

# CASE STUDY

THE GROWING SCHOOLS GARDEN

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Wetland and Arid Zone

## Broadlands Primary School, Hereford



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## Why we got involved

In March 2002, Broadlands Primary School established its Eco Committee as part of its commitment to the Eco Schools programme. In the same year Mrs Weeks, the Science and Eco Schools coordinator and a keen gardener herself, set up a gardening club to provide an extra-curricular activity for the Reception and lower Key Stage 1 pupils.

After refurbishing the school's wildlife pond and establishing a 'Food, Friends and Flowers' garden, one of their next projects was to develop a 'Sunshine Walk'. This was inspired by the one in the original Growing Schools Garden at the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in July 2002. The Sunshine Walk was rapidly followed by the planting of bulbs and herbs around the grounds and a new area of native woodland and orchard.

These developments of the school grounds, and the school's recycling achievements, resulted in many awards: February 2003 Eco Schools Silver Award; May 2003 Runners-up in the RHS Malvern Spring Show Primary and Middle Schools' Garden Design Competition winning £1500 to build a sensory garden; June 2003 judged in the top three entries for the Growing Schools Greenfingers Challenge in the West Midlands Region; July 2004 Eco Schools Green Flag was awarded.

In 2007 we have been working towards: redeveloping our infant playground area; installing a new pond and wildlife area and developing a new vegetable



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garden. Broadlands has inspired and supported many local, and other more distant, schools in their grounds development and is proud to have been invited to contribute to the new Growing Schools Garden at the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in July 2007. The project has provided many varied opportunities for delivering the curriculum and for promoting the use of the 'outdoor classroom'.

## What we made for the Wetland and Arid Zone

Pupils from Year 2 and 3 produced two mosaic tiles. One depicts a Hereford bull, the other the view from the infants' playground in spring with the Malvern Hills in the distance and the Lugg River and Lammas meadows in the foreground.

For other areas of the garden the pupils filled a gabion with local cobbles, apple-tree logs and piece of carved stone from Hereford Cathedral, replaced during restoration, to reflect the local geology, traditional agriculture and cultural heritage of the county. Two gabion cushions depict the school badge and the cathedral, River Wye and apple orchards

A variety of tree dressings were produced by different year groups linked to topics undertaken during the year. In addition, three tactile Herefordshire apple tree ceramic reliefs were constructed (see the Make It in the Food and Farming Zone for more information about these).

## What we learned

The projects have linked, enhanced and made more relevant many areas of the curriculum. The whole school has focused on the cultural heritage of Herefordshire. Pupils' geographical skills, knowledge and understanding of their local area have been enhanced as has their understanding of contrasting geographical localities. The science curriculum relating to rocks and soils has been made more relevant and accessible. All pupils have experienced working in the medium of clay, developing techniques that have enabled them to produce 3D objects. Design and technology processes, and pupils' understanding of the properties of materials, have been put to use in real contexts. Pupils have been given opportunities to see the links between different areas of their learning, and their use in real-life situations. The pupils have shown great pride in their achievements and have welcomed the opportunity to share these with a wide audience.



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## Photo gallery



## Quotes

*'I enjoyed it when we made our ideas into real mosaics. Especially sticking the mosaics onto the slabs.'* Year 2 pupil

*'Recently at our after-school art club we have been involved in making cushions. We found it really fun. We have used many different materials to*



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*make our cushions, and have all made completely different designs all to do with Herefordshire. As well as at art club, each class has made tree dressings which were all brilliant. It has been a really special privilege to be able to work on this project, as not many schools have been able to.'* Year 6 pupil

*'I think that our school is very lucky to be asked to make things to go on show at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show and then go off and be displayed permanently. I really enjoyed making the apples and the tree dressings because I like making clay apples and tree dressings and we had help if we needed it by Reverend Harris and Mrs Axtell. I'm glad our school was chosen to take part because we have good designers in the school. My models of apples and tree dressings wasn't the best but our values are good and teach people how you should behave and I hope people take note of the values and behave. I wish we get to take part in something like it in the future. I really enjoyed making them.'* Year 5 pupil

*'The work has helped my writing.'*EAL Year 2 pupil

*'I was interested in the Chelsea Flower Show when I saw it on television because they were talking about honey bees and we had been working on mini beasts for the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show.'* Year 2 pupil

*'I enjoyed squishing the real bark onto the clay and sticking the clay bark onto the tree.'* Year 2 pupil

*'I found out that colorado beetles are a terrible bug and we don't want them in this country. I thought they looked nice!'*

*'We saw a big contrast in the year groups, the way the different ages interacted with the materials when forming the clay apples. Throughout the year groups they coped well with learning new skills and the end product was excellent. Both adults and children enjoyed the experience.'* Teaching Assistant

*'I enjoyed working with clay so much that I have volunteered to go into Nursery and work with them on their apples.'* Teaching Assistant

## Helpers and sponsors

We would like to thank the parents, grandparents and members of the wider community who have enabled us to succeed in our projects. Many thanks to: Mr Chris Radbourne of Radbournes, Hereford; Mr Ben Moss and Fenella Tyler of Bulmers, Hereford; Capps & Capps Stonemasons; Tudors Building Supplies; S. J. Stanley Builders; Mr I Phillips; Mr & Mrs M Wilkins; Ms K

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Dyche and family; Messrs M Weeks Snr & Jnr; Royal National College for the Blind; Wyebriidge Sports College.

## Other information

One member of staff is trained to Level 1 in Forest Schools Skills with two other staff members due to undertake training. Support staff find use of the 'outdoor classroom' invaluable when working with pupils with specific needs.

Pupils throughout the school have an extensive range of extra-curricular activities available to them. Those taking place outside the classroom include many sporting opportunities such as football, netball, tag rugby, orienteering, cricket, athletics, rounders, golf, tennis, hockey, skipping and trampolining as well as gardening and Eco Schools groups.

The Foundation Stage outdoor areas are used on a daily basis and the Sensory Garden, school grounds and adjacent nature reserve are all used extensively both within lesson time and for special projects such as: Kite Week, Family Day and Scavenger Hunts. They are also used for Art Club activities, drama and music lessons, presentations on the Sensory Garden staging, cycling proficiency, and visits from the emergency services. Pupils attend the annual Herefordshire Schools' Music Festival.

The school has annual residential trips to London, Belgium and Boreatton Park. All year groups undertake trips every year and in most cases there is at least one per term with many shorter excursions into the local area. Most recently:

Year 6 have visited the Herefordshire Schools Science Festival, Hereford Cathedral, Lugg River and Lammas Meadows, Madley Environmental Centre and carried out data logging.

Year 5 have visited Blists Hill Victorian town, Hereford Cathedral – Free For All Project – Slavery, also Tudor Trail with the 'Old House' in Hereford High Town, Belmont Abbey, Lower Brockhampton (NT) Tudor work, County Library – Pie Corbett reading.

Year 4 have made a pilgrimage to the cathedral presenting their work from this in assembly. Use the grounds regularly for P.E., Science, geography and music.

Year 3 have visited Chedworth Roman villa, Carleon Roman Barracks, The Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail, Ironbridge Open Air Museum of Steel Sculpture, Weobley village.

Year 2 have visited The Black Country Museum, Cadbury World, the local high school pond, local Victorian buildings, local supermarkets.

Year 1 have visited: Techniquet in Cardiff – science, sound and forces; Goodrich Castle – fantasy fiction and history; Hereford sorting office – recounts, sequencing, letter writing; the local area – traffic and parked car surveys, tallying and pictograms; local nature reserve – science, variation and lifecycles; local playground – science, forces. Walk to the local church.



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Year R use their outdoor area daily for literacy, numeracy and all other areas of the curriculum. They have visited the local Post Office and shop, Wonderland, Symonds Yat, Puzzle Wood and Worcester. Produce an annual outdoor Nativity play.

Nursery use their outdoor area daily for all areas of the curriculum. They also use other areas of the school grounds and local nature reserve on a regular and frequent basis. A new outdoor area for Forest School activities is planned and will be shared with the playgroup linked to Broadlands. Nursery pupils particularly enjoy growing their own vegetables these are harvested, cooked and eaten by the children.

## Contact details

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