

CASE STUDY

THE GROWING SCHOOLS GARDEN

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Food and Farming Zone

Falconer's Hill Infant School, Daventry, Northamptonshire

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Why we got involved

We are a Green Flag Eco School. This is the highest environmental/sustainability award for schools. Although our children range from only four to seven years old we take a very active interest in our environment. Our motto is 'We care for everything'.

We are proud of our school grounds which include a calm corner, creepy-crawly courtyard, adventure hill, living-willow maze, spinney and garden. We regularly host visits from other schools and organisations who want to improve their grounds and gain new ideas. Learning through Landscapes has visited us on several occasions, and asked us to take part in the show.

What we made for the garden, to represent Food and Farming

We have grown vegetables for the show. Every class has been responsible for a different vegetable. Our children are regularly involved in growing things in our school garden and we often use what we grow to cook with. We have a children's kitchen and we cook autumn soup from the pumpkins we grow, and bake carrot cake with the carrots. In this way our children can see that their food does not come just from the freezers at Tesco's!

To represent other facets of outdoor learning we have also created mosaics that depict our school mascot Fizz (a falcon chick- after our name Falconer's Hill Infants) and the Eco School emblem of a tree. We have a giant mosaic at school that everyone in the school contributed to showing the children dancing around a mulberry bush.

What we learned

The benefits of being involved in a 'hands-on' garden cannot be over-estimated. The children love planting and tending but the big favourite is digging! Gardening is very therapeutic and appeals to all children whatever their ability level. The children learn about what plants need to sustain life. They are aware of sustainability and use the compost they have created to nourish the ground. When they cook what they have grown they become involved in language development, measuring, science (by identifying changing states during the course of cooking) and PSHE – working together cooperatively. Obviously, creating the mosaics involved design and creative skills.

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Photo gallery



Quotes

'We planted some carrot seeds. They were really tiny and stuck to my fingers. Our class had to look after them and make sure they had water. That was easy because it kept on raining! I like eating raw carrots- they are good for your teeth.' Sam, aged 5

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Other information

As a school we believe in learning outdoors. When we are not making use of our own grounds we are regular visitors to the local Country Park where the Country Park Rangers support our learning with activities such as seasonal explorations, pond dipping and outdoor cooking using the pizza oven. We visit local nurseries and farms and take part in Daventry Council events such as Climate Change Day and Lose the Litter Campaigns. We hold a Tree-dressing Day every year when we decorate our giant oak tree to clothe it in winter when it is bare to thank it for all it gives us each year – shade, a home for animals and beauty.

Contact details

Falconer's Hill Infant School. Ashby Road, Daventry, Northants NN11 0QF
Tel 01327 702878
Email head@falcons-inf.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Contact Mrs Coleen Wilkins

