

Crabtree Farm Primary School

Food for Life Intent, Implementation and Impact

Our children will have the opportunity to explore and learn outside. They will have a respect for the natural environment by contributing to the development of our school grounds. Our children will understand where their food comes from and how it is grown. They will have the skills and knowledge to take responsibility for their own actions and have a sense of duty and care for the world in which they live.

Intent

It is our aim that the use of the school grounds and the polytunnel will allow our children to increase their life skills and experiences throughout their time at Crabtree Farm. We recognise the outdoors is a wonderful resource for teaching our children through practical, hands on learning experiences which are memorable.

Gardening and learning outdoors provides our children with opportunities for increasing scientific knowledge and understanding, and improving literacy, numeracy and speaking and listening. It provides cross-curricular links to a range of National Curriculum subjects. It increases the children's confidence, resilience and self-esteem.

By giving gardening and learning outdoors a role in our children's learning our aim is that they will-

- Develop into more skilled and creative thinkers
- Have greater awareness of sustainability
- Be encouraged to take greater control of their own learning and become active in seeking out knowledge and problem solving
- Develop an inquisitive approach to learning that they can apply to all subjects
- Develop their vocabulary and knowledge about the natural world
- Increase their sense of well being

Implementation

The individual class plans for and maintains the crops or flowers that they grow. Produce grown within the school is either offered to the kitchen and is used in the children's school meals, or is sold to parents. This provides the opportunity for children to witness first-hand the process of growing, harvesting and cooking food.

Gardening is taught by Tracey Lloyd, a gardening specialist and environmental educator in Nottingham. All our children in Year 1-6 receive a taught session each half term, where they complete a lesson linked to their current curriculum topic. Class teachers then have a timetabled slot in the polytunnel, bi-weekly to follow up the growing that has taken place within the session with Tracey Lloyd. They are able to take advantage of our large polytunnel to teach their children in and grow vegetables. Lessons are active and practical with all children and all abilities taking part and being involved.

We use the Food for Life website to support staff with ideas and lesson plans for gardening, growing and working with children outside. This resource is essential for supporting teachers who may have limited gardening experience themselves. The Food for Life programme is about making good food the easy choice for everyone and reconnecting children with where their food comes from and teaching them how it is grown and cooked.

Children within Early Years also have the opportunity to use the polytunnel bi-weekly. Here they experience how to take care of plants including weeding and watering duties as well as planting their own produce. The Early Years curriculum links to the activities that take place within the FFL/gardening time. As part of the Early Learning Goal for Understanding the World, children must be able to understand important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter. The use of the polytunnel allows children to have first hand experiences of this and see the changes happen around them throughout the year. This in turn supports the children's speech as it encourages questions and leads to a more inquisitive approach to learning. The children also work towards their physical Early Learning Goal whilst in the polytunnel strengthening both their fine and gross motor skills as well as building their wider knowledge of how to stay safe and work with different tools.

Tessa Bunby is our school councillor and uses the polytunnel on a daily basis with her clients from our school. She recognises the asset that our school grounds and polytunnel are for the work that she does with our children. At lunchtimes the polytunnel is accessible to all year groups on a rotation timetable, this provides more children with a therapeutic place as an option at lunchtime and is really popular with all year groups.

Impact

By the end of Year 6 our children will be able to show support and collaborate with other children in outdoor learning experiences. They will be able to talk about current environmental issues and know where their food comes from. Our children will understand the basics of gardening and what is required to grow flowers and vegetables.

Through the outdoor learning opportunities, we provide for our children, they develop a love for the outdoors and become stronger and more active learners. Outdoor learning impacts positively on our children's attitudes, beliefs and self-perceptions and can have a positive effect on social development and greater community involvement. They develop their ability to work with and communicate with their peers and adults. Our children embrace a healthier, more active lifestyle which is a vital tool for success at school and beyond.