



Case study

John F Kennedy Catholic School

Schools' Challenge – School Ground Development

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Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

Background

John F Kennedy is a catholic comprehensive with 1100 pupils on roll, aged between 11-18 years. The school is committed to improving the environment and has developed a school biodiversity plan, a 50 year School Environment Mission, and an eco policy.

The Project

1. What were you trying to achieve for your learners through the curriculum?

As part of the Year of Food and Farming the school set out to develop the school grounds even further to maximise opportunities for learning outside the classroom:

- To create an outside classroom
- To increase fruit and vegetable production by expanding the school allotment
- To increase flower and vegetable sales using the Horticultural Enterprise Project
- To increase the number of new habitats on the school site
- To complete the log cabin project - the school's environmental education centre
- To achieve Green Flag Eco-School status



2. How did you organise the learning to achieve your aims for learners?

The school grounds at John F Kennedy act as a cross-curricular resource, therefore each area of the curriculum is taught using the outside classroom.

3. How well are you achieving your aim?

- Pupils enclosed the spinney with a fence made of recycled larch and constructed an outside classroom. They regularly gave up holiday time to work on the pond/wetland area and created a



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new board walk and pond gardens. Forty tons of larch logs were stockpiled next to the site for the log cabin project, designed by Sixth Form students

- In February 2008 selected Eco-club members presented their work at the East of England Conference on Sustainability
- Eco-club and horticulture students planted 3000 bulbs around the site between November 2007 and January 2008, where the majority of the bulbs were donated by a local nursery
- The school received a £500 grant from the Tree Council to purchase new trees for the spinney. The school also contacted RHS Wisley to support the spinney conservation project and a topiary project linked to the new sports centre
- From April to July 2008 the Eco Club students worked on completing the tree trail, the butterfly trail and chalk scarp meadow. Horticulture students have ensured that all produce is grown organically, the allotment area increased by 20% in September 2007 and vegetable and flower production increased by 30%
- During the Year the school students planted over 300m of new hedge and managed a further 100m, with support from the Woodland Trust and Valley Grounds Care
- The outside classroom enhances and supports teaching and learning in all curriculum areas

