



ST BERNARD'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Early Years

LEARNING OUT OF DOORS POLICY

ADVENT 2018

St Bernard's Preparatory School

EARLY YEARS POLICY

LEARNING OUT OF DOORS

Mission Statement

With God as our shelter and Christ as our guide, the mission of St Bernard's Preparatory School is to educate towards love and service to God, each other and the wider community. Through our broad balanced curriculum we will develop an understanding of each faith and the values we share. We will treat each person with respect, knowing we are special and unique.

St Bernard's is part of the St Benedict's family of schools. All schools in the group share a similar Catholic and Benedictine/Bernardine ethos.

Rationale

"Children learn by moving, and movement needs space. Only through ready access to the outdoors and stimulating outdoor provision can a child's physical development, personal, social and emotional wellbeing and learning across the curriculum flourish."

Marjorie Ouvry, 2001

"To be effective, an Early Years curriculum should be carefully structured. This includes planned and purposeful activity that provides opportunity for teaching and learning, both indoors and out." Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage

Benefits of Outdoor Learning:

- Outdoor learning helps to ensure that children are successful learners enabling children to develop knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday learning experiences.
- Outdoor learning enables children to be confident individuals and impacts positively upon children's attitudes beliefs and self-perceptions. Outdoor learning contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem and self-sufficiency.
- Outdoor learning can have a positive impact upon children's behaviour.
- Outdoor learning contributes towards the promotion and children's understanding of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle.

St. Bernard's Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

- Outdoor learning has a positive impact upon children's personal and social development. It can also bring about community cohesion and allow children to develop as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their wider community. It can create pride in the school and wider community and promote community involvement, renewing children's pride and creating a sense of belonging and responsibility.
- It raises learners' attainment, promotes and strengthens communication skills, team work and sense of cohesion.
- There is clear evidence that boys in particular are more active in their learning in an outdoor environment.

Aims

At St. Bernard's Preparatory School we aim:

- To provide opportunities for all children to access a well-planned outdoor environment and to meet their needs and interests through a range of resources and experiences.
- To provide equipment which not only develops physical skills, but also skills across the whole curriculum.
- To create a stimulating outdoor environment in which children can feel safe, secure and confident to use the activities.
- To develop or change activities to further stimulate the children.
- To make good use of outdoor space so that children are enabled to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.
- To provide opportunities to work independently and collaboratively with enthusiasm and perseverance.
- To support the children's learning in the outdoors by sharing in their experiences and interests.
- To provide appropriate adult intervention to help the children make progress in their learning and to develop and enhance the children's learning through play.
- For children, appropriately clad, to access the outdoor areas and activities in all types of weather.
- To provide the opportunity for children to develop their gross motor skills and their general health and fitness in the outdoor environment.
- To promote social and emotional development and negotiating skills through talking with friends and sharing in their outdoor play.

Policy into practice

At St. Bernard's Preparatory School we have:

- A designated outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children to access.
- Defined boundaries in which the children can feel safe, secure and confident.
- Watchful adults to provide appropriate intervention to engage children in the learning process.
- A range of large and small equipment and cross-curricular activities which help to promote interactive and independent play and sharing and physical skills.
- Space for growing and caring for plants.
- Opportunities for self-initiated activities under adult supervision.
- Access to the wider environment of the school field, playground and conservation area under adult supervision.
- Opportunities which are linked to children's learning for the children to visit places of interest.
- A buddy system which gives our youngest children the opportunity to socialise, play and learn collaboratively with our oldest children.

Planning

St. Bernard's Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Careful planning for the outdoor environment will ensure that it enriches all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. See Foundation Stage Curriculum policy.

Inclusion

The outdoors curriculum of shared and physical activities is an important part of a child's overall development. At St. Bernard's Preparatory School we are committed to providing for each child, the opportunity to access all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. We adapt the facilities and activities whenever possible, to enable all children to use them. All outdoor areas are accessible by wheelchairs.

Resources

Our varied and extensive resources cover all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum. To maintain a high standard, these resources will be continually reviewed, thus enabling the maximum input in the important area of learning out of doors.

Health and Safety

As children participate in the various outdoor activities they will be learning the significance and importance of being aware of others in a physical situation. We aim to provide safe and yet challenging experiences within a controlled environment, which naturally develop children's abilities and awareness. Our children are taught about consideration of their health and safety and that of others. All teaching and teaching support staff are familiarised with and adhere to the school Health and Safety policy. Visual daily risk assessments are carried out and more formal written risk assessments are completed if required for specific activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

The outdoor curriculum is monitored by the Early Years Co-ordinator. The effective use of our outdoor spaces and equipment, for delivering all areas of the Foundation Stage, is evaluated through observation and by monitoring the children's progress. Medium and short term planning are regularly reviewed by all members of the Early Years Team led by Mrs M Biscardi.

Applies to:

Whole School including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), all staff, peripatetics, clubs and extra-curricular activity providers, volunteers, Trustees, Governors.

Related Policies:

Safeguarding Portfolio, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Admissions, Health and Safety, English, Maths

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Availability:

This policy is made available to parents on our website www.stbernardsprep.org or a copy may be obtained from the school office on request.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster. The Trustees will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed by _____

Headmaster _____

Date _____

Chair of Governors _____

Date _____