

The National Nurturing Schools Programme  
Assessment Report



Establishment name and address	St Joseph's Primary School 155 Aldershot Road Guildford GU2 8YH
Headteacher/Principal	Tom Collins
NNSP trained staff	Roise Evans, Assistant Head Jennie Trimmer, Assistant Head
Assessment date	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026
Assessor	Carrie Thorne
Trainer	Miranda Collins
Review date	March 2029

## 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

This report cannot reflect the hard work that goes on at school every day. A comprehensive evidence file and related documents have been provided as part of the assessment process by the school. This includes attendance and exclusion data and Case Studies for Partnership, Community and The Boxall Profile, along with a clear understanding of The Six Principles of Nurture, evidenced in the application and Principles into Practice report.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive setting serving approximately 650 pupils. The school benefits from its position within a well-established residential area, with strong links to the local community and good access to the wider town. Serving a diverse community, St Joseph's places the wellbeing, inclusion, and personal development of every child at the heart of its ethos. Through a whole-school approach grounded in The Six Principles of Nurture, the school has created a safe, supportive, and emotionally responsive environment where pupils are enabled to thrive both academically and socially.

As a Catholic school, St Joseph's maintains close and meaningful connections with the parish of St Joseph's Church, which are reflected in the spiritual life of the school, regular opportunities for worship, and shared community events. What is truly remarkable is how The Six Principles of Nurture have been carefully and seamlessly woven with the school's motto - "the way, the truth and the life" - creating a coherent, values-driven

approach that shapes every decision, every interaction, and every opportunity for pupils, families and staff alike. Head teacher, Tom Collins explained, “Nurture is at the Heart of St Joseph’s, we have taken The Six Principles and combined it with our motto so that we are - Living the Mission Every Day!” The school has demonstrated a strong and sustained commitment to The Six Principles of Nurture as a foundation for effective practice and interactions across the whole school

### **Examples of excellent practice include:**

#### **A Vision Driven with Passion and Purpose**

A key strength lies in the leadership of the National Nurturing Schools Programme (NNSP). With clarity of vision and a deep commitment to inclusive practice, leaders have ensured that nurturing principles are lived and breathed across the school. This strong and purposeful leadership has created consistency, enabling all pupils to feel supported, understood, and able to thrive. This reflects the dedication of Sally and Jennie, whose commitment has been instrumental in driving the programme forward and therefore, although it was evident that this achievement reflects a collective staff effort, special recognition should be given to Sally and Jennie. Tom explained, “I want to hold up Jennie and Sally. They are tremendous advocates for the programme and all our nurture work.”

They are both passionate champions of the Nurturing Schools Programme within St Joseph’s. The application materials, including the case studies and self-assessment, were highly detailed and provided a comprehensive insight into St Joseph’s - not only in terms of its ethos and values, but also its strategic approach and impact. Staff shared, “Sally and Jennie have kept us up to date with strong CPD, and we have been involved every step of the way.” Both Sally and Jennie demonstrate a deeply reflective approach and embody the principles of nurture in all aspects of their work. Staff spoke highly of their dedication and enthusiasm, and the respect they hold for them was clear - “Sally and Jennie model exemplary practice every day; they are what we all aspire to.”

“Sally and Jennie promote wellbeing; they are so nurturing themselves that they make us feel so comfortable - we can ask them anything.” It is clear that the pupils and families at St Joseph’s are central to everything they do, and they are a real asset to the school.

#### **One Team, One Nurturing Family**

Nurture at St Joseph’s is truly a whole-staff approach, with every member of the team playing a vital role in creating a supportive and caring environment. Parents were particularly keen to highlight this, recognising that nurture is not confined to specific roles but is embedded across the entire staff team. What stood out strongly was the way staff champion and celebrate one another, modelling the very relationships they seek to build with children. This strong sense of unity was reflected in comments shared on the day: “We are one big staff family, but our deputy head is amazing, despite being super busy she always makes time,” (staff member) and from parents, “Our pastoral lead

Mrs Sewell in particular is very nurturing, she is amazing!” and “Mrs Sewell makes worry worms and they are so important in our house.” Together, these voices capture a culture where care, respect, and appreciation underpin both professional relationships and the wider nurturing ethos of the school.

### **Wellbeing and Nurturing Provision at St Joseph’s**

Wellbeing is at the heart of St Joseph’s, shaping everything the school does. As one parent governor noted, “Wellbeing is at the heart of St Joseph’s, the wellbeing principle is foundational because it runs through everything,” and this is evident in the warm, positive relationships, safe and supportive spaces, and genuine care shown to both pupils and staff. Children clearly feel this too: one pupil shared, “My favourite thing is the wellbeing chart and wellbeing area in every classroom because I like my wellbeing checks,” and another explained, “nurture is having good wellbeing.”

The school has a rich, whole-school approach to supporting wellbeing. Weekly connection circles, RE and PSHE lessons, restorative practice, and celebration of achievements -through postcards home, witness awards, house points, the Headteacher’s blog, and Google Classroom - help children build resilience, confidence, and social skills. Targeted support ensures that pupil premium children and those with adverse childhood experiences receive tailored provision, enrichment opportunities, and wellbeing interventions, supported by trauma-informed training.

Children benefit from a variety of safe spaces and resources, including wellbeing areas, Zones of Regulation, worry monsters, sensory rooms, prayer gardens, and the wellbeing garden. Movement breaks, calm periods, and the presence of the school dogs, including much-loved Scarlet, provide comfort and promote regulation. Staff listen and problem-solve with children through restorative conversations and quiet one-to-one time, and infant provision for high-need SCLN children has already shown a positive impact on wellbeing.

Pupil voice is central to decision-making. The School Parliament and Child Wellbeing Committee gather feedback and develop initiatives, while wellbeing ambassadors and play leaders help foster a positive school experience. St Joseph’s creates a nurturing, inclusive environment where both children and staff are supported, celebrated, and empowered to thrive. The school’s approach to wellbeing is clearly embedded, lived every day, and deeply valued by the whole community.

### **Nurturing Staff Wellbeing**

At St Joseph’s, the nurturing ethos extends wholeheartedly to staff, with a clear understanding that when adults feel supported, valued, and cared for, they are best placed to nurture the children in their care. This commitment is both visible and deeply embedded, as reflected in Tom’s words: “It is important that I look after my staff, their wellbeing is really important to me - that is why I complete staff surveys every half-term, which is a lot, but it is vital. I need to nurture my staff, too.” This principle is lived out

through thoughtful, responsive leadership and a culture where staff voice is genuinely heard.

Leaders actively respond to feedback through a ‘You said, we will’ approach, ensuring that staff feel listened to and respected. Meaningful changes have been implemented as a result, including the opportunity for staff to take PPA time at home, reduced staff meetings to allow space for coaching and professional dialogue, and simplified planning and marking expectations to ease workload while maintaining impact. Teachers are no longer required to supervise break times, creating valuable opportunities for rest, reflection, or restorative conversations. Practical gestures of care - such as providing food before parent consultation evenings and a second breakfast on INSET days - further demonstrate the school’s commitment to staff wellbeing. Staff shared their appreciation of these efforts, “SLT are conscious of workload, they do what they can to make our jobs more manageable, they are on this journey and in it with us!”

The physical environment also reflects this nurturing approach. The staff room has been thoughtfully redesigned as a calm, welcoming space where colleagues can relax and connect. Staff wellbeing is visibly prioritised, with access to toiletries in staff facilities and clear signposting to external professional support. A dedicated wellbeing committee, representing all phases of the school, plays a key role in fostering this culture. Meeting regularly, the committee listens to staff, reflects on needs, and organises events that promote connection and care. Initiatives such as World Kindness Day and a staff Mental Health Week- featuring activities like nature walks, tea and cake gatherings, and off-site experiences- have strengthened relationships and provided meaningful opportunities for staff to recharge.

Recognition and appreciation are also central to the school’s approach. Staff achievements are celebrated through shout-outs on noticeboards and online platforms, reinforcing a culture where contributions are noticed and valued. Regular reminders from the wellbeing committee and leadership ensure that all staff know where to turn for support, creating a keen sense of community and shared responsibility. Through these carefully considered actions, St Joseph’s has created a working environment where staff feel genuinely nurtured. This culture of care, respect, and responsiveness not only enhances staff wellbeing but also strengthens the school’s overall nurturing provision, ensuring that positivity and support ripple throughout the entire school community.

### **Seamless Transitions: Children Move Forward with Confidence**

Transition is a clear strength at St Joseph’s; the school recognises that change can be challenging for children, and they therefore work carefully to ensure every move is smooth, supported, and nurturing. From nursery to reception, between year groups, and into secondary school, children benefit from structured handovers, home visits, stay-and-play sessions, visual resources, and opportunities to build relationships and confidence. Vulnerable children receive tailored support, including additional visits, social stories, and pastoral oversight, while all pupils experience carefully planned transition

days that focus on wellbeing, resilience, and familiarity with routines. Staff describe the impact of these practices with pride: “Transition is such a focus that it is never a worry for anyone,” “Boxall assessments inform our transition meetings, taking them to the next level,” and “I think our work around transition is one of the most successful outcomes of the NNSP.” By embedding consistency, predictability, and care across all transitions, St Joseph’s ensures children feel seen, valued, and ready to thrive at every stage of their learning journey.

### **Communication as a Nurturing Strength**

At St Joseph’s, communication is a cornerstone of the school’s nurturing ethos, ensuring that children, families, and staff are supported, valued, and included. The school believes that parents are children’s first educators and prioritise regular, meaningful engagement with families—sharing successes, celebrating progress, and working collaboratively when additional support is needed. Leadership and pastoral teams offer guidance and signposting to specialist services, while staff adapt communication for parents with English as an additional language or limited literacy, using verbal explanations, translations, or practical support. Parents recognise this commitment: one said, “It was the communication and the vibe which made me really want to send my child to this school,” and another noted, “There is excellent communication with us daily, weekly, and it is not just one way, the school ask our opinion.”

Communication also drives the school’s nurturing approach with children. Twice-weekly connect times, wellbeing tea parties, and regular restorative conversations provide structured opportunities for pupils to share views, express emotions, and feel heard by both peers and adults. Relational practice ensures children feel valued, included, and emotionally supported within their classrooms. Pupil voice is embedded through the School Parliament and committees, enabling children to influence decisions, such as securing funds for the Allotment Club’s raised beds, which led to a Gold Guildford in Bloom Award. Celebrations of achievements, whether for core values, wellbeing, or personal successes, further reinforce a culture of recognition, support, and emotional growth.

I had the opportunity to meet with a parent governor who explained the high level of communication which takes place between the school and the governing body. “Communication is incredibly high with regard to all school developments, and the NNSP was no exception. The governors have been kept informed of the NNSP progress.”

By actively listening and responding to families and pupils, and integrating this insight into everyday practice, St Joseph’s uses communication not only to inform, but to strengthen its nurturing provision. Every conversation - whether with a parent, a child, or between staff- helps build relationships, model empathy, and ensure that the wellbeing of each child is central to the school’s work.

### **Community Engagement as a Nurturing Strength**

St Joseph's places strong value on being an active and connected part of its local community, recognising the powerful role this plays in nurturing both children and their families. The school creates meaningful opportunities for families to engage, building a sense of belonging, trust, and shared purpose that extends beyond the classroom. Parents clearly appreciate this, with one commenting, "The school have a real social side which we can get on board with," highlighting how inclusive and welcoming the school feels. These connections support children's wellbeing by strengthening relationships, reducing isolation, and fostering a supportive network around each family.

The school's commitment to community involvement is both intentional and impactful. As Tom explained, "The partnership with the allotment society is an example of how seriously we take community involvement. Being at the allotment is so good for the wellbeing of everyone involved." Opportunities such as this, alongside wider enrichment such as the school choir performing at parish Mass, community events, a hospital café, and G Live, enable children to feel proud, connected, and actively involved in their community.

St Joseph's further strengthens its role as a community hub by opening its site to a wide range of external groups and organisations. Clubs such as football, Taekwondo, Rock Steady, Spanish, Brownies, and Guides take place regularly, many of which are attended by both St Joseph's pupils and children from the wider local area. The school grounds are also used for PFSA events, bringing together children, families, staff, and the local community to raise funds for projects that benefit everyone. Continued investment in facilities, such as the addition of lighting to the astro, ensures that these opportunities can run throughout the year. Alongside this, the school actively welcomes external agencies into the school to support its nurturing provision. Partnerships with organisations such as MATRIX, STIPS, the PMHW team, Barnardo's, the local pupil referral unit, and Freemantles autism outreach provide specialist support for children, families, and staff, strengthening practice and ensuring that wellbeing needs are met holistically. One parent shared with pride, "Our school is the beating heart of the community."

St Joseph's also benefits from strong and meaningful links with its parish community. The school works in close and active partnership with St Mary's Church, sharing in Mass, First Holy Communion, and a range of initiatives that nurture and strengthen the spiritual life of the school. Current projects, including the development of the Willow Tree Garden to reflect the school's mission and the promotion of the Oscar Romero Award, demonstrate this shared commitment. Pupils are enriched through a wide range of experiences, including educational visits and charitable events such as CAFOD Fast Day and trips to Wintershall's Nativity and Life of Christ. A strong culture of giving is evident, with the whole school community regularly contributing time, resources, and fundraising efforts to support others each term.

Through these extensive and purposeful community links, St Joseph's creates a deeply nurturing environment where children and families feel connected, supported, and part of a wider, caring community.

It has been a privilege to visit St Joseph's and experience first-hand the warmth, care, and genuine welcome extended by the whole school community. Thank you to staff, pupils, governors, and families for your openness, honesty, and pride in sharing your journey. The strength of relationships and the deep sense of belonging felt across the school are truly special.

St Joseph's is a shining example of a nurturing school, where The Six Principles of Nurture are not simply understood but are thoughtfully and consistently woven into the very fabric of school life. This strong moral purpose is evident in the school's unwavering commitment to providing an education for the whole child: heart, mind, and soul.

Across all areas - wellbeing, communication, transition, community engagement, and staff support - there is a clear, shared understanding that nurturing relationships is at the core of success. Pupils feel safe, heard, and valued; families feel welcomed and included, and staff feel supported and cared for. This collective commitment enables every member of the school community to flourish.

St Joseph's lives out its ambitious and deeply meaningful vision to create "a little piece of heaven on earth." This is not just an aspiration, but something that is evident in the daily experiences of those within the school. The nurturing environment you have created is one where kindness, respect, and compassion are evident at every level.

As you continue on your journey, you should feel immensely proud of all that has been achieved. I wish you every success for the future and look forward to seeing how your nurturing approach continues to grow and inspire.

#### **Quotes from the assessment day:**

- This has been a very personal journey for me, also. (Headteacher)
- Being safe in their classroom is most important to us. (Headteacher)
- Transition is tailored to individuals and individual families. (parent)
- Mrs Sewell makes worry worms, and they are so important in our house. (parent)
- There is something here that sets this school apart. (parent)
- There is something here that words can't describe. (parent)
- There is a sense of not avoiding the contextual because it is so important and the school do not avoid anything. (parent)
- We have structured their play more so that it can help develop their social skills more. (member of staff)
- Nurture was already here, but we have been given a name for our practice now. (member of staff)

- Scarlett brings so much joy with her. She is a ray of sunshine that we all look forward to every Wednesday. Staff CPD is on a Wednesday, so she supports us in that too. (member of staff)
- We all looked at The Six Principles of Nurture from a school perspective, but they encouraged us to look at them in terms of our cohort and subjects. It has been enormously powerful. (member of staff)
- The school is really open to our crazy ideas. (parent)
- We parents, are a big team, and we want to make school amazing for our children. (parent)

**Recommendation**

**We recommend St Joseph’s Primary School for the National Nurturing Schools Award**

Areas for development	Timescale
<p><b>Deepen the use of the Boxall Profile:</b> Extend the application of the Boxall Profile across the school to enhance understanding of individual pupil needs and ensure that identified targets are consistently embedded into classroom practice.</p>	Ongoing
<p><b>Nurture Principles.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote and embed nurture group principles throughout the provision for pupils and staff.</li> <li>• Continue to familiarise your families and community with the Six Principles, for example, mention them in reports, on letters and emails, in Newsletters and keep updates on your website and social media platforms to ensure all stakeholders are familiar with their meaning and impact.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<p><b>Develop Parent Nurture Ambassadors:</b> Strengthen the partnership with the PTFA to establish a team of Parent Nurture Ambassadors, enabling families to engage more deeply with The Six Principles of Nurture and support the nurturing culture both at home and in school.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate the provision within your setting, completing the National Nurturing Schools self-assessment on an annual basis.</p>	Ongoing

Engage with the re-accreditation process for the National Nurturing Schools Programme.	2029
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