



Encouraging an Early Love of Learning

Primary Years is the time when children develop their love of learning. While the core curriculum areas of literacy and numeracy will always take priority at The Friends' School, the Friends' Kindergarten and Morris Primary Years educators also recognise it is important to nurture children's individual approaches to learning.

At Friends', Kindergarten students have been enjoying some stimulating learning experiences with the completion of a new outdoor learning area, and Year 1 classrooms have been transformed to enhance an investigation into the wonders of light.

Head of Friends' Primary Years Mary-Margaret Gibson explains, "Devising ways to inspire constructive play and exploration, stimulating the senses, and encouraging children to create and imagine are just some of the objectives that occupy our educators each day.

"We have deliberately taken steps to provide Friends' students with access to a stimulating play environment to encourage them to engage with nature, to think, question and experiment."

The new Kindergarten outdoor learning area was planned in consultation with students and educators to create a space where children can play, explore and imagine, or simply rest, contemplate and wonder. Specific ideas that reflect the children's wishes were incorporated into the design, such as rock pools, a messy area and 'shiny, happy things'.

The area reflects the School's intention to view children as active learners. It uses the environment as a third teacher, with many natural textures, and lots of opportunities to build, look, dig, laugh, ask, imagine and learn.

Meanwhile, in the Year 1 classrooms, students have been exploring the wondrous properties of light and shadow. Classrooms were darkened and lit sparsely with various types of light, ready for children to enter into a new environment designed to inspire exploration, questions and light-filled experiments.

Excitement was high as the doors opened, and children were keen to move about the room, looking and interacting with each installation prepared by their teachers. When curiosity and questioning are nurtured, the scene is set for engagement and ultimately a love of learning.