

Growing Schools Case Studies



Eco Garden

A school garden and allotment providing a work and study area incorporating the national curriculum, current ecological issues and a healthy lifestyle all within 30m² at Carmel RC College, Darlington

Aim

To highlight current social, economic and environmental issues through the use of the school grounds.

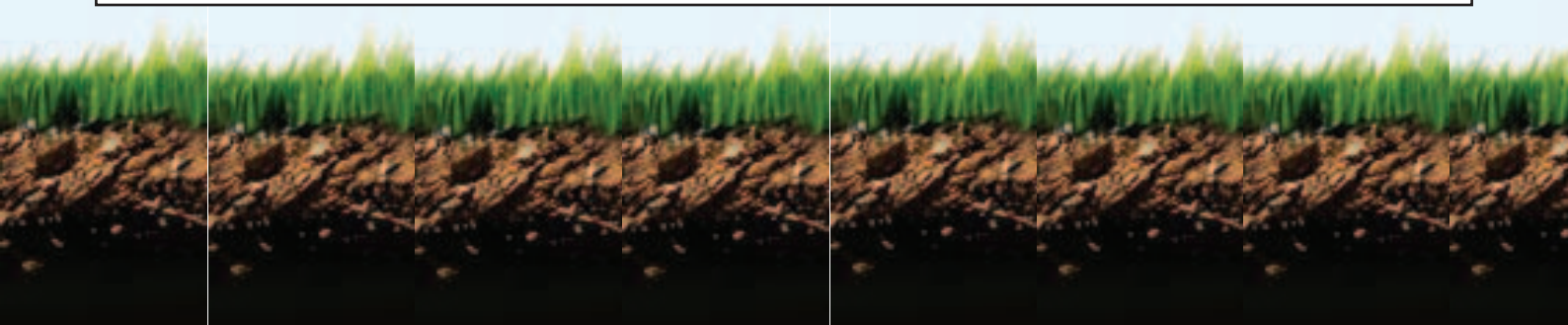
Action

Converting a derelict 30m² piece of school grounds into an allotment, wildlife sanctuary and educational resource.

Outcome

Student participation in scientific subjects such as healthy eating, recycling, photosynthesis, garden design, genetics and soil sampling. Resources for scientific experiments, classification, environmental monitoring and a young enterprise group.

Breaking Ground



Growing Schools Case Studies

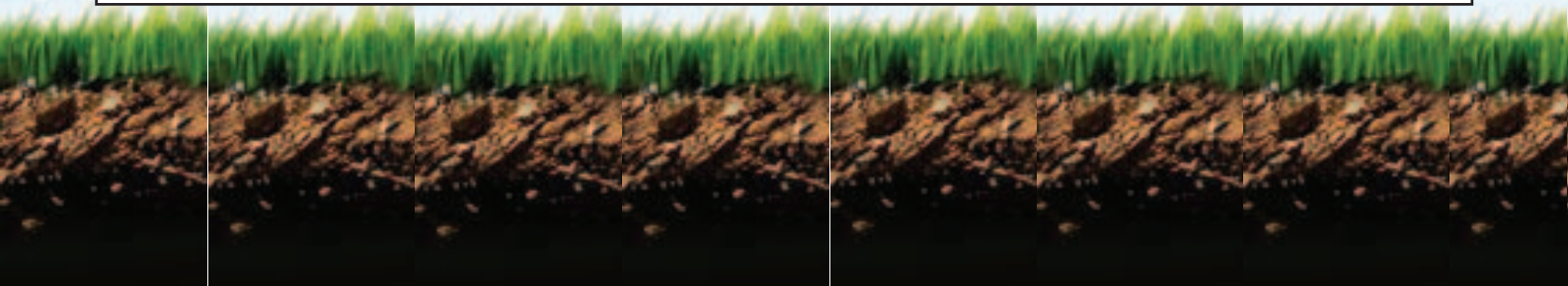


Planting out the raised beds



Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. As such we have developed a sustainable resource for all age ranges from primary to tertiary education. We have created an allotment plot with six raised beds with the facility to grow a range of crops. We also have a greenhouse and shed and have utilised both natural and artificial environments.

We are a Catholic College with strong links to the community. We have incorporated our values and beliefs into this project by trying to link the community with what goes on in our school grounds. With parents, students and teachers we have brought together a group of



Growing Schools Case Studies



like-minded people to meet every Thursday to discuss improvements within the school, not just through the garden project but through wider, ecologically linked projects such as litter picking, saving electricity and fund-raising events. The weekly meetings between teachers and the eco-garden students are proving interesting, educational and relationship-building between a range of students within the school. The meetings are student led and only facilitated by the teacher.

Comments from these meeting have included:

- 'How good is that, growing our own vegetables'
- 'They taste so much better'
- 'I feel really proud of what we have done today'
- 'What a lovely pair of cabbages'

We have registered with the Heritage Garden Society and are the proud owners of vintage and rare-breed tomatoes, cucumbers, broad beans, asparagus and parsnips.

Our yearly aim is to provide the school kitchens and the young enterprise group with saleable fruits and vegetables to highlight the fact that it is possible to grow your own vegetables. We hope to supply the school science and technology departments with resources to use within the curriculum such as flowers, fruits and vegetables as well as chemicals harvested from the plants to use within the chemistry department. The garden has helped develop technology skills such as designing of the garden and building raised beds, irrigation system and piping system for the water butts.

We have further aspirations, and a plot of land on which we aim to produce a community-based resource including an insect garden and pond. We are currently searching for external links to science and engineering businesses within the Darlington community in the hope of further developing our knowledge and understanding of ecological issues as a partnership.

