

# Healthy Heroes!

Gardening for health



Preparing bean stakes.

## The school...

St Scholasticas is a single form entry Catholic school, built in 1974, and situated in a built-up urban area of Hackney.

A majority of the children do not have any access to an outside growing space so the three growing areas within the school are really important to the pupils both in accessing food grown at the school, and also learning about where food comes from.

The areas include; a small space in the Nursery/Reception area, the peace garden and an underused area which is being developed into the primary growing area. All growing is in either small raised beds or containers.



Supplying the school kitchen.

## The Project...

Every class from nursery to Year 6 has been involved with the project, taking every opportunity to throw on the coats and wellies and head outdoors!

From Year 4 onwards a smaller group of 8-10 children are rotated throughout the year to ensure that every child has participated in some sort of growing activity.

The theme of community cohesion is always encouraged, with decisions being made as a whole school on what to plant and cultivate.

Each group of students supports the process of growing at each stage. For example, Year 2 may plant sweetcorn, but it is perhaps the Year 4 group



Enjoying the harvest!

who will transplant them into larger containers and possibly another year group who harvests the crop. **EVERYONE BENEFITS!**

The children taste the produce and deliver excess harvests to the school kitchen, the hope it to increase this supply.

The gardens have been used to teach the school curriculum throughout the year.

For example, as part of Roman studies in History class, Year 3 discovered how Tiberius loved cucumbers and built greenhouses so he could eat them all year!



This case study has been developed as part of the Food Growing Schools: London project, a partnership initiative led by Garden Organic.

Garden Organic is the UK's leading organic growing charity, with over 20 years experience bringing the benefits of growing food to schools.

Food Growing Schools: London is funded by the Big Lottery and Mayor of London to bring together the very best of London's food growing expertise, information and support, with the ambition to inspire and equip every school in London to grow their own food.



Planting out.

Three word project summary...

**TRANSFORMED**  
**DEVELOPED**  
**ENJOYED**





'People's Choice' prize winners!

## Competition winners!

St Scholasticas won the 'People's Choice' prize at the Schools Marketplace event at City Hall on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015. This was part of 'Grow Your Own Business' activities, run by the Food Growing Schools London project.

The competition was sponsored by Abel and Cole and the Judges were Sara Haglund of Abel and Cole and James Campbell, Chief Executive of Garden Organic.

The standard of school-grown produce and stall displays was commended as exceptional.

## Highlights...



The first year has been a learning curve for everyone involved, but there continues to be great enthusiasm and commitment at St Scholasticas.

They show a real willingness to accept long term benefits of gardening and outside learning schemes. They hope to continue to address green issues by continuing to enter competitions to highlight their good work.

The school intend to sell surplus crops in either the school fair or at the connected Church, with the profits going to charity.

## Top Tool



The greenhouse has been the most enjoyable factor. The school has a large purpose-built area and greenhouse which has enabled the growing season to start sooner and prolongs the life of the produce.



## Challenges...

In the early days, school staff had lots of things they wanted to do but didn't have the resources or expertise in place to implement these.

Through the Food Growing Schools London project they were able to sound out ideas about what they could grow in different small spaces.

Another challenge was access to water. The main planting area is a little derelict, so they have made best use of container planting which hold water well!



Team work.



Before...



Planting tomatoes.

## What's next?

The school hope to increase the growing area and create better access for the children. As well as this, they want to be able to harvest significantly more in order to supply the kitchen with more food as well as local cafe if possible (and in exchange for a chocolate brownie treat to celebrate all the hard work!)



After...



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