



St Martin's C of E Primary and Nursery School

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Dear Parents and Carers

Over the last couple of years we have successfully introduced "Shoeless Learning" across Nursery, Reception and Year One. This may sound unusual but research has shown that not wearing shoes in the classroom leads to:-

- Higher levels of concentration
- Improved behaviour
- A quieter, more comfortable and, therefore, more relaxed learning environment
- It has also been shown that whilst children's feet are still growing and developing, having periods without shoes helps to develop strength, balance and proprioception (the neurological ability of the body to sense movement and position). It also helps to contribute to good posture.

The findings are based on the research of Stephen Heppell, one of the leading researchers within education. In addition to information online, a link to the section of the website that relates to shoeless learning can be found below:-

<http://rubble.heppell.net/places/shoeless/>

At St Martin's, the wellbeing of the children is at the heart of everything we do. We spend a lot of time learning on the floor and feel this approach helps with hygiene as well as the benefits listed above. Below are some things that will be done to maintain the safety of the environment within the classroom and the general wellbeing of your child:-

- The classroom carpets and floors will have a deep clean every Summer
- The classroom floor is vacuumed and mopped by our cleaners at the close of every school day to ensure that any debris is cleared away in preparation for the children's arrival the following day.
- Whilst we maintain the cleanliness of the toilets during the day, each cubicle will have a pair of crocs outside for children that wish to wear these when they go to the toilet.

In the morning when the children arrive at school, they come in, take their shoes off and put them under their peg. If you would like to provide your child with a pair of slippers or slipper socks to wear whilst in the classroom you are welcome to, however, this is not a requirement. The children have continued access to the outside throughout the day. For this reason we ask that the children have a pair of wellies that are kept in on the welly rack outside each classroom as they are easy to pull on and off and will also be needed for weekly forest school. At lunch times the children will wear their school shoes to the hall and out on the playground. It would be really beneficial for the children if shoes are velcro or buckle/zip so the children can put their shoes on independently.

If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Many thanks

Melanie Turl

Assistant Head - Foundation and Key Stage One Lead