

Transcript – Tony Doran, Headteacher introduces the Nurture Principles

Hi there. My name is Tony Doran and I have the privilege of being the Headteacher of Virtual School Kent. At Virtual School Kent, we are always looking to find new or better ways of supporting our young people. And I would like to tell you about how we are working to achieve an award called the National Nurturing Schools Programme or NNSP. This is a huge development for us because it usually takes a school two years to achieve this award. But we believe it will support us in achieving great outcomes for our young people as well as our key partners that we work with and also for our own staff.

There's also never been a time when nurture approaches are needed more. We want to show that we live and breathe the Six Principles of Nurture in our everyday practice. These principles really embody what we believe in and all of the staff at our school have been part of training events as well as small development groups to bring this work together.

Nurture UK are helping guide us through this journey to achieve the award so we took their Six Principles of Nurture and developed these to make them our own. Our Apprentices helped us put VSK's Nurture Principles into words. By young people, for young people and therefore, VSK's Nurture Principles are

One: Whatever changes you face, we are here to guide you.

Two: No matter what your age, everyone is at a different stage.

Three: VSK can help you find your voice.

Four: How you behave tells us how you feel.

Five: VSK can be your safe space.

And, finally, number six: Nurture helps you feel happy and healthy.

VSK's Nurture Principles have been encapsulated in a new logo and my sincere thanks goes out to our Participation and Engagement Team who helped create this. You can see our brand-new nurture logo on our website, and we hope you really like it.

We also hope that you will see us practising these principles in how we all work together. And we can already see the difference during lockdown when our staff have worked tirelessly to keep spirits up during these difficult times. For example, they have been joining up for fun coffee breaks, raising money for charities supporting foster carers with home learning packs and resources as well as putting on a myriad of virtual afterschool and holiday activities for our young people which

I'm sure you're aware of and I hope many of you have got involved with these activities because we've had wonderful feedback on them.

An important part of this work is how we are using the Boxall Profile. This is an assessment tool that we use in partnership with schools to help us collectively understand our young people better. The tool helps us to suggest strategies and / or resources that could help improve things for our young people at their schools or in their early years provision or in their post 16 settings.

All of our staff are now trained in using the Boxall Profile tool and we know that many of our schools already are too, so this means we are able to collaboratively work well together.

At VSK, each team now has a Nurture Ambassador, and their names can be found on our website. They are the key people for you to get in contact within your area if you have any questions and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them as well as my extended leadership team who have been really important in helping drive our school towards achieving the NNSP Award.

I look forward to seeing the positive changes that the NNSP will keep bringing to my school and how it will help our young people to thrive. If you see us doing any of these Six Principles of Nurture, well or otherwise, please do tell us. We always appreciate feedback so we can keep on improving.

Thank you so much for your time today. Take care.