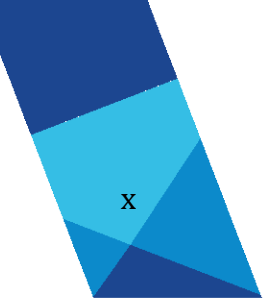
Consultation time with each pupil's own school needs to be planned and taken into account when a timetable is being drawn up.

Consideration should also be given to ensure Nature Nurture Practitioners have adequate breaks and lunch times.

Communication

It is the responsibility of the pupil's school to:

- Seek parental consent to refer a child to the nature nurture programme (a leaflet for parents can be found in Appendix 3 and draw their attention to the privacy notice Appendix 4).
- Ensure the Nature Nurture Practitioner is made aware of any factors which may impact upon the pupil's wellbeing



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- Share key updates about the pupil's progress within the Nature Nurture Programme with the parent and other members of the team around the child
- Advise the Nature Nurture Practitioner if the pupil is absent from school on a day they were scheduled to participate in the Nature Nurture Programme

It is the responsibility of the Nature Nurture Practitioner to:

- Provide a **very brief written update** to the named person following each nature nurture session (a session feedback form template is provided in Appendix 5).

Work with parents

It may be assessed that it would be beneficial for a child and their parent to participate in the nature nurture programme together. It is not the role of the Nature Nurture Practitioner to provide intensive intervention or therapeutic support. Rather, their role in this situation is to facilitate relaxed outdoor sessions that allow the parent and child to enjoy quality time together.

In some situations, it may be appropriate to run sessions with a small group of parents and their children, with a view to creating a context for parents to support one another.

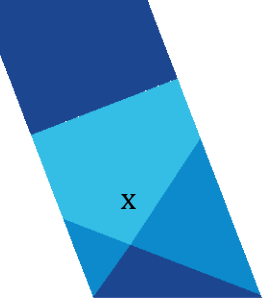
Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)

Nature Nurture Practitioners have access to CLPL in line with existing procedures and HR and OD policies.

Aberdeenshire Learning and Development Online (ALDO) offers a comprehensive range of development opportunities for learning about a wide range of topics of relevance to employees across the Council and to groups within particular Services.

Nature Nurture Practitioners will undertake a Nature Nurture training programme, as arranged by Aberdeenshire Council (see Appendix 6). This will involve attending one hour per week of training for a period of 27 weeks. These sessions will be arranged for outwith school hours so as not to impact service delivery. Nature Nurture Practitioners will also participate in a Universal Nurture training workshop delivered by the Educational Psychology Service in order that their work is aligned with Aberdeenshire nurture principles.

In addition, Nature Nurture Practitioners from across Aberdeenshire will meet a minimum of twice yearly to network, share practice and plan for improvements.



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Resources

The core recommended kit each Nature Nurture Practitioner is listed in Appendix 7. A one-off budget of £500 has been made available to each cluster to ensure they have access to the appropriate resources. Orders will be processed centrally by the Inclusion, Equity & Wellbeing Team.

Clothing

All 'waterproof' clothing should be made from breathable, waterproof material, not 'shower proof'.

It is recommended that children come prepared with:

- Waterproof jacket, fleece lined for winter.
- Waterproof trousers or salopettes for winter
- Robust boots with warm socks for winter such as wellingtons.
- Warm gloves (not mittens)
- Warm hat
- Small rucksacks for children to carry water bottle, snack/lunch, change of clothes.

It is recommended that adults come prepared with:

- Waterproof jacket, fleece lined for winter.
- Waterproof trousers or salopettes for winter.
- Robust flat heeled steel toe capped boots, with warm socks for winter, such as wellingtons, waterproof walking boots or rigger boots.
- Warm gloves (not mittens)
- Warm hat

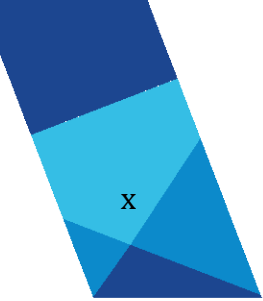
Transport

A PTU500 should be completed for any pupils who require transport to access the Nature Nurture programme.

Risk Assessments

Pupil Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment Template:

This document should be completed by the home school for every child accessing the Nature Nurture programme. This should be discussed with the Nature Nurture Practitioner in advance of the programme commencing. A template is provided in Appendix 8. The template has many examples of behaviours and control measures



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for you to consider. If a behaviour is not relevant to the pupil, please remove the entire row. This document must be relevant to the pupil it is intended for. Please ensure the control measures are relevant for the specific pupil. This document should be shared with the pupil's Parents and reviewed regularly.

Pupil Behaviour Risk Audit:

This document should only be completed if there is concerning behaviour that results in an amendment / adaptation to the pupil behaviour risk assessment. A template is provided in Appendix 8. Any additions to the Risk Audit and therefore amendments to the Pupil Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment should be shared with the home school and Pupil's Parents / Carers.

Blank Risk Assessment Template:

This document is to be used by Nature Nurture Practitioners to identify the risks associated with the environment and activities associated with the Nature Nurture programme of learning. For every risk identified; control measures must be defined. When identifying the risk level being low, medium or high; the expectation would be that the risk level would reduce once the control measures are identified. This would be shown on the documentation by putting an X in the appropriate column. A template is provided in Appendix 9.

For guidance on where to access safe outdoor spaces you can access support from the Aberdeenshire Ranger service who can provide additional advice for your local area. Please see a contact list of local Ranger Services Appendix 13 and a Fire information booklet in Appendix 14

In addition, you may wish to review the Scottish Outdoor Access code for visitor's webpage which also provides some useful information.

<https://www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/act-and-access-code/scottish-outdoor-access-code-visitors-and-land-managers>

Additional Staffing

It is the responsibility of the home school to provide any additional staffing support that a pupil requires in order to participate in the Nature Nurture Programme.

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Activities which take place out with Aberdeenshire Council educational establishments

Activities which take place out with Aberdeenshire Council educational establishments are considered to be 'excursions' in line with 'Offsite Excursion Procedures Education & Children's Services January 2023' which can be accessed [here](#)

Offsite Excursion Procedures state that all organised offsite excursions must be on Evolve to help ensure trips are well planned, risk assessed, have parental consent, are approved and covered by Aberdeenshire Council's Offsite Excursion Insurance Policy. If an excursion is happening on a regular basis the dates can be plotted on one Evolve with all the relevant information, which will allow one Evolve for a regular group of excursions.

Staff who are required to plan an excursion will be given a username and password by the establishment's Evolve Visit Coordinator (EVC).

The EVC is normally the school administrator, so the leader of the excursion creates the Evolve (or the EVC does this) and submits to the Head Teacher for approval. More than one establishment can be associated with a staff member therefore qualifications need only be entered once.

[Evolve further information and log-in](#)

Evaluation

The Nature Nurture Practitioner post is funded through the Scottish Government Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Grant, which is managed by the GIRFEC Children & Young People's Mental Health & Wellbeing Group. Evidence of impact on children, young people and families is a condition of this funding.

A Pre and Post Nature Nurture Programme Assessment should be completed for every pupil that participates in the Nature Nurture Programme using Appendix 15. This assessment is carried out by the class teacher, in discussion with the pupil.

Based on their knowledge of the pupil, the class teacher is asked to rate each of the following themes on a scale of 1-5 using the descriptors in Appendix 15:

- Relationships
- Participation
- Communication
- Resilience
- Emotional Awareness
- Emotional Regulation

- Organisational Skills
- Motor Skills.

This exercise is carried out once before the pupil begins the Nature Nurture Programme, and once immediately after they have finished attending the Nature Nurture Programme. The pre- and post-assessment data should be shared with the Nature Nurture practitioner immediately after it is gathered.

Class Teachers are encouraged to discuss any changes in the pupil's scores over time with the pupil themselves, and to share this information with the named person in order that it can be shared with parents and incorporated into single or multi-agency child's plan processes as appropriate.

Nature Nurture Practitioners are required to access the 'Evaluation Documents' channel on the Nature Nurture Practitioners Microsoft Team page in order to upload data submitted for those pupils who have completed the Nature Nurture Programme and for whom a post-intervention assessment has been completed.

In the 'Evaluation Channel' in 'Files' there is an excel spreadsheet for each cluster where Nature Nurture Practitioners can record the difference in scores from the Pre and Post Nature Nurture Programme assessments.

Nature Nurture Practitioners are also required to complete a survey each year via Microsoft Forms based on specific information that is requested by the Scottish Government.

The data which is gathered is used to monitor the impact of the Nature Nurture Programme on children across Aberdeenshire.

All pupils who participate in the Nature Nurture programme should be supported by their class teacher to complete the "Pupil Feedback Form" Appendix 10.

The parents of each pupil that participates in the Nature Nurture Programme should be asked to complete a "Parent Feedback Form" see Appendix 11.

The completed pupil voice and parent feedback forms should be shared with the Nature Nurture Practitioner in order to support self-evaluation and service improvements. It should also be shared with the Named Person in order that it can be incorporated into Child's Plan processes as appropriate.