

Moseley Park Academy



Secondary Students grow goodness in their community garden – Moseley Park Academy

[Moseley Park Academy](#) is an Ofsted-rated Outstanding secondary school in Bilston, West Midlands. During the Summer Term of 2020, students were discussing the food parcels that the school had been handing out during the Covid-19 pandemic and were keen to find ways to improve the packages and increase efficiency and cost. By September the pupils had decided to begin growing fruit and vegetables to be able to donate them to food banks and soup kitchens in the local community.

The Project

Twelve students from Year 10 became motivated to support their community during the pandemic. With their schools' current involvement in providing food parcels, the students wanted to expand on this to incorporate additional health and wellness benefits. Brainstorming sessions were held to figure out how they could best utilise the spaces they were currently using in the school and to even increase these. The students decided that as well as providing fruit and vegetables to donate, they also wanted to create a place of sanctuary that would be open to students and the wider community to offer some respite and peace during these difficult times.

"It makes me feel happy as I'm doing something good and helping others, I can't wait to use the vegetables that we are growing to make soup." - Alan Wedge, Student at Moseley Park.

The first and most challenging step was to create the allotment area in the school. The students had a dedicated 10m x 25m area in which to set up their space and reached out to Astley Partnership, a local

landscaping company to see if they would donate their time to create a plan for the allotment and garden space. They created a beautiful plan for them, it was so exciting to see what the finished product could look like! The students were now able to remove the top layer of grass and rotavate the soil in preparation of sowing seeds. Most students had no experience with, and so it was a tough task that challenged them both physically and mentally. They were motivated to keep going and really encouraged and supported one another in sticking to the task and reaching their goal. A team of students even returned to the project site after school to complete the task in time!





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“Many of the students felt they did not flourish in the traditional academic and classroom setting and so this project allowed them to expand their skills set and feel a sense of validation in the success they had in different settings. You could really sense the satisfaction and pride from what they had achieved.”
– **Jamie Howe, SENCO at Moseley Park.**

Once the allotment area had been created, the students moved on to creating planters out of crates and applying more seeds. A real highlight was seeing the seedlings sprout!

The Result

The students have plans to create a sensory garden and crop growing area where students can go as a safe and peaceful space. It will have low raised beds with plants of different textures and smells, visual items the students will make and audio stimuli such as chimes! An exciting development came about when the students secured funding for the project from the local council and NISA, a company of independently owned grocers throughout the UK. Together they pledged to provide 37 fruit trees, six fruit bushes, 50 fledging plants, a polly tunnel and a fruit cage for the projects to be successful. The school is planning an opening ceremony in the Summer Term and are dedicating the garden to a former teacher who had passed away.



“The students have benefited from this project immensely, it has so many cross-curricular links that students have been able to develop in these areas in a practical manner. They had to work as a team to create the area, developed leadership skills taking charge of certain tasks without being directed, and developed their communication skills.” – **Jamie Howe, SENCO at Moseley Park.**

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