

If we provide Pupil Premium children in yr5/6 with a garden/environmental club will it improve their engagement and motivation in science?



About us... Hazel Grove Primary School nestles in the Stockport local authority within a mixed and diverse community. It is a two form entry boasting 395 pupils with the ethos of "learning together, learning forever", where every child is valued and supported in their learning and celebrated for what they achieve. In July 2017, Ofsted awarded the school 'Good', it has a nursery and Chill Zone for working families. Hazel Grove Primary School is heavily committed to being an inclusive school and embraces the diverse local community. With its 'open door' philosophy, everyone working within Hazel Grove Primary is committed to engaging parent partnership to ensure and encourage all children to attend school every day.



Project: Away from school, PP children in particular, don't have the opportunity to spend quality time outside in a safe environment. Their lack of opportunity to become 'one with nature' and no opportunity to enjoy outdoor learning impacts on their achievements, especially environmental sciences; insect habitation, ecology, plant growth and living things. After identifying years 5 and 6 to have a highest percentage of Pupil Premium and the largest attainment gaps after some discussion with children we decided to have a 'taster' gardening club and six children were chosen from yr5 and 6; given journals to enter their plan and ideas.



Our first cosmos seedling

Setting some standards: The planning and preparation involved to ensure the success of the whole school Arts and Engineering week, 'Let's go fly a kite', held in January 2018, detailed substantial evidence to suggest that having a whole school opportunity to enjoy this gardening club would be almost impossible task given the time frame allowed. It was decided that smaller groups of specific children would benefit this action research. The children would initiate their own learning, have a more positive outlook and greater awareness of the outdoor environment.

Findings: After supplying children with materials, over that initial week we observed a definite improvement in positivity to being outside. There was changes within the dynamics of the group and a clear leadership role. EW commandeered the group and enlisted children for watering duties, observations of seeds and seedlings; even arranging for trays and planters to be taken home through the holiday. Children's analysis and evaluation of their learning experience was shared and reflected upon through shared discussion in order for them to consolidate and plan their own learning.



Next Steps: The main aim of this action research was to close gaps. As this 'taster' of a gardening club has been such a success by way of engagement, a more positive attitude towards the outdoors and an improved interest in sustainability and eco system, both myself and CC do recommend that this project will be rolled out next year; notably with a longer time frame which will have an even greater impact.