

Sustainable change at St Margaret's

Parents and teachers at St Margaret's Primary in Whalley Range have transformed their grounds and developed their community room putting sustainable principles into action.

The active members of the Friends of St Margaret's (FOSM) got involved with the community room project when the chance to apply for money from Sure Start arose. FOSM wanted to be involved in the design to influence the sustainable construction specification.

Renewables Northwest advised them on appropriate technologies and Green Cities were appointed as a sustainability consultant. The contractor was happy as he recognised it as an opportunity to offer a new angle to his business.

To reduce waste they adapted the existing structure: they kept old shower wall tiles in place for the kitchen walls, while existing hardwood benches were recycled into shelves and surfaces. They specified FSC timber throughout, efficient double-glazing, recycled their PVC piping and used non PVC electrics for



the galvanised conduit. Eco woodstain and paint were used internally and externally, the toilet and taps were water efficient and natural rubber flooring was laid in the kitchen and toilet. They also chose an electrical top-up heating system, so they could either specify a green supplier, or eventually connect to their own renewable energy.

Fiona, a member of FOSM said, "Every small step adds up to make a difference to the school's impact on the environment."

The grounds were transformed with the support of a professional gardener and parent from Outer Space Designs,

which, along with a donation from a former pupil, enabled a gardening group to be set up.

A Change grant supplied a container for storage and a resource space (cups of tea out of the rain!) for the new community gardeners. They organised a community garden workday with support from the 100 Days Campaign, a community summer picnic and hired comedy chefs to celebrate and cook the food grown in the garden. They also built a beautiful community gate with Jon Male, a metal work artist, which allows independent access to the room and garden.

A Food Futures grant supported four seasonal picnics and produced a calendar linking the plants they grew to the richly multi-cultural food made at home. Furthermore, the school cooks joined in by making rhubarb crumble for lunch with fruit grown from a local allotment.

The school has benefited and hope to carry on with these activities and encourage the use of the garden for educational as well as recreational enjoyment.

fosm@st-margarets.manchester.sch.uk

Editor's notes This edition of Beehive is focusing on school buildings and grounds. With such huge investments being made into school buildings and with the curriculum beginning to open up things have never been more exciting.

Our cover story highlights the importance of each and every decision being critical in making a place or a space more sustainable. Think Global looks at the links between learning and buildings. Whilst the centre pages examine the role of school grounds in pupils' sense of well-being. Read and enjoy!

Thanks to Fiona Dunk, Chris Linge and Maqbul Rose for their valuable contributions.

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Carbon Zero Schools

In 'The Children's Plan' an ambitious target has been set for all new school buildings to be zero carbon by 2016. With the technologies currently available, the zero carbon ambition cannot be achieved on many school sites. However, a taskforce will be appointed to advise on how to achieve zero carbon schools, whether the timescale is realistic and how to reduce carbon emissions in the intervening period.

Given that most new build schools are currently using more energy than their predecessors this must be a welcome intervention.

New Legislation may affect your school

From October 2008 schools will have to have a Display Energy

Certificate (DEC) in some of their buildings - if they have over 1000m² of floor space. A DEC shows how a building's energy use performs against a benchmark and is based on the buildings actual annual energy consumption.

The Sustainable Learning website (www.sustainablelearning.info/) not only provides a whole school approach for examining energy and water usage, it also provides lots of information and a downloadable certificate.

It is particularly important for any schools applying for their Eco Schools Green Flag as schools will be required to submit a copy of their certificate with their application form.

Ofsted's recognition of Sustainable Schools

Sustainable Schools has been recognised by Ofsted as a school feature that can help improve performance and the delivery of Every Child Matters outcomes.

This is reflected in Ofsted's new Self Evaluation Form. On the first page, where schools are asked to summarise their aims

and special features, Ofsted want to know, for example, 'whether your school is implementing the Sustainable Schools framework.'

It is perhaps a reflection of the excellent work being done by schools engaging with this agenda. It has been noted that schools taking an innovative and

Green flags being raised in Manchester

Manchester now has five Green Flag Eco Schools. Grange School has been joined by Temple Primary, Armitage Primary, Brookburn Primary, and the first High school, Cedar Mount. Congratulations to every school and all the participants who have worked so hard to achieve these awards.

To become an Eco School involves considerable effort and it has just been announced, that to keep the Green Flag flying, schools will have to reapply every two years with no permanent flags being awarded in future. The aim is to keep Eco Schools high on the school agenda and to ensure that the process is properly embedded. This must be to remind us that a sustainable future is only achievable through sustained effort.

EMERGE Recycling's 'REAL Skills Programme'

EMERGE Recycling has received £460,550 to continue and expand an innovative schools, volunteer and community education programme, that will teach people across Greater Manchester valuable lessons on sustainable living. The project, named 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) Enterprise and Leadership (REAL) Skills Programme, will

also work to increase regional volunteers to get actively involved in the environmental sector, and High School students to get involved in local Social Enterprises.

Jo-Anne Witcombe, Education and Community Liaison Team Leader said: "Emerge recycling is delighted to receive the Reaching

Communities grant from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver the 'REAL skills programme' in Greater Manchester." The programme will start in April 2008 and will run for 3 years. For more information ring Jo-Anne on 0161 223 8200.

Hellerup School, Denmark

Hellerup school in Copenhagen, Denmark is unrecognisable to most as a school building. A school that features no corridors, classrooms or internal walls forces us to question what we consider to be integral components to a school's design.

The stereotypical school-look has gone and the innovative design is matched by its teaching methods. Given the BSF programme a lot of interest is being shown in this, and other similar school buildings, that inspire new environments and methods of teaching.

The innovative open plan design resembles a modern workplace as opposed to the typical Victorian or Edwardian school buildings spread across the UK. The large wooden staircase serves as a seating area in a space used for assemblies but also doubles as a performance area for plays. When some privacy is needed, small hexagonal structures provide the sound insulation that is needed in an open plan design, providing intimate spaces that help the students to focus. Pupils are free to rearrange the furniture as they see fit and choose where they work, on tables, settees or on the floor. Pupils are grouped



into 'home areas', containing their own kitchen, chill out spaces and relaxed learning areas for the project based curriculum. The kitchens enable the children the freedom to make themselves a drink or something to eat as they see fit throughout the day. The school focuses on multiple intelligences and learning styles and each class is divided up into groups accordingly. The school believes that if children are given the opportunity to work to their preferences then they will achieve more from their education. The school claims this approach builds the children's confidence, makes them comfortable within themselves and gives them responsibility.

Preventing the need for children to move from class to class, to walk down a maze of corridors where most incidents of bullying or violence occur leads to longer lessons and greater focus and enjoyment. In addition, teachers are able to collaborate in interdisciplinary projects and gain greater control of the environment to suit the needs of learning and teaching as the space does not limit or dictate how

learning should take place.

Educational innovation has been taking place at Hellerup school with the vision of a different educational approach necessitating a different educational building. The building is designed to allow freedom and responsibility to manipulate and use the environment as the inhabitants see fit. This communicates a very different message from the traditional school buildings which have dominated learning for over a century.



Buildings and grounds

Doorway 5 of the Sustainable Schools strategy

The DCSF recommendation for Buildings and grounds states that 'We would like all school buildings – old and new – to make visible use of sustainable design features and to chose green building technologies, furnishings and equipment as opportunities arise. Through their grounds, we would like all schools to enable pupils to learn about the natural world and sustainable living, for example through food growing and biodiversity conservation.' This article takes the school grounds theme one step further, as it highlights the social,

psychological and learning benefits inherent in exciting and diverse grounds.

On a more practical level, if you wish to set up a gardening club in your school grounds and grow your own vegetables, good advice can be found at www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening/ with the Campaign for school gardening.

Furthermore, the first 'Growing Schools Conference' is being held on 7th April in Birmingham. The conference aims to support all teachers from Early Years through to Secondary who are

interested in expanding and improving learning outside the classroom in their schools. There will be speakers and workshops, including school grounds development, incorporating growing into the national curriculum, sustainability, culture and creativity, setting up a school farm, extended schools, and more. Demand for places is likely to be high, even with a £50 cost, so if you are interested register your name, school, address and postcode to: conference@countrysidefoundation.co.uk

Reading the Outdoors

The importance of school grounds

The outdoors provides children with the freedom to move, play, socialise and be in contact with the natural world. School grounds can have a massive impact on the emotional and physical development of children, through the visual 'messages' they receive which can effect their behaviour and attitude. These messages are sent out by elements that make up our environment e.g. trees, bushes, tarmac, structures etc. Therefore, the way in which school grounds are developed, maintained and managed are important.

By creating positive spaces we can :

- reduce conflict behaviour
- increase social interaction
- increase the experiences children encounter

- improve health (physically and emotionally)
- improve the quality of teaching and learning by using the grounds as an education resource
- ensure the effective use of existing resources

Through stimulating grounds that portray positive messages (allowing children to climb, throw, dig, explore, hide, investigate, nurture, reflect and letting their imaginations literally 'run wild'), we have an opportunity to develop pupils values and skills.

What are our school grounds 'saying' to children?

School grounds communicate to children through signs, codes and structures, and these impact on their behaviour and attitude. A tree can reveal a different message from a bush, just as grass does from tarmac. Children break down their environment into separate elements e.g. tree, bush, rubbish, pond, insect, building and these all develop responses from children, positive and negative.

A study conducted by 'Learning through Landscapes' found that



children have a positive response to natural colour, trees, woods, leaves, animals, places you can climb/hide/explore/make a den, places that challenge you and have millions of 'bits' and wildlife. Negative elements were dirt, pollution, rubbish, litter, damaged things, tarmac, animals, places where you can't go, nowhere to sit/hide/shelter, boring places and places that are too open.

Animals appear as a negative and a positive influence due to the background of different children, those from rural areas saw this as a positive as it was the 'norm' for them to see and keep animals.

The elements revealed responses such as 'flowers make me feel happy' and 'a bare playground with tarmac makes me feel like you don't care'. However, how an area is used can also have a detrimental effect on children and how they feel. Children felt that grass was good to play on to

do activities like gymnastics, roly-poly, but it was good for exploring also, which children loved. However, in many schools access to the grass area is used only during certain seasons (if at all) and this made children feel that the grass was more important to the school (as they thought they could not play on it due to damaging it). This outcome of mixed messages appears with many elements such as trees being objects to touch, sit under and climb (but not allowed to), mud and puddles for splashing in (but would get in to trouble at school or at home). However, if you got dirty during gardening, this was okay as you had permission. The elements in school grounds are endless and messages can be conveyed from equipment, ponds, flowers, the whole school environment.

What can we do?

Children value their play time and school grounds. For them to feel valued, to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility, and for school grounds to provide their full potential as an educational resource, children need to be involved in their development and management. Consultation, feedback and reviewing with all pupils are key factors when designing school grounds. Various methods can be used to seek views and opinions: the Mosaic approach combines traditional tools of observations and interviewing with participatory methods, for example, the use of cameras, map making and child-led tours. This

is an inclusive approach which allows all children to make a statement by taking a picture of an area they dislike, by drawing areas on a map that they consider as important etc. Such research compliments the Healthy Schools Programme and Eco-schools, where pupil voice is a fundamental element.

It is important to remember that when re-designing your grounds, there will always be places to keep, places to expand, places to change and places to add. Children will love some of their play areas, want to change others, and want to lose some areas/elements. The school

grounds are part of a hidden curriculum that needs to be part of our everyday school life, embedded and sustained, just like everything else.

For further information, please contact Maqbul Rose and Brian Goodman – Healthy Schools Partnership- Public Health Advisors Education for Sustainable Development. Tel: 0161-882 2313.

WWF UK (World Wide Fund For Nature/Learning Through Landscapes (1994). Special Places; Special People, The hidden curriculum of school grounds. Surrey. WWF UK



School Grounds Development Toolkit Version 3

Groundwork

A great toolkit that will provide you with ideas and contacts for everything from why to develop your school grounds, to a step by step guide for you to follow, contacts to assist in your project and organisations that may be able to provide funding. Some useful curriculum links as well as photocopyable resources that you could use to encourage school participation through surveys and posters. If your school wants a copy contact Holly Peston on 0161 220 1000



Schools for the Future: Design of Sustainable Schools – Case Studies

Published by The Stationery Office, 2006
ISBN: 13 978 0 11 271190 2

Packed full of pioneering schools that have led the way in achieving sustainable educational buildings from new build or refurbishment. Honest evaluation of the

mistakes and barriers that each project encountered will help you to navigate through the possible pitfalls. The inspirational ideas and tools will help you to plan for any changes you are considering, with ideas on how to minimise waste, avoid pollutants, use less energy and water as well as enhancing habitats for wildlife.

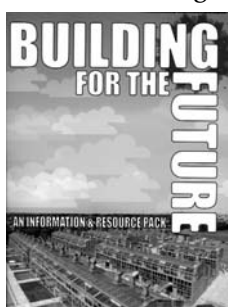


Schools for the Future: Designing School Grounds

Published by The Stationery Office, 2006
ISBN: 13 978 0 11 271182 7

Fantastic ideas to inspire the redesign of your school grounds, with innovative yet practical designs to get the best out of your pupils educational, recreational

and social needs. Encouraging case studies that outline how pupils have participated in the process from design to build.



Building for the Future: An information and resource pack

Published by Alternative Technology Centre

Although this pack examines sustainable buildings per se, this pack covers important and basic information about materials, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste, water and biodiversity, with case studies and contacts in Yorkshire. Good for getting a picture of what should be involved in sustainable buildings. Contact 01422 842121 or email info@alternativetechnology.org.uk

School Grounds Handbook

Published by Cheshire County Council, 2006
ISBN: 0 904 562 941

A step by step guide that talks you through each stage of planning for your new and improved school grounds. Giving you the links between behaviour and environment, the initial stages of pupil participation, design and planning with sections containing great design ideas to help you to implement a wetland, wildlife area, quiet area, active play areas or organic garden.

websites

www.ltl.org.uk

Learning through Landscapes is a great resource to help you plan improving your school environment with activities for early years, primary and secondary. It will help you to inspire and motivate your pupils to get fully involved in the process of learning through the environment.

www.schoolgrounds.ca/schoolgrounds/

The Canadian Biodiversity Institute has an excellent website that includes sample surveys, plant lists and some great photographs of successful school ground transformations.

www.littlerotters.org.uk/

Downloadable resources that will guide you through the process of starting a composting scheme at your school.

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/

Downloadable posters, leaflets and information to help you know how to plan and when to plant with links to curriculum to get your pupils involved.

www.sustainablelearning.info/

If your thinking of embarking on reducing your school's water and energy consumption via a whole school approach then this is the best place to start.

www.ncsl.org.uk/sustainableschools/sustainableschools-casestudies.cfm

Case studies of seven schools that have managed to bring education for sustainability onto their school agenda and ways in which they have made it an integral component.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/growingschools/

'Every one knows children would rather be out than in...' is what it says on the website. And it's true. On this site there are resources, advice, tips, news and information to make this an invaluable resource.

Linking environmental education activities to the national curriculum

Tuesday 1 April 2008, BTCV, Skelton Grange Environment Centre, Leeds. Tutors: Helen Pearson/Caroline Crossley
Aimed at environmental educators, rangers, countryside wardens and others beginning to work with schools, this event will introduce you to the National Curriculum, including Sustainable Schools. We aim to de-mystify the curriculum and other schools related documents and to help you find out where your topic links to different subject areas, bringing your environmental work more in line with the needs of schools. We'll give guidance on where to start and how to develop and link activities together, and you'll put together some curriculum-linked activities to take away.

For details call Jacki or Helen at ETN on 0121 359 2113 or Email ETN@btcv.org.uk.

Fees: voluntary organisations £105 + VAT, local authorities, statutory & other non-voluntary organisations £160 + VAT

Growing Schools Conference

Monday 7th April, 9.30am - 4pm, Birmingham.

The conference aims to support all teachers from Early Years through to Secondary who are interested in expanding and improving learning outside the classroom in their schools. There will be speakers and workshops, including school grounds development, incorporating growing into the national curriculum, sustainability, culture and creativity, setting up a school farm, extended schools, and more. Demand for places is likely to be high, even with a £50 cost, so if you are interested register your name, school, address and postcode to: conference@countysidefoundation.co.uk

Working with secondary schools through the national curriculum

Tuesday 15 April 2008, Centre of the Earth, Birmingham
Tutor: Andrew Simons, The Wildlife Trust

This event will provide an introduction to the revised National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4, including opportunities and requirements related to environmental education and Sustainable Development Education. It will explore case studies of successful partnerships between organisations and Secondary schools linked to the National Curriculum, and will introduce examples of resources developed to meet the needs of Secondary schools and the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. It will also consider some of the practicalities and challenges of working with Secondary schools. The event is aimed at local authority officers, community and environmental workers wishing to work more effectively with Secondary Schools. For details call Jacki or Helen at ETN on 0121 359 2113 or Email ETN@btcv.org.uk.

Fees: voluntary organisations £105 + VAT, local authorities, statutory & other non-voluntary organisations £160 + VAT

Creative use of sound in environmental education

Wednesday 16 April 2008, The CREATE Centre, Bristol

Tutor: Tony Whitehead, RSPB
This fascinating event will show you ways in which recorded sounds from our natural environment can be used in innovative and creative ways by young people. The event is being run in conjunction with Sonic Arts Network and the Sonic Postcards Project (www.sonicpostcards.org).

This event is aimed at countryside staff wishing to develop new environmental arts projects with young people or teaching staff looking for new directions in environmental education. It assumes no previous knowledge of audio hardware or software.

For details call Jacki or Helen at ETN on 0121 359 2113 or Email ETN@btcv.org.uk.

Fees: voluntary organisations £105 + VAT, local authorities, statutory & other non-voluntary organisations £160 + VAT

NW ESD Forum Seminar

Wednesday 16th April at UCLAN, Preston

Speakers are being recruited for a discussion on embedding ESD into the new curriculum structure. The seminars are in place of the original NW ESD Forum meetings – so this is an opportunity to network. Non-FE's and non-orgs are welcome to attend the specific meetings subject to numbers and availability. To book please email Angie Jukes :angie.jukes@nwra.gov.uk or ring 01942 776725. In order to manage waste and travel issues, Angie needs to know numbers for events for catering and for health & safety purposes so please register.

Healthy Schools Education for Sustainable Development Seminar

Thursday April 17th 2008, The Zion Centre, Hulme.

This seminar is for educational professionals delivering Healthy Schools in Manchester. The aim is to explore the Healthy Schools ESD criteria and how to embed ESD into the school community. For further details contact Maqbul Rose of the Healthy Schools programme on 0161 882 2313.

Eco School Co-ordinator training

Thursday 22nd May 2008, 1 - 4pm, at Bridge 5 Mill
MEEN will host a session specifically for Eco School co-ordinators to share information, their experiences, to network and learn.

Call Raichael at MEEN for further information on 0161 273 8881 or email: meen@gn.apc.org

Manchester ESD Forum

Thursday 5th June 2008

1 – 4.30pm at Bridge 5 Mill
A quarterly forum for practitioners of ESD from across Manchester to share good practice, keep up to date on local, regional and national initiatives, network and form partnerships. Call Raichael at MEEN for further information on 0161 273 8881 or email: meen@gn.apc.org

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

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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 £_____