

## School Garden Grant Case Study

School: Elmwood Junior School

Type of School: maintained Junior

Amount Received: £2,500

### Before the project



### After the project





### Project aims

Our project is called the 'Eco Zone'. Our aim was to take an under-utilised and overgrown garden area in the school grounds and transform it into a fun, engaging and educational outdoor learning environment. We feel that this is particularly important for our pupils as the school is placed in an urban area with little green space. The deprivation indicators for the area are high and many of our pupils and their families do not have gardens or spaces where they can be involved in growing.

We have succeeded in providing a large outdoor learning space and have started an edible garden. The centre piece is the Biodome, which will enable us to grow food all year round. Our pupils are learning in a hands on way during lessons and extra-curricular clubs about seasonality, growing, nutrition, health living and sustainability. This supports the Science curriculum as well as other areas such as PHSE, Art, creative writing and Maths.

### Key project data

The project is benefiting 480 pupils aged between 7 – 11. We also have 20 teachers, 20 Learning Support Assistants, Caretakers, Office Staff and Governors involved in developing the garden. We are also working with the Catering team to use the produce that is grown on the Salad Bar and also plan to sell our produce at the Summer Fete.

### Project success and impact

Pupils from all year groups have been actively involved in starting the garden, choosing what to grow, learning how to plant seeds and seedlings and monitoring how their plants are growing. The children have shown fantastic enthusiasm and have relished the opportunity to learn and work outside. They are even keen to try eating what they have grown, even if it is something they would not normally eat, such as radishes! Many have said that they will also try growing food at home. The school will build on this enthusiasm next academic year with outdoor learning embedded into the curriculum from September, so that each one of our 480 pupils aged between 7-11 will benefit from the project.

### Quotes from pupils

The pupils that have been involved in growing have been universally enthusiastic. The following quotes demonstrate their engagement in the project:

*'This is the best lesson ever'* – pupil 4S, after a lesson learning about seeds and planting.

*'I'm going to get my Dad to buy some seeds so that we can grow this at home'* – pupil 4S

*'I've never tried radishes before. They taste okay!'* – pupil Year 5, after tasting Elmwood's home grown produce.

### **Quotes from teachers**

The teaching staff have greeted the project with great enthusiasm as the garden provides a huge variety of opportunities for delivering creative and interactive learning.

*'The possibilities for the garden seem almost limitless, from supplementing children's learning both within and outside the curriculum, to supporting their social, physical and mental well-being. There is a great buzz around the school about our new outdoor space and the children have already demonstrated a genuine excitement about getting out there.'* Jo Allen, Year 6 teacher and Science Co-ordinator.

### **Quotes from parents/volunteers**

*'The children of Elmwood will see benefits from growing food: the satisfaction of planting and watching the seeds grow and then being able to eat the fresh produce when it is ready to harvest. Gardening will encourage pupils to have a healthy and active lifestyle.'* Jan Danson, volunteer and allotment owner.