

Our project is two-fold.

1. **Objective 2:** To engage our pupils and their families in growing their own fruit and vegetables to be used in their meals, to educate, improve wellbeing, promote sustainability, support families with seasonal vegetables and encourage healthy living. (“Researchers at Sheffield University have demonstrated that people who grow fruit and vegetables at home eat more fruit and veg and reduce food waste... The amount of fruit and veg wasted by these home-growers was a whopping 95% lower than the UK average, highlighting huge co-benefits for the climate impacts of our food system.”)
<https://www.sustainweb.org/news/sep23-home-grown-fruit-and-veg/#:~:text=%E2%80%A2%20Veg%20Cities-,Growing%20fruit%20and%20veg%20at%20home%20is%20good%20for%20health,veg%20and%20reduce%20food%20waste.>

We currently have a polytunnel which is underused. The aim of the project is to make this more accessible to our children and families. By providing an outdoor classroom, which would be used after school as a mini centre for families to share, whilst planting and growing in the polytunnel, safeguarding barriers would be removed. To ensure that the school could provide adequate planting areas, additional raised beds would be required and old ones repaired. Our pupils would use the classroom throughout the day, including lunchtimes and it would be opened for our families to use at the end of the school day until 5pm. School use of the outdoor classroom would include forest school, curriculum based learning such as science (plants, habitats and biodiversity), geography (the environment, sustainability and climate change) RE (Laudato Si – caring for our common home) and PSHE (healthy living, mental health and wellbeing, learning to look after our environment). For our families, they would have the opportunity to grow their own vegetables and we would hold special after school activities such as building bug hotels, hedgehog houses, and bird feeders. The outdoor classroom would also provide the space for our families to enjoy a hot chocolate and quality time with their children away from modern technology. Once a group is established and ground rules understood, we would aim to offer access to our families during the school holidays. This needs further research though to ensure that safeguarding and health and safety

policies are in place. It is likely that a member of staff would have to be present, school would fund this cost and open the garden 1 day a week for families to enjoy. I have several members of staff who live on the estate who are very keen to be part of the project.



The school polytunnel





We have space at the side and back of the polytunnel for additional planters which would be built by our site manager.



This would be the position of the outdoor classroom.

How this meets the criteria:

Biodiversity: alongside the outdoor classroom we would create a wild flower area for families to enjoy, explore and learn about the intricacies of an ecosystem, whilst having a positive impact on wellbeing. They would have the opportunity to encourage wild life back onto our field.

Environmental projects/ increasing food security: Children in school and our families would be able to grow fruit and vegetables. We have a fantastic cook in school who is keen to teach our families how to cook and use these vegetables in their meals. By doing this we will be encouraging our families to use seasonal vegetables and explaining how this impacts positively on the reduction of CO2 emissions. We have previously run a

family cooking group using and outside agency which taught the families how to cook healthy family meals, which they would then sit down to and enjoy together. This was a huge success and accessed by several of our hard to reach families. This experience would be enhanced further by the fact that they had grown the vegetables. Sarah Fox our Eco lead is attending further training on how to get the most out our polytunnel.

How we will deliver this project:

If we are successful with the bid, to launch the project, we would have a grand opening inviting our families to participate in different activities, such as planting, gardening, creating bird feeders and a nature hunt. Photographs would be taken and displayed in the outdoor classroom to provide a sense of ownership. Following a recent survey over 34 out of 44 responses are keen to participate in growing their own vegetables. We are expecting this number to increase as surveys are returned.

I have 3 members of staff, who are extremely keen to take a lead role in this project. Eventually, school aims for this after school activity to be parent led, however we are aware that this may take time. The project would initially be twice a week, and as families become more confident and understand school expectations regarding health and safety and safeguarding, this would be increased to allow them to tend to their plants once routine and procedures are established and understood.

2. **Objective 2:** To inform and educate our families in ways to reduce and recycle their plastic waste by using refillable products. Please note these products (which are eco friendly and made in the UK) will be sold at cost to be affordable to our families.

How this meets the criteria:

Educational Projects dealing with climate change and young people/recycle: In our curriculum we address climate change in KS2, and it is apparent that the children have limited knowledge of their impact on the environment. The second part of the project aims to raise awareness of the impact of plastic on the environment. The pupils would be promoting refills for **eco friendly** cleaning products, such as washing up liquid, soaps, shampoo etc. These would be sold at cost to support families with the cost of living crisis. This project would allow the children to educate their parents and others in the community whilst having a positive impact on the reduction of plastics. The children

would be responsible for selling the refills and informing parents about the need to recycle and reuse. For this project to begin we require a metal container (to store the products safely), scales and biodegradable tape.

Responses from a recent survey show that 42 out of 44 would be willing to buy refillable products. We have the opportunity to buy 20 litre tubs of the products from an eco shop who is willing to sell this at cost price allowing us to pass this saving onto our families.

Initially we would start with just 3 products, currently the most popular from the survey is washing up liquid, handwash and cleaning spray. All products are of a high quality natural, vegan and chemical free which are made in the UK with zero waste, and therefore good for our environment. If we are successful with bid, we plan for our Year 6 children to write to local businesses to sponsor the purchase of one of the products, to allow parents to sample the product for free or at a substantially reduced cost to encourage them to try the product. Our Eco Warriors will be responsible for creating posters and leaflets to inform our customers of the benefits of reducing plastic waste.

How we will deliver this project:

Drop off service in the morning: Eco warriors to fill containers and work out price at dinnertime for parents to collect at the end of the day. This has numerous benefits for the children. They will be actively caring for our environment, educating our community and developing their mathematical and team working skills.