

Case Study - Northdowns Primary School



Project Title:

'Growing your Own'

Healthy Schools Theme:

Healthy Eating

School Context:

Location: Brockham, Near Dorking, Surrey
Number of Pupils: 421
SAT or GCSE performance: See end of document for results (attachment section)
% SEND: 14%
%FSM/disadvantaged pupils: 12.2%

Identified Priority:

Healthy Eating: To improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of healthy eating by adopting a school allotment to plant and grow fruit/vegetables. This need was prioritised as a direct result of observations and oral feedback from staff and students.

A tour of canteen bins showed a regular waste pattern of 50% uneaten food. It was obvious that the school needed to re-visit the food the students eat and decide what is healthy food and its nutritional value, for their well-being.

Outcomes:

Outcome 1:

Children's understanding of healthy eating and nutrition has increased by taking ownership of their individual work. This "Hands on Work" has encouraged them to consider the unnecessary waste of food in school. The project has assisted children to change attitudes towards food in general. Reactions such as "I don't like it" and "I don't like the look of it" has been reduced due to being involved in the growing process. Children are prepared to be involved in tasting sessions.

Over 300 children have participated in the Allotment Project. They have learned about soil types and what plants need to grow and be healthy. They have joined in at leaf identification and plant doctor exercises in a Curriculum Day with 60 Year 2 students. **(See end of document for Science Day Plants & Growing listing - See attachment section)**

Year 6 (60) students have used their reasoning skills while judging the depth of soil needed to plant potatoes, measuring distance from one plant to the next and how many rows can be planted in the

allocated area. Finally how many potatoes will be harvested on the basis of eight spuds per plant? Natural problems will occur during the process but they learn to understand crop failure and resilience helps them to recover from difficulties and move forward with solutions. A Reception class (30) have volunteered throughout the school year to remove snails, measure the plants for growth and keep an eye on which plants the slugs like to eat.

Outcome 2:

Pupils have taken the fruit and vegetables that they have grown to plan, prepare, and cook healthy snacks. A Reception class (30) harvested some of their allotment vegetables (courgettes, onions and tomatoes and French beans). They chopped the vegetables and added them to pasta). They picked blackberries at the allotment and collected apples which were cooked and served as a blackberry crumble. One young lad (not a vegetable eater) came back into the classroom after school and asked for the recipe. Being involved in the complete growing process had changed his attitude.



A year 3 class (30) planted three types of carrots - white, purple and orange. This proved to be of great interest to the children and became a tasty snack.



Outcome 3:

The allotment as a learning/experiential environment serves to develop both cognitive and non-cognitive development. Physically, the children walk to and from the allotment, carrying equipment needed for their work. They develop hand co-ordination by digging, planting, measuring, watering and harvesting produce.



In a Reception class (30), students have volunteered to grow seedlings in pots which are transferred to the allotment, their class garden and the local plant sale.

Outcome 4:

Whenever any group visits the allotment, health and safety rules are discussed and explained. Children are put into groups for various activities. The students learn to recognise others' strengths and limitations and offer support when necessary. They also understand how their actions impact on others. They value the contributions of other students, work as part of a team and make friends. There is a praise culture in place to raise self-esteem. Vulnerable children work on the allotment in small groups. It has been a pleasure to see them have the freedom to develop their own method of learning. At times they have struggled with disappointments but have developed perseverance and self-esteem. Three students in particular have benefited from working with growing plants/vegetables. Staff have noted their progress. One Year 1 student who rarely spoke to others and had poor reading skills, blossomed when working on the allotment.

She talked more and improved her organisational skills. She has since shown a leap in self-esteem, become a team leader and is improving her level in reading. A Year 3 student who joined us from France was finding it difficult to fit in to a new environment. On the allotment, he was part of a team and helped by others with identifying language. Another student in Year 2 who has behavioural problems, found his learning style on the Curriculum Day. He learned about the plants by sketching them first and then moved on to other activities.

Outcome 5:

The allotment provides an opportunity for shared working between staff, parents and students. Teaching assistants, parents/carers and staff work together by sharing ideas, resources and information to give students the best chance for growing their own vegetables and in doing so, add to their development. Brockham Nursery has joined our project and are contributing to its success. When last year's group joined Reception in September, they were already familiar with the allotment and actively joined in activities. One of the grandparents made a lovely sign to identify "our patch". The environmental clubs on two sites contribute as well to the Leigh Plant Sale and cooking/eating activities.

Healthy Eating Week held June 12th, 2017 was one of the busiest weeks for planting. Over 100 children visited the allotment that week - watering, planting and harvesting. Families came after school and viewed the children's work. The Head teacher gave an insight into the Allotment Project by submitting an article to the Parish Magazine.

Activities / Interventions:

The allotment Project has gone from strength to strength. Having acquired our allotment in December 2016, we have dug and rotovated the land and engaged with the local community to source funds. In addition to the £200 donated, The Friends of North Downs School donated £100 this year to continue to work.

Children have grown plants for two years for the allotment and Leigh Plant Sale. To date approximately 300 students have been to the allotment. In April 2017, Waitrose representatives gave an assembly to the Leigh Site on the topic of healthy eating. Their motto is "Learning through Growing". They gave children a generous set of seed kits.

A Market Stall at two sites last year raised £73 to purchase seeds for the 2018 plant season. To date we have held two further markets, raising £34 for our early produce.



Curriculum Days have been established to focus on planting and growing. The planting on the allotment has now been extended to winter months. All these activities have led to the students' greater understanding of healthy eating. It has been a pleasing to see that the Camera Club have encouraged their members to photograph items on the allotment towards Science work.

There have been an engagement with local businesses. Good discounts have been given by nearby Nurseries. Compost was donated by Kingfishers Farm in Abinger Hammer for our planting. A legacy was left to the Brockham Green Horticultural Society to plant flowers in named places in Buckland, Betchworth and Brockham. Children from the school with their families participated in this activity. The Allotment Project has joined the Brockham Green Horticultural Society and were encouraged to enter the September 2017 show. Individual students and group entries were submitted. We won 1st prize for our 9.5 lbs marrow and 3rd prizes for craft, art and photo entries. We intend to enter the 2018 show in September.
(See end of document for Proof of Prizes Award for Produce - See attachment section)

Impact:

Children have learned a great deal about planting, growing, harvesting and marketing their fruit and vegetable. They have demonstrated interest in the growing process and the benefits received.

The work related to the allotment has rippled out to other community activities/competitions. Year 1 site (Leigh) entered a potato competition led by the group AHDB Potatoes. Other classes are participating in the potato competition run by Brockham Green Horticultural Society. Classes 1 and 2 in Leigh have developed their own composting area for their leftover fruit which can be used in growing plants.

The unintended impact was the allotment project became a springboard for the further development of outdoor learning and activity. The school is applying to become accredited as a "Learning outside the Classroom" (LOTC) school.

Next Steps:

We hope to extend the range of plants we grow. With money raised, we wish to purchase propagators for classrooms to use in the winter months to prepare for spring planting.

We are going to investigate planting a herb section in the allotment to focus on the benefits of using herbs in cooking and also their medicinal properties.

The greatest achievement of our allotment is that students have learned a great deal about growing fruit and vegetables. They are curious about the whole growing process. Food is no longer a commodity to be thrown away. There is now a culture of "try something new" and an appreciation of the process from seed to table. The allotment has proved to be a source of physical activity, emotional well-being and a source of healthy eating for all.

Senior Leader Quote:

The school has made a long term commitment to developing the outdoor learning curriculum. Our 'Grow Your Own' project is central to this as we are also working towards our 'Learning Outside the Classroom' accreditation. This project has not only supported the collaborative work of the school across our three sites but also further increased engagement with the village communities.

Photograph(s): Included within the sections above

1 and 2: Students preparing and eating food they cooked.

3. Harvesting 4. Measuring 5. Marketing

Attachments:

1. SATs results.



North Downs School SATs 2017 Results.pdf

[Online URL Link: North Downs School 2017 SATs Results](#)

2. Science Day (Plants & Growing). 3. Proof of prizes award for produce

Science Day - Plants and Growing - Year 2 at Leigh
Thursday April 19th 2018

Activity AM and some of PM - carousel

Mrs Tubb, Mrs Boyer, Mrs Ogston, Mrs Gelllett, Mrs Rode, Mrs Barbara Cavalier, Mrs Smith, Mrs Goodwin (am), Mrs Lambert, Mrs Wilkins (am), Mrs Lampard, Mrs Deeks, Mrs Preston, Mrs Cook, Mrs Ottaway

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Mirabel	Jake C	Cameron	Ryan	Rosie	Jasper
Matilda	Amelie	Dylan	Jomie	Harry I	Molly
Harry G	Austin	Ava	Sylvie	William	Zu
Gracie	Fallon	Harrison	Kairi	Logan	Jack
Eva	Emily	Lucy	Lilybelle	Lily	Maddy
Diggory	Annabelle	Noah	Edward	Alex	Owen
Kegan	Flo	Annie	Augustus	Alexandra	Eloise
Hamish	Amber	Amelie	Lexi	Isla	Harry
Daisy	Alexia	Thomas	Elliott	Seren	Ben
Zac	Jess	Zeke	Joseph	Heath	Heidi

Activity	Person	Location	Resources
A Planting (seeds and bulbs) Potatoes	Mrs Boyer Mrs Rode Mrs Wilkins (am)	Outside Beetles'	Outside (covered areas if wet), pots, compost, tools, mixture of seeds and bulbs Individual pots and planters polystyrene
B Outdoor Learning Activity Leaf identification/ Scavenger Hunt	Mrs Ottaway Mrs Preston	Outside	
C Sewing Activity	Mrs Cavalier Mrs Gelllett Mrs Goodwin (am)	Beetles' Classroom	
D What do plants need to grow and be healthy? How to be a plant doctor?	Mrs Deeks Mrs Lambert	Bees and Beetles'	Dead and live plants, magnifying glasses, sorting cards etc
E Art Make a daffodil	Mrs Ogston Mrs Smith Mrs Lampard	Outside Bees	Egg boxes, felt tips, daffodil template, split pins, oasis
F Plants We Eat Twinkl powerpoint Data collection What is its name? Is it a fruit or vegetable? Does it grow from seed or bulb?	Mrs Tubb Mrs Cook	Bees' classroom	Selection of food and plants for chn to taste include food from different parts of plants. Children bring in one fruit or vegetable.

THIRD PRIZE

Class 53

Description a collection of vegetables

Exhibitor's name and address North Downs allotment Project

Gardener (if any) _____

FIRST PRIZE

Class 58

Description Heaviest marrow

Exhibitor's name and address Mrs. M. Rode (on behalf of Northdowns School

Gardener (if any) Allotment Project)