



## **Bertrum House Nursery Curriculum Policy**

Bertrum House is situated between Balham and Tooting Bec and our children live within a close radius of the nursery. The children have usually joined Bertrum House with a wide range of experiences provided by their families and have an excellent general knowledge of the world around them. We aim to take this curiosity and engagement to enthuse the children to love school and learning with an exciting and wide ranging curriculum, enhanced with activities such as learning about artists and presenting their own work in an art gallery; performing on the stage for events such as Christmas, Mother's Day and the end of year assembly.

We are proud of our inclusive curriculum and have supported numerous individuals with emerging and diagnosed needs. More information can be found in our Local Offer.

Our teaching teams are experienced teachers and practitioners who have a deep understanding of child development and the progression of skills and concepts. Our curriculum is aligned with the Birth to Five Matters document with a strong focus on the three 'Prime Areas': Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. The Prime Areas are crucially important for children under five are central to children's learning and development as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and into Key Stage 1.

Across the nursery, we support the children to be confident, respectful members of their community and a key feature of this is to learn skills for self-regulation. Our staff team builds strong relationships with children and their families, modelling healthy interactions and supporting the children to understand their feelings and manage difficult situations. The children have supported opportunities to test their feelings as they experience new opportunities.

We teach our children in two distinct year groups with children joining at 2 years old into our Nursery Class (Cherry). In the September when children have already turned three, they move up to Pre-Reception (Maple) which will be their final year before starting Reception at local schools. The classes have their own classrooms so we can deliver a curriculum that is targeted to the age and stage of development of the children. Learning activities are play based but have a progression of skills and independence that are needed to ensure that children are school ready. We plan carefully, never more than a week ahead and draw from our expert understanding of each child, their interests and the next steps needed to master concepts and explore new skills. Whole class teams have dedicated time to plan so that each practitioner can scaffold learning for every child.

In our Nursery class we build on children's early experiences at home helping them to develop into confident learners who are engaged with their peers and new activities. We nurture a love of learning, stories and support the children to use their senses to explore the world around them. The children explore concepts practically through play based activities so they master ideas of number, counting skills and an enthusiasm for stories and language. During their time in the Nursery class, the children develop the self-care skills they need to be independent learners and we aim for them to be able to dress themselves, indicate when they need to use the toilet, wash their hands and adapt to school routines such as tidying up and lining up.



The transition to school begins gently as soon as the children start with us and we are proud that they continue to flourish when they start in Reception. By the time they reach Pre-Reception, children understand routines such as carpet times and lining up which enables them to move confidently around the building and engage for longer, focused learning tasks. Those children who have a strong grasp of concepts such as number, identifying environmental sounds start to learn more formal aspects of learning involving numerals, combining of groups to add and phonics. All children continue to bring home a library book each week and in their Pre-Reception year, they will also share a reading scheme book with their teacher and parents. These books are carefully matched to the children's individual reading skills and start from wordless books through to texts with decodable words and sight vocabulary.

We support the children into their new schools and this is planned carefully into our curriculum with role play, sharing of uniforms and photographs and welcoming future teachers into our setting.

By the time the Bertrum children move to their next schools we aim for them

- To be excellent communicators to express their ideas and listen to others
- To have a well developed vocabulary so they can engage in exciting play and share their knowledge of a wide range of topics
- To feel confident and motivated in a learning environment
- To have strong foundations through the Prime Areas of Learning and to have extended their learning into the Specific Areas of Learning including Maths and Literacy
- To know what they enjoy and what they are good at, from reading to construction to being a good friend
- To be motivated, resilient and enjoy a new challenge

Outdoor learning is an integral part of our curriculum and the children spend an hour outside each day. Bertrum House is an accredited Natural Thinkers nursery and we are proud to deliver their ten commitments:

- Children have access to a range of natural areas and materials outside
- Children have opportunities to grow, pick and taste produce
- Children have access to play with mud
- Children care for their natural environment
- Children engage in all weather and the seasons
- Children have opportunities to engage with wildlife
- Children have daily access to the outside and nature for at least 25% of their day or session
- Settings ensure that no child is excluded from outside activities
- Settings ensure parents/carers have opportunities to get involved with Natural Thinkers activities
- Opportunities for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths will be incorporated into the outdoor environment.

We plan our outdoor learning activities with as much thought as those indoors and the provision is very different from 'play time' at school to ensure that activities are purposeful whilst still allowing children to direct their learning and set their own challenges.

Outside we can effectively teach children attitudes to learning that they will rely on when they move through primary school: planning, problem-solving, managing risk, resilience and confidence. In addition to these characteristics of learning, we are able to support development in all areas of learning in a motivating and engaging way, for example we use carpentry tools to develop fine motor skills.



Evidence suggests that outdoor learning can boost children's ability to learn new skills and concepts as well as promoting high levels of wellbeing and mental health. We structure our morning session so that children go straight outside onto the field to give them a positive, stress-free transition into nursery. When they return inside, they have received a boost to their creativity and problem-solving skills which helps them engage with their inside tasks.

Woven into our curriculum are our aspirations for our children to be responsible members of their community. We teach them to be responsible for themselves, our garden and the toys we use, and to nurture relationships with their peers, teachers and wider community. Our curriculum teaches the children to understand and appreciate their environment and through Natural Thinkers they learn to take care of it.

Written: April 2023