



St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

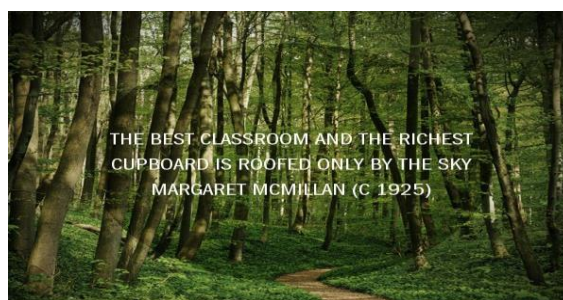
Growing Together in Faith, Love and Learning.

Engagement, excitement and enrichment lie at the heart of our curriculum. In recognising the unique gift that is each child in our school family, we aim to provide a rich curriculum that is firmly rooted in the gospel values. The spiritual aspect of awe and wonder drives our creative curriculum, providing exciting, engaging opportunities and experiences to further enhance the statutory curriculum and fuel a passion for learning and a love of the world in which we live.

High quality teaching is that which is differentiated and personalised to meet the needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need something additional to or different from what is provided for the majority of children; this is special educational provision. We, the family of St Bernadette's, endeavour to ensure that effective provision is made for all those who need it. More details are available on the school website under the SEN school offer.

POLICY FOR EARLY YEARS OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

**"Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity."
(1 Timothy 4:12)**



The importance of the Outdoor Learning Environment

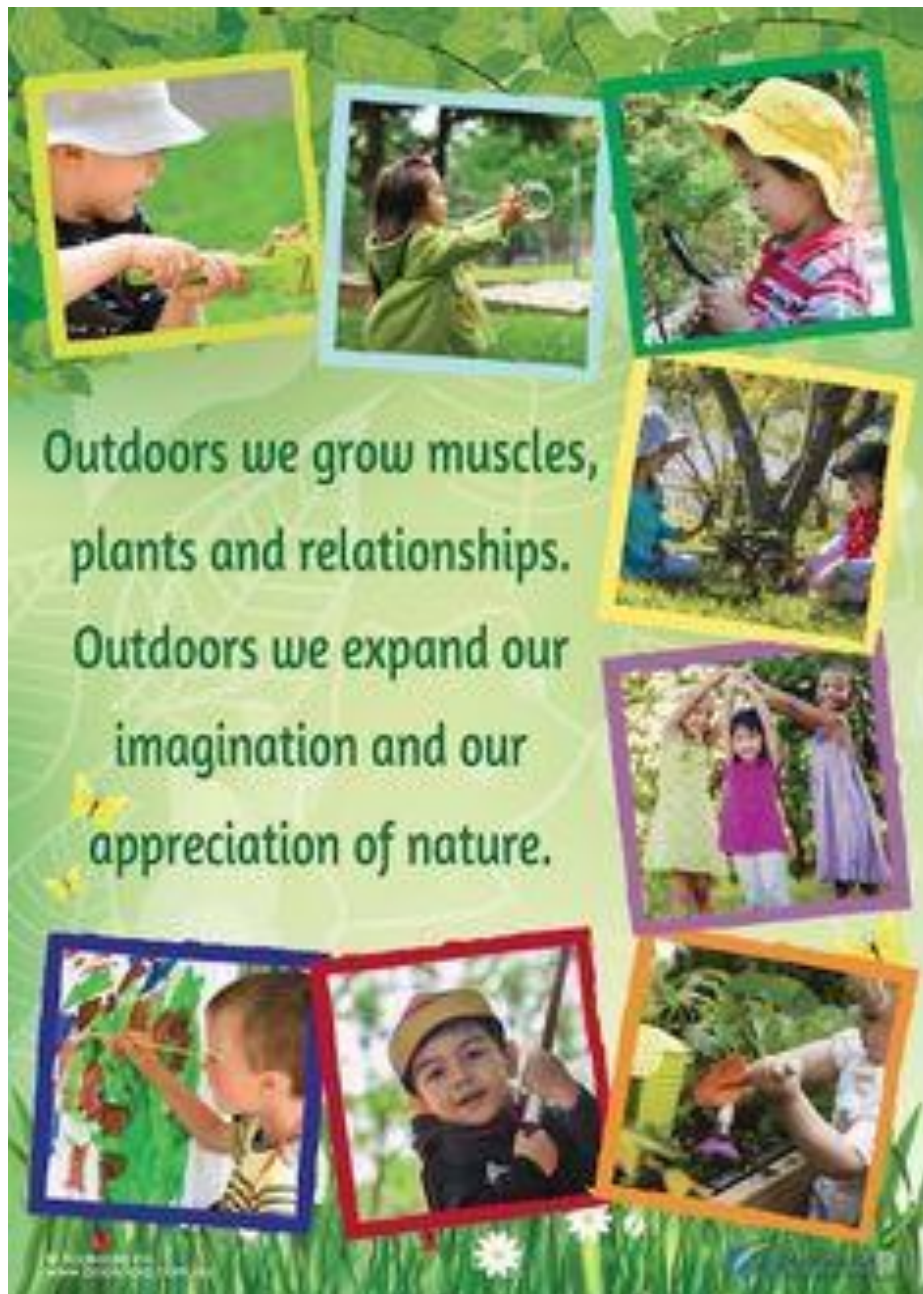
We believe that learning outdoors is central to children's learning. It is where children want to be and presents unique opportunities which cannot be replicated indoors. It offers "children an environment where they can feel secure and relaxed and where freedom of movement becomes the key to quality learning" (Inside Out).

"When children play out of doors, they are exercising their growing intellectual and emotional muscles, as well as their physical ones. They are developing the power to think, to feel, to do, to see and understand to represent and express. They are imagining, puzzling, wondering, exploring, befriending and sharing"

Can I play out? Mary Drummond

We believe that Outdoor Play is important as:

- The foundations of each child's learning depend upon their ABC, attention, balance and co-ordination.
- It gives opportunities for multi-sensory learning with stimuli from the natural world.
- It provides an ever-changing environment.
- A safe and secure area can be provided (even if it is only a small area).
- It creates links between areas of learning.
- It is essential for intellectual, emotional and physical growth.
- Children can make decisions, problem solve and experiment in relation to the world around them.
- It enables children to be adventurous, explore and investigate in and take risks in relation to their wider learning environment.
- Outdoors provides nourishment as children learn through movement.
- Children can engage and enjoy physical activity.
- Children can build, create and be messy on a large scale.



Why Outdoors?

Learning outdoors is central to children's learning.

It is where children want to be and presents unique opportunities which cannot be replicated indoors.

So why outdoors?

The foundations of each child's learning depend upon their

ABC:

Attention

Balance

Co-ordination

A safe and secure area can be provided (even if it is only a small area).

Outdoors provides nourishment as children learn through movement.

It creates links between areas of learning.

It is essential for intellectual, emotional and physical growth.

It enables children to be adventurous, explore and investigate in relation to their wider learning environment.

My life should be filled with
WONDER, discoveries,
and adventure.

Take me **OUTSIDE**.
Let me get to know and love
NATURE.

I will remind you what it's like
to see with a child's eyes
and open heart.

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Children can engage and enjoy physical activity.

Children can build, create and be messy on a large

Children can make decisions, problem solve and experiment in relation to the world around them.

Hence, the whole curriculum can be discovered in an accessible and well-planned outdoor learning environment.



When I Play Outside

I am learning about

Absorption Adaption Action Arranging **Animals**
Autonomy Balance Belonging Calculating Caring
Cause and Effect **Change** *community* *Creative Thinking*
Culture Chemical reaction **CONSTRUCTION** *Calm*
Co-operation Creatures **CLASSIFICATION** Conservation
Communication Confidence **Connection** Conversation
Depth **DISTANCE** Density Experimentation Evaporation
Friction **Friendship** Force **Gravity** Height Inertia
Invention **Identification** **Insects**
Light Initiative *Language* Listening Literacy Independence
Investigation *Manipulation* **Myself** Measurement Mass
Movement Matching **NATURE** Negotiation **Nurturing**
Numeracy **OBSERVATION** Ordering Patterning
Physics Planning Problem solving
Plants Questioning *Reaction* Risk *Responsibility*
Resilience **Regulation** Representation Suspension
Size Shape Seasons *Senses* Scientific Method
Temperature Teamwork Texture Volume Vibration
Weight Weather *Speed* *Space* **Collaboration**

...and much, much more!

www.outdoorlearningplay.net.au





I will understand

problem solving, self-exploration,
decision making, number
relationships, structures, complex
vocabulary, healthy living, cause
and effect, creativity, imaginative
thinking, and my natural world
when I am big.

**Because I play outside
while I am little.**

www.HowWeeLearn.com

OUTDOOR LEARNING

The Extended Classroom

Aims and purposes:

The aims for the EYFS Learning Environment are based upon intrinsic values of outdoor play'.

- To provide the children with an organised, integrated indoor and outdoor learning environment.
- To value that when outside, play is the most important activity for young children allowing them to build on first hand experiences.
- To offer outdoor provision which has meaning for young children and which is led by the child.
- To ensure that the focus for outdoor provision should extend and compliment that of the provision indoors.
- To provide a motivating, dynamic and versatile place where children can create, change, choose and 'be in charge' of their play.
- To provide the children with opportunities to play, explore and talk in their contact with the natural world.
- To enable children to have many real experiences in a rich outdoor environment, which is carefully planned for and structured to meet their individual needs.
- To provide opportunities so that children have long periods of time outdoors to develop their use of space and resources and revisit activities.
- To ensure that all adults understand the importance of outdoor play for young children and to provide provision that is stimulating and has potential to meet all their needs.
- To offer challenge where young children can take risks and develop their ideas within a framework of safety and security.
- To meet the individual needs of young children, supporting inclusion and offering a diverse range of activities and experiences.

Planning

Outdoors learning is planned for carefully and in conjunction with indoor provision where possible. It is based upon the Practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We plan for the outdoors holistically, recognising that all aspects of a child's development are inter-related.

We offer experiences which link all areas of the curriculum and provide them with the opportunities to explore resources at their own pace, explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Outdoors many of these aspects are brought together through playing and talking.



Examples of outdoor play opportunities

Outdoor play provides the children with opportunities to:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Be curious.

Be responsible for living things and understand their responsibility for the environment.

Play group games and share exciting discoveries.

Physical Development

Climb, balance, hang, and crawl

Pedal, ride, scoot

Dig, fill, transport

Throw, catch, hit

Communication & Language

Work collaboratively, sharing ideas and discussing.

Literacy

Hide letters and find them.

Read in dens and re-enact stories.

Develop fine motor movements.

Write lists and make information books.

Mathematics

Play hopscotch, giant dice and target games.

Count kegs, wings, leaves, sticks etc.

Play positional language games.

Build shapes.

Develop problem solving skills.

Understanding the World

Investigate and explore

Plant and grow

Make collections

Design and make on a large scale

Observe seasonal changes

Make maps, plan routes and trails

Use cameras to record

Expressive Arts & Design

Use natural materials to create sculptures etc.

Be messy and creative on a large scale

Use music or story to inspire learning

Assessment

Assessment outdoors is an ongoing process and the regular assessments of the children's learning ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Observations form the foundations of our assessment process. These achievements are recorded on Tapestry, our online Learning Journey.

Organisation/ Storage

All children will have continuous access to the outdoor area (Big Playground & Little sheltered Playground) and will be supervised by a Practitioner.

The outdoor play area is a safe, challenging space, which is divided into several areas of learning (i.e. Mud Kitchen, Builders corner, Digging area, Allotment, Music Area, Small World, Reading Chair, Water Wall, Reading Tepee & shed, Art Area, Bike Track and Gross Motor Fun Area).

All staff take responsibility for the setting up and tidying away of resources. We take pride in our outdoor area and ensure that after each session the children and Practitioners tidy each area. At the end of the day they are placed in our storage container or by the side door in our classroom.

Roles and responsibilities of Practitioner

We believe that the role of the Practitioner is crucial in both planning and providing an outdoor learning environment. Our Practitioner is active and involved in each child's learning.

Their role includes:

- Planning a well-balanced programme of activities, building upon children's achievements and interests.
- Motivating, discussing, challenging, extending, questioning, celebrating success, giving feedback and supporting the children.
- Modelling activities and behaviour.
- Identifying children's preferred learning styles and needs.
- Identifying achievements through regular and systematic observations, which inform planning.
- Tracking and evaluating children's progress.
- Monitoring risk assessment - Setting up/tidying away/checking equipment.
- Checking the suitability of activities for children - Ensuring resources used efficiently and effectively.
- Ensuring equal opportunities.

Parent Partnership

Parents will be encouraged to value the outdoor learning environment through the following strategies:

- New parents can explore the outdoor area on their initial visits, where the importance of provision is highlighted.
- Time is spent during our New Starter meetings explaining the purpose of playing outdoors and how the children use the outdoor learning environment.

Health and Safety

Safety is of fundamental importance in the outdoors and the following measures will be taken:

- **Code of conduct for staff and children:**

Our code of practice for the outdoors is:

(Ask the children to make a set of rules for the outdoors, including sanctions and display these for all to see).

- **Safety Checks:**

Risk assessment is implemented every day. We check the outdoors for any hazards before every session and complete our Outdoor Checklist.

Please read our Health and Safety Policy for further guidance in this area.



Inclusion/ Equality of Opportunity

- All children in the setting regardless of their sex, mobility, race, size should feel included and have equal access to the outdoor curriculum.
- Strategies for inclusion include: Providing open-ended resources which take into account all children's interest and needs.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of the standards and quality of teaching in the EYFS Outdoor Learning Environment is the responsibility of the Early Years Subject Leader. They ensure that Outdoor play is used to improve teaching and learning at the EYFS.

The work of the Early Years Subject Leader also involves:

- Establishing and supporting colleagues in creating and teaching the Early Years Curriculum.
- Ensure all principles of policy are implemented.
- Ensure planning and organisation in line with policy.
- Being informed of current developments in Early Years.
- Being responsible for their own Professional Development.
- Providing a strategic lead and direction of Early Years in the school.
- Organising and co-ordinating the transitions between Nursery and Reception & Reception and Year 1.
- Organising and delivering curriculum workshops for parents and/or staff when appropriate.
- Reviewing samples of work, observing lessons and organising observations from other Subject Leaders.
- Using information to inform self-evaluation and then their individual Action Plan.
- Giving the Head Teacher an annual report evaluating the strengths and weaknesses and areas for further improvement - Monitoring the impact on standards in the EYFS.
- Making curriculum reports to Governors where appropriate.
- Being directly responsible for the Baseline Assessment & Foundation Stage Profile ensuring the Head Teacher, Governors and Parents have relevant information in the appropriate form.
- Undertaking an annual curriculum audit to give information to support annual budget bids to the Head Teacher.
- Preparing annual curriculum budgets
- Monitoring the effective use of devolved curriculum budgets.

This policy was reviewed in November 2023 by I. Li.

It will be reviewed again in September 2024.

Signatory:

Date:

