

Nature Nurture Practitioner Guidance for Schools

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	January 2023	Original version
2.0	May 2024	Information included on activities which take place out with Aberdeenshire Council educational establishments and the use of EVOLVE.
3.0	September 2024	<p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requests for additional, or replacement, equipment should be made to the Enhanced Provision Head teacher. NNP to share feedback with class teacher/named person following each session (Appendix 5). <p>Removal of all references to Intervention and Prevention Teacher (IPT)</p> <p>Rename Community Resource Hub (CRH) to Complex Needs Provision (CNP)</p>
4.0	February 2025	<p>Removal of reference to initial cluster allocation of funds (£500).</p> <p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommended session duration expected attendance at training and PSGs table with timeline and related appendices
5.0	May 2025	<p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reference to 27.5 hours allocated to each cluster for a Nature Nurture Practitioner an intervention should not extend beyond two terms suggested 30 minutes (per day) to complete paperwork revised Pre and Post Nature Nurture Programme Assessment (Appx. 15) NNPs to collate/record data, as per funding requirement, supported by the class teacher and named person within agreed timeframe



Nature Nurture Practitioner Guidance for Schools

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 recognized 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 & Wellbeing Supports and Services Grant.

The allocation of 27.5 hours is allocated to each cluster for a Nature Nurture Practitioner. Clusters, however, may opt to use Pupil Equity Funding to enhance this allocation.

Nature Nurture Practitioner Role

- Deliver targeted Nature Nurture outdoor intervention work that aims to foster positive relationships, emotional resilience, enhanced self-esteem and self-awareness for children.
- Liaise with teaching colleagues concerning the health and wellbeing of individual pupils and contribute to the 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. It is recommended that these sessions should last **a minimum of one hour**.
- 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.
- Work as part of the cluster support team to share data and outcomes as part of wider evaluation of the 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, including termly Professional Support Groups (PSGs).

Line Management

Nature Nurture Practitioners are part of a continuum of support 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 (see below).

Strategic management of the Nature Nurture Team is, as a whole, 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 the [Enhanced Provision Request 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.

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 **no more than two terms**, with August to December being regarded as a single term. It is incumbent on the Nature Nurture Practitioner to ensure evaluation data is collated and recorded on completion of an intervention (see appendices below) in accordance with external funding arrangements.

Only in **exceptional circumstances**, and with the agreement of the Enhanced Provision Head Teacher, will the Nature Nurture Programme continue **beyond a second term**. In this event, a request for a continuation of outreach support should be made to the Local ASN Forum. [Request for Continuation of Outreach Support](#)

Deployment

A flexible approach needs to be taken with regard to the deployment of Nature Nurture Practitioners. Allocation of time should be needs-led and 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 time to complete Session Feedback Forms ([Appendix 5](#)) (suggested 30 minutes per day) and for breaks and lunch.

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
- 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 that 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 and class teacher following each Nature Nurture session (a session feedback form template is provided, see [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 relevant topics 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 out with 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 termly in their Professional Support Group (PSG) to network, share practice and plan for improvements.

Resources

The core recommended kit each Nature Nurture Practitioner requires is listed in [Appendix 7](#). Clusters received an initial budget to ensure they have access to the appropriate resources. Requests for additional, or replacement, equipment should be made to the Enhanced Provision Head teacher.

Clothing

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

It is recommended that children come prepared with:



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- 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 by the HT for any pupils who require transport to access the Nature Nurture Programme. This should be approved by the school QIO before submitting.

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](#). This document should be shared and agreed 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 (low, medium or high), the expectation would be that the risk level would reduce once the control measures are identified and implemented. A template is provided in [Appendix 9](#).

For guidance on where to access safe outdoor spaces Aberdeenshire Ranger service



can provide additional advice for your local area. Please refer to [Appendix 13](#) and [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.

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 organized offsite excursions must be on Evolve to help ensure trips are well planned, risk assessed, have parental consent, and 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 it 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 the Pre and Post Nature Nurture Programme Assessment ([Appendix 15](#)). This assessment is carried out by the class teacher, in discussion with the pupil **prior to the intervention starting and within**



2 weeks of completion.

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.

- 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, after it is gathered, to support reflection and help identify next steps. Class Teachers are encouraged to discuss any changes in the pupil's scores over time with the pupil themselves.

This information should then be relayed to the named person who will then share with parents/carers. Further agreements will be 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 Teams 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



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Child's Plan processes, as appropriate.





Appx.	Title	Completed by	When	Communication
1	Induction Checklist	NNP/ EP HT	Prior to start date	Email correspondence between EP HT and NNP prior to start date
2	Enhanced Provision Request Form	Named Person	Once agreement has been made at Child's Plan meeting that a referral is being submitted for NNP	Email EP Request Form to EP HT/ASN Forum. Await decision via Appendix 1 Outcome Letter
3	Information for Parents and Carers	Named Person	Prior to discussion/agreement of intervention at Child's Plan Meeting	Shared with parent/carer
4	Privacy Notice for Photographs	Named Person	Prior to pupil starting NNP	Parent to complete and return to Named Person
5	Session Feedback Form	NNP Named Person	After each session with pupil	Share with class teacher and email Named Person. Named Person to share with Parent/Carer, as appropriate.
6	Training Calendar	NNP	On dates, as specified	Expectation that all new NNPs complete mandatory training on dates, as specified.
7	Resource List	NNP	Prior to NNP starting role	Discussion and resource requests made by NNP to Named Person/EP HT.
8	Behaviour Support Plan and Risk Assessment	NNP with Class Teacher/Named Person/Parent/Pupil (if appropriate)	Prior to start of Intervention and ongoing throughout intervention	All parties should have input and agree as to the content prior to start of intervention. Continued review as, and when, required.
9	Blank Risk Assessment Template	NNP	Prior to specific activities	Email Named Person prior to activity.



10	Pupil Feedback	Class Teacher with Pupil Named Person	End of Intervention	Class Teacher to support pupil to complete form, share with NNP and email to Named Person. Named Person to share with parent/carer.
11	Parent Feedback	Parent/Carer Named Person	End of intervention.	Named Person to request completion at end of intervention.
13	Local Ranger Services	NNP	As required	NNP to contact Ranger, as required.
14	Fire Booklet	NNP	Prior to fire activity	NNP to ensure fire safety followed and RA completed.
15	Pre and Post Nature Nurture Programme Assessment	Class Teacher/NNP Named Person	Prior to pupil starting programme and end of intervention	Class Teacher to collate pre and post intervention data, share with NNP and Named Person. NNP to upload data centrally. Child's Plan minutes to state agreement for intervention to end and evidence impact. Named person to share Pupil Feedback and overview of NNP Programme with Parent/Carer.
16	Request for Continuation of Outreach Support	NNP/Named Person/Parent/Carer	At agreed review date (confirmed at start of intervention between Named Person and EP HT)	Child's Plan minutes stating agreement for pupil to continue, outlining reason for this and next steps. Named Person shares/discusses minutes with EP HT for approval/seeks continuation of outreach support via ASN Forum.



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