

Incredible Todmorden High School

In 2007 the Catering Manager at Todmorden High School, Tony Mulgrew, decided to change the way the school's Catering Team sourced and produced food. He believed that Todmorden High needed to become more involved with growing fresh produce and decided to investigate how to make this sustainable and economical. He put an advert in the local paper asking for help and this was the start of the school and community working together to form Incredible Edible Todmorden.

Incredible Edible Todmorden aims to increase the amount of local food grown and eaten in the town. Businesses, farmers and the community, as well as schools, are all involved. Vegetables and fruit are springing up everywhere with public flower beds being transformed into community vegetable patches.

To publicise this the school invited parents to watch Tony create school meals so they knew how such high quality, low cost meals were produced. They were impressed. The school went on to join the "Food for Life" Partnership and, with support from Garden Organics and the Focus on Food Campaign, took up Flag Ship School status.



Furthermore, Deputy Headteacher Helen Plaice was investigating ways to extend and enrich the students' curriculum and make their education relevant to their lives outside school. Following developments in the kitchens it became evident this was the path the school should take in developing their curriculum. With support from Calderdale MBC they were successful in a bid to offer the Environment and Land Based Studies Diploma from 2011. They have recently appointed a Head of Vocational Learning, Paul Murray, and part of his brief is to plan the strategy for attaining the Food for Life Silver and Gold Marks by adapting the curriculum, and ensuring this initiative impacts on students of all ages and abilities.

Over the last 3 years the School has developed student leadership and

appointed Aisha Coggan as a student Director of Incredible Edible Todmorden. As part of this role she gives a student opinion at meetings and makes sure students' interests are represented. Her aim is to get the people of Todmorden involved in what is grown in their town, and to get students engaged with the building of the Lottery funded aquaponics units.

The last four months have seen the development of a strong leadership coalition, combining formal school leadership structure and student representatives with partners from the local community, the local authority and from national groups. They are starting to link a wide variety of smaller initiatives, and are forming a powerful, comprehensive model for community cohesion by working in partnerships, and are now recognised as a lead school for the Calderdale Challenge within the Local Authority.

The strength of this project was the use of distributed leadership to encourage colleagues to follow new ideas outside the usual leadership structure. The challenge has been to formalise this process so that it becomes embedded at all levels.

Editor's notes: How can we make our schools more sustainable? Part of the answer lies in looking at the buildings and grounds and working out ways to make them more sustainable. In this issue we learn about an outdoor kindergarten in Scotland, about young people from Abraham Moss designing their own sustainable classroom and about Todmorden High where sustainable food has become a passion that has improved the school's profile. Bon appetit!

With thanks to Alison Watson, Helen Plaice, Glebelands City Growers, Alison Latta and Daisy Black for their valuable contributions.

Contents

Network News	2
Think Global: The Growth of the Outdoor Kindergarten	3
Build a Class of Your Own	4 & 5
Resources	6
Diary	7

Renewable energy prize

Solar panels, wind turbine or maybe a heat pump? Win an independent renewable energy assessment for your school.

Action for Sustainable Living (AfSL) and A Few Small Steps, in association with renewables4communities, is offering one winning school an independent renewable energy assessment (worth £600). The prize will include an on-site visit and report covering suitable technologies, planning, costs and savings, funding, energy efficiency and installers.

To enter, answer the following questions:
kWh are units used to measure...?
a) distance
b) energy
c) weight

Our school should receive the assessment because... (max 20 words).
Email answers with your name, school, address, contact number and confirmation of Head Teacher's support to contact@renewables4communities.org.uk by 30 June 2010. See www.renewables4communities.org.uk and www.afsl.org.uk for more information.

Sow A Seed in Your School

Hulme Community Garden Centre and Debdale Eco Centre have recently gained funding from Local Food for a 'Growing People' project. The Sow a Seed strand of the project will help schools create or develop food growing areas within school grounds by bringing horticulture into the classroom curriculum.

Focusing on 8 – 9 year olds attending schools local to Hulme Community Garden Centre, the sessions will cover healthy soils and healthy plants, sowing seeds, pricking out, potting and planting

out, companion planting and much more. Trainers will visit school grounds to assess growing sites, create sustainable growing areas, provide planting guidance and encourage participation from caretakers and staff. The project will include 6 sessions, expert advice and training and will run from Sept through to July.

For more information, contact Katherine Moores on 0161 2278198 or email thetrainer@hulmegardencentre.org.uk

Recycling Trucks for School Fetes

The Waste and Recycling team are offering to bring a recycling truck to school fêtes across Manchester so children and parents can see how they work, sit inside the truck and learn about their improved recycling services. At school fêtes attended last year it proved to be a big hit with children and parents. They bring recycling information and a range

of Love Food Hate Waste materials such as recipe cards, spaghetti measures and bag clips and run mini competitions for adults and children.

If you would like to register an interest please let us know the date and time of your fête by contacting Helen Conlon at h.conlon@manchester.gov.uk or call 0161 234 1378.

Grow for It!

Glebelands Farm, Sale, has been awarded £51,000 by the Big Lottery Fund's Local Food Scheme to develop an education programme and learning facilities at the farm.

As well as funding the construction of new poly tunnels and water tanks, the grant will fund the construction of toilets and a yurt education centre. A programme of school visits and information packs are planned to enable children to learn about where their food comes from and the importance of organic farming and local food. The site, which incorporates organic food production, a composting area, woodland borders and wild areas, puts sustainable farming into practice; they recycle waste from Unicorn Grocery, the main buyer of the farm's produce, into compost and minimise packaging and travelling distances.

The new education programme hopes to cover the importance of balance with the natural world, how the element cycles fit into growing practices and low-tech farming solutions for maximum productivity with a low carbon footprint. Visits will include a short tour, growing activities, looking at natural diversity and an all-important tasting of produce. Glebelands will also offer support for schools starting to grow food on their own grounds and encourage community volunteering at the farm.

Their education programme will be starting in September upon completion of the new facilities. For further information, visit www.glebelandscitygrowers.co.uk.

If You Go Down to the Woods Today...

One minibus full of children, a selection of bright red waterproofs, Wellington boots and a woodland park. That is all that is needed for a day of learning, play and adventure in one of Glasgow's more unusual nurseries.

Based on the Scandinavian and German outdoor kindergartens, Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens believes that learning in an outdoor setting helps to build children's physical, social and emotional development, whilst providing valuable access to the natural world for the children of Glasgow. The kindergarten opened in October, and despite weathering a very harsh winter now has around 50 attending children.

The children meet in the morning in small groups at the kindergarten's indoor accommodation and travel to Pollok Country Park for a day learning and playing outside in the woods, whatever the weather. On arrival, they help to set up a base camp, complete with bio-toilet, tarpaulin and hammocks. Then they submerge themselves in the many activities the woods have to offer, from mini beast hunts and den building to forest crafts and learning about the



weather and environment. Teaching at the Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens is based on the national curriculum, but uses the natural world as a source of teaching materials; the children use sticks and pine cones for counting lessons and making pictures and no toys are brought out with them into the woods. Learning is primarily child-centred; children are encouraged to ask questions about the plants and animals they encounter in the woods. They learn about protected species such as bluebells, the importance of recycling and waste maintenance and how to respect and care for their environment.

The kindergarten was set up by two parents looking for a nursery which would allow their children to explore the outside world. Co-founder Alison Latta says that the kindergarten 'aims to provide superior nursery care to work alongside existing nursery care.' She feels the outdoor learning environment is highly beneficial to children from city backgrounds, developing their imagination, building skills, resilience and a healthy attitude from an early age. She is also a strong advocate for

building 'family environments' among the children by mixing age groups; 'The younger children can then learn from the older children and develop their abilities, whilst the older children learn to support others and share their experiences!' The kindergarten is already looking to expand its horizons, with a second site planned in north Glasgow and links to wildlife garden and tree planting projects. Given its current popularity with children and parents alike it appears that, for many children in Glasgow, the Great Outdoors will continue to remain great.



For more information about Woodland Outdoor Kindergartens, visit www.woodlandoutdoor.org.uk.

Build a class of your own?



would be encouraged and inspired to address and adopt green issues and lifestyles.

Some amazing designs were created, all of which focussed on sustainability as the number one priority. Furthermore, students, in working with professionals, were able to take part in BSF pupil consultation sessions and could understand the plans they saw and comment on changes they noticed. They went on to confidently discuss their own ideas and concerns with BSF planners promoting excellent feedback from architects and Manchester City Council representatives .

Unfortunately, the plan to build was shelved; however, the students continued working with classofyourown® to engage with a wide range of industry professionals and have a clearer understanding of the school design and construction process.

Firstly, they had to understand what makes a school sustainable. The bigger picture, not just issues surrounding the three 'R's – reduce, reuse, recycle. And what does 'sustainability' actually mean?

There are many ways in which the corporate sector defines sustainability, and many definitions are complex and often

The classofyourown® team, led by Land Surveyor Alison Watson and Architect Dan Gibson, have shared their experience of public sector construction projects with pupils at Abraham Moss High School. By providing authentic workshop activities they have brought the concept of “the sustainable classroom” to life.

Alison and Dan believe the benefits of working with children in new school design should be highly recommended. With a natural interest in their own environment, children are best placed to define what works and what doesn't in terms of the space in which they spend so much of their young lives.

With a new school already designed as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme, students from Abraham Moss High School were keen to raise awareness of school and community environmental issues before they made the move from old to new. They needed to find ways to engage their peers and inject a large dose of environmentalism; to get children to see that being green is not

nerdy and will never go out of fashion.

Their ventures started with a challenge to design an Eco Classroom. Students formed their own companies and became Directors, Marketing Managers, Architects, Surveyors and Landscape Designers, all investigating ideas which would conclude in the design of a single stand alone 'Environmental Resource Centre'. The classroom sized building, with its own external learning landscape, had a brief to provide a facility for the school and its wider community where environmental issues could be taught in cross curricular subjects, and the community



Pupils from Abraham Moss giving a presentation at the 'Greenbuild Expo' conference.

Forgotten Fields



Calendars from the Forgotten Fields Project

'Forgotten Fields' is an intergenerational oral history project which promotes collaborative research in the history of food growing in particular areas. Young and old work together to explore historical archives and to record memories which are developed into a calendar. The young people illustrate the findings for the 12 calendar pages which are then printed and distributed to the local community.

From a school's point of view the project is a fantastic way of achieving greater community cohesion as the participants learn from each other and value each others' contributions. Everyone has to eat and what

we eat has changed so radically over recent years that food heritage is an innovative and exciting way of crossing cultural and generational boundaries. Some Manchester Primary Schools have successfully worked with 'Forgotten Fields' on this project, but it can also be developed by community groups or youth groups.

To develop skills in this way of working 'Forgotten Fields' is offering opportunities for volunteers to get involved whether from a school or community perspective. If you wish to discuss any opportunities contact Fiona Dunk on 07848026257. For more information about the project and to view a calendar go to: www.kindling.org.uk/manchester-particular or, for a case study, go to <http://kindling.org.uk/timperley-rhubarb-remembered>.



derived of the 'cut and paste Google' genre. The Abraham Moss students defined sustainability as simply "finding ways to care for life on Earth (where CARE is the operative word)"; we don't need to be radical in the way we approach sustainable living, but we can all be a little more considerate in the way we make decisions.

The students took ownership and responsibility for each one of the DCSF's 'Eight Doorways, and took to the corridors armed with a notepad and a camera, recording 'the good, the bad and the ugly'

features of their school environment. Each team presented the challenges they faced, the strengths and weaknesses of their school, the options they had to deal with each problem, and threat of doing nothing.

Not only did this task support student inclusion in the school management process, but it brought to life everyday solutions to a wide range of environmental issues. The students collaborated to agree goals and values, communicating these to their peers and agreeing ways to perform designated individual and group tasks. From recycling to responsible procurement, the

students learned that they could have a positive impact on the future of their education and their planet, driving change in their school's policies through a bottom up strategy.

The young people of Abraham Moss High School are driving change in sustainable thinking from the learner's perspective, taking valuable ideas and environmental concerns to school stakeholders and decision makers. By engaging with the learner voice, head teachers and managers can create a sustainable legacy influenced by the young people who are defining their future within the school.



The Playground Potting Shed

By Dominic Murphy - £14.99

ISBN: 978-0-85265-098-1

A 'foolproof' guide to gardening with children.' Dominic Murphy records his setbacks and triumphs as he helped his local school create a beautiful and productive garden. Includes sections on growing vegetables, making the most of the soil you have, controlling pests, encouraging wildlife and unique information on getting everything growing and harvested within the academic year.

Get Your Hands Dirty

By School Farms Network

A wonderfully practical resource pack outlining the potential for using growing plants and animals in teaching a range of curriculum subjects. Covering a range of advice about educational growing from gardening in all kinds of spaces, making ponds, keeping animals and horticulture to using greenhouses and polytunnels.

Email schoolfarmsnetwork@farmgarden.org.uk to order a pack or look at the resource online at www.growingschools.org.uk



The Green School

By Stan Terry - £11.99

ISBN: 978-0948543470

A practical book designed to inspire all those involved in running schools with information about how green principles can be applied to all aspects of them to create an environmentally sustainable society.

Wild About Nature: Environmental Education Handbook

Free from Manchester City Council

A resource pack including planning and preparation advice for environmental education activities outside the classroom, open spaces and river activity sheets, links to the National Curriculum and more.

Call 0161 9532761 or email d.sakalas@manchester.gov.uk to order your copy.



Forest Schools and Outdoor Learning in the Early Years

By Sara Knight - £17.99

ISBN: 978-1847872777

Where do the young children in your care play outdoors? Do they learn how to work together to solve problems? Do they learn to trust one another and gain knowledge of the world around them? This book looks at the opportunities forest school experiences offer young children, and how this fits into the early years curriculum.

All the above are available from Manchester Development Education Project:
<http://www.dep.org.uk/bookshop>, Email: info@dep.org.uk, Tel: 0161 9218020.

Virtual Growing Schools Garden

By Chris Beardshaw

Online resource

The Growing School Garden takes you through a virtual school garden. Click on different areas of the garden to discover new ideas about planting, growing and making creative spaces. Packed full of useful resources and advice on how to create a garden of your own.

www.thegrowingschoolsgarden.org.uk/

Growth Through Growing Year Planners

Free to download

Two booklets highlighting ways in which growing-related activities can be used to support the learning of students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and those with special educational needs.

Download from www.growingschools.org.uk/Resources/GrowthThroughGrowing/

Appletree School

By the Royal Horticultural Society

Online resource

A game for students to play as they follow a school gardening team through their preparations for an open day. The game teaches pupils about tools and plants and the seasons. The game is suitable for primary school levels.

<http://apps.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening/studentshome/default.aspx>

Young Explorer's Club

Every Saturday, 10 – 11.30am
the Lodge, Queen's Park,
Heywood

Every week we do activities that inspire Natural Play and promote good interactions with Nature. There will be special Summer holiday events in addition to the regular Saturdays. See the BTCV website:

www.btcv.org.uk/cgi-bin/office_opps.cgi?region=nw&office=20009#20008

Play in the Great Outdoors

22 – 23 June 2010

Losehill Hall, Peak District
£360 (including dinner)

Hands-on training jam-packed with ideas, activities and techniques to help you deliver brilliant and effective environmental education. Apply an increased understanding of the special nature of outdoor play to make a difference to children and young people. Deliver high quality and enjoyable outdoor play experiences, including the risk benefit approach and develop a range of inspiring play ideas for your own setting.

Contact Sue Field or Margot Seymour, Learning Team Administrators, Losehill Hall, Peak District National Park Authority, Castleton, Hope Valley, Derbyshire S33 8WB, 01433 622472, training.losehill@peakdistrict.gov.uk or visit www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/training

Grow Your Own...

1st July 2010, 12.30 - 4.30,
Bridge-5 Mill, 22a Beswick
Street, Ancoats
lunch included

This training session is about

sustainable food, with a focus on the benefits of growing your own food. Featuring presentations from schools and practitioners who have successfully established gardening and food production projects, with examples of curriculum activities around sustainable food and healthy eating. There will also be information stalls and opportunities to network and make contacts. The event is relevant for high schools and primary schools. Teachers and head teachers, teaching assistants, other school staff, governors and parents all welcome.

This event is free. Contact office@meen.org.uk for further details or call 0161 2738881 and to book places.

Building Compost Bays

3rd July 2010, 11am – 2pm
EMERGE, Units E1-E4, New
Smithfield Market, Manchester,
M11 2WJ
Free

How to build compost bays: A practical workshop discussing the uses of compost and how to build your own compost bays from wooden pallets. At the Polytunnel in the EMERGE learning garden, New Smithfield market. Open to everyone and free to attend.

Call 0161 223 8200 for further details.

Global Dimension: The Key to all the Doorways

6th July 2010, 4.30 - 6pm
Lancashire Global Education
Centre, Preston. Venue tbc.
£15.

This participatory workshop will give you lots of ideas for how to help children and young people gain a deeper understanding of

how they are connected to the wider world, about the injustices which exist and what they can do to become active global citizens.

To book please contact Leanne on 01772 752930 or email lrimmer@lancswt.org.uk.

MEEN AGM

8th July 2010, 3.30 - 6pm
Bridge-5 Mill, 22a Beswick
Street, Ancoats

Find out what MEEN has been doing this year, network and enjoy food and drink!

Email office@meen.org.uk or call 0161 2738881.

Feeding Manchester

25th June, 4pm
Hulme Community Garden
Centre

The fourth Feeding Manchester event will take place on the evening of Friday the 25th June 2010, combining a networking and social event with the opportunity to discuss how we encourage other organisations to adopt our definition of Sustainable Food and prepare for a possible sustainable food manifesto for Greater Manchester. The evening will be an opportunity for groups to update each other with their news and progress; creatively explore ways of raising the profile of sustainable food and discuss what a sustainable food manifesto for Greater Manchester may achieve and share a meal.

For more information visit: www.kindling.org.uk or email chris@kindling.org.uk.

What is Manchester Environmental Education Network?

Manchester Environmental Education Network (MEEN) is a membership-based organisation aiming "To inspire and motivate learning about sustainability by building a network of people actively committed to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Manchester." The network was established by six partner organisations involved in the project, and currently employs a network coordinator and a Sustainable Schools Project coordinator.

Membership of the network offers:

- * free network directory (pay only for P&P) - while stocks last
- * free termly newsletter
- * support from network coordinator
- * reduced entrance to MEEN events
- * a voice in how MEEN is run and the activities of the network

Project Partners:

Development Education Project (DEP),

Laurel Cottage
c/o MMU 799 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M20 2RR
Tel: 0161 921 8020

Groundwork Manchester, Salford and Trafford,

Timber Wharf,
42-50 Worsley Street
Castlefield
M15 4LD
Tel: 0161 220 1000

Manchester Environmental Resource Centre initiative (MERCi),

Bridge-5 Mill,
22a Beswick Street, Ancoats,
Manchester. M4 7HR
Tel: 0161 273 1736

Manchester Healthy Schools Partnership,

Mauldeth House,
Mauldeth Road West, Chorlton.
Manchester. M21 7RL
Tel: 0161 882 2313

Environmental Campaigns Manchester City Council

3rd Floor,
Pink Bank Lane,
Belle Vue,
Manchester
M12 5QN
Tel: 0161 953 2760

Mersey Basin Trust,

Bridge-5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street,
Ancoats, Manchester. M4 7HR
Tel: 0161 273 4207
merseybasintrust@hotmail.com
www.merseybasintrust.org.uk

Network Coordinator:

Raichael Lock,
coordinator@meen.org.uk

Manchester Environmental Education Network (MEEN),

Bridge-5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street,
Ancoats,
Manchester. M4 7HR
Tel: 0161 273 8881
Fax: 0161 273 8156
E-mail: office@meen.org.uk

Funded by



Registered Charity no.: 105908
Registered Company no.: 4625636

Membership of Manchester Environmental Education Network (MEEN)

Please fill in this form and return to the network coordinator at the above address, enclosing a cheque for the relevant amount.

Name School / Organisation Subject (where applicable)

Address

Tel Fax E-mail

Schools / Organisations - Manchester	£8
Individuals - Manchester (waged / unwaged)	£5 / £2
Non-Manchester based membership	£12
Please add P&P for directory	£2
TOTAL	

I enclose a cheque payable to 'MEEN' for £_____