

# *St. Joseph's Catholic Schools' Federation*

## *Children's University*



# Brief History of the Children's University

- **Established initially in mid 1990s**
- **Grew from concern that the formally prescribed curriculum might be 'squeezing out' exciting learning**
- **12 CUs thrived initially but needed better sustainability**
- **Re-energised in current form in 2007**



# CU Unique Selling Points – (USP)

✓The Children's University (CU) is an international charity that provides 7 to 14 year olds (Year 5+ with their families and carers) with exciting, innovative high-quality learning experiences outside the normal school day, at weekends and during the holidays throughout the British Isles and beyond. Participation is voluntary.

✓There are in excess of 115 local Children's University centres across the British Isles all managed to meet the needs of their local communities and all involve local universities, colleges and schools. There are also CU developments in the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, China and India.

✓Although open to all, the Children's University aims particularly to reach children facing educational and socio-economic disadvantage.

✓Our aim is to raise aspirations and develop a love of learning by issuing children with a *Passport To Learning* which records their individual learning journey. The children are rewarded for their participation with certificates at graduation ceremonies at grown-up universities with proud parents in the audience.



# CU Unique Selling Points – (USP)

- ✓ The activities are practical, fun based and voluntary and include after-school clubs, community activities, and learning at museums and theatres, in parks and galleries and even at B&Q and the BBC. Children are also encouraged to attend CU lectures and seminars at universities in order to whet their appetite for future learning.
- ✓ After the age of 14 Children's University 'alumni' can continue their involvement through our CU Volunteering scheme which is linked to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- ✓ The Children's University aims to develop the understanding that learning can be a satellite navigation to better places in life ... all under the motto "*aspire to inspire*"!
  - ✓ Independent evaluations by the University of Cambridge have shown that the Children's University makes a difference to children's learning and achievements, both in and out of school.



# Summing up the Evidence

## **Outcomes for learners:**

**Children often achieve better in school as a result of motivation from something they succeed at beyond school, making learning a reality beyond academic studies**

## **Outcomes for schools:**

**Children's University can improve attitudes to learning and attendance  
Pupils and teachers testify to life changing experiences**

## **Outcomes for families:**

**Children's University can provide a vehicle for families to learn together  
Self-driven, confident and collegial learning**

## **Outcomes for the community:**

**Children's University can help children to connect what is inside them with what they do in school and what they experience beyond school...**

**Provides a safe haven and models positive relationships**



# CU Unique Selling Points – (USP)

- **All Premier Sport franchises are validated in principle as places where children can use their *Passports To Learning (Learning Destinations)*.**
- **Franchise holders and local CU Managers agree how national programmes are offered in their area, linked to national guidelines for time allocations per activity.**
- **After school clubs and holiday activities are both covered.**
- **Session leaders stamp Passports To Learning at agreed intervals.**



# How does my child get involved?

Children collect Children's University credits (1 credit = 1 hour of learning) through their own Passport to Learning, in which they are encouraged to collect hours of learning towards nationally recognised awards from 30 up to 1000 hours of learning.

## What type of activities are included?

We will include any activity which:

- Is about learning
- Is voluntary
- Raises aspirations and broadens pupils horizons

We will also validate time spent at Children's University approved visitor attractions focused on learning such as museums, clubs, and outdoor activity centres which are known as **Learning Destinations**



# How do I find Learning Destinations in my area?

We will sign post you to destinations, but these can also be found on their national website:

If you know of an after school club, or special activity which your child is taking part in, we can nominate it as a Learning Destination.

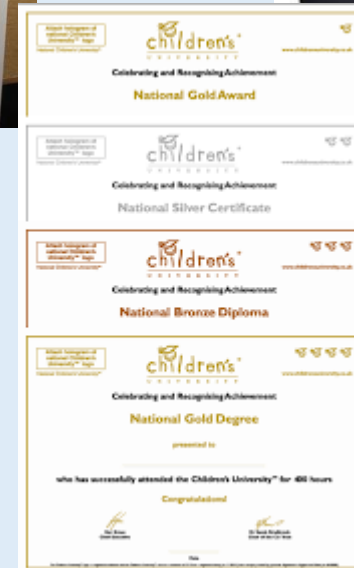




# Children's University: Awards and Certificates

There are four levels of awards, exactly the same as the awards given at University level:

1. Undergraduate (30-400 hours)
2. Postgraduate (400-800 hours)
3. Doctorate (800-1000 hours)
4. Honorary recognition



# Graduation

