



Hello and welcome to a special newsletter about the King Athelstan Outdoor Learning Environment. We wanted to update you on our outdoor learning developments so far and share the next exciting steps in our Big Outdoors Project journey.

## Our journey so far

Led by the needs and imagination of our children, staff and parents/carers, in 2019 we developed an ambitious and exciting design for our outdoor spaces. As making the design a reality would cost around £400,000, we knew it needed to be a long-term phased project. We successfully began fundraising for the first phase (Key Stage 2 Playground), with over £50,000 raised by our Parent Carer Staff Association (PCSA) over a four year period, alongside some sports funding and school revenue. This initial phase cost around £240,000. We now need to raise a further £120,000 to transform the KS1 playground.

As you will know, the first phase of our project was completed just in time for our children to return to school in September 2020, after six months in lockdown away from friends, school and the outdoors. Giving the children space to freely play, explore, challenge and compete has been invaluable. Now we want to create more opportunities for our younger pupils and for the next generations of children to come to our school.

## What do our children think of the new KS2 playground?

“Our playground has improved drastically for the better. It is incredible and a lot more enjoyable to play in” – Ektoras

“I really enjoy everything in the KS2 playground. My favourite place is either the hill or the quiet area because they are very calming” – Lara

“This upgrade had a big impact on breaktime – it has made it a lot more fun.” – Amira

“I really enjoy playtime because the new playground has lots of obstacles to run around while you play fun games.” – Ano

“I love playing on the MUGA because there are loads of different sports you can play there.” – Grace

In recent weeks new timetabling has meant that Years 1 and 2 are now able to have playtime in the amazing new KS2 playground, which they are loving!

From mud...



... to MUGA

From old tired equipment...



... to a challenging climbing area and resurfaced playground

From a flat, uninspiring playground...



... to a space landscaped to inspire and with the creation of an adventurous ‘mountain’ for children to explore

From underutilised space...



... to maximised use of space with the creation of ‘Daily mile’ running track.



## Allotment update

As part of the KS2 development we wanted to create an area where children could grow their own plants and food. Thanks to a hardworking, dedicated team of volunteers from our school families, this area was transformed over the Easter holidays. We have created 8 raised beds, one for each year group from Reception to Year 6 (as Nursery have an existing growing area) to grow flowers and veg to support our creative curriculum.



We've already planted a few strawberries and can't wait to do more planting in the next few weeks!



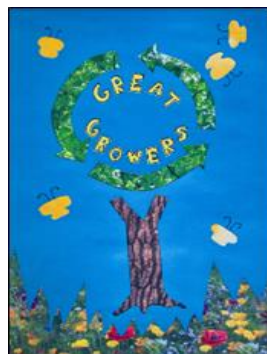
Our School Council members have asked the children in class to help name this new area. There are some fantastic suggestions and the final name will be voted on by the whole school community from a shortlist of names.

Mr Morris and Mrs Williamson, as part of British Science Week and Earth Day, launched a competition to design a poster advertising the new growing space and the amazing opportunities it holds for our children. Thank you so much to all those who entered. There were so many talented creative submissions!

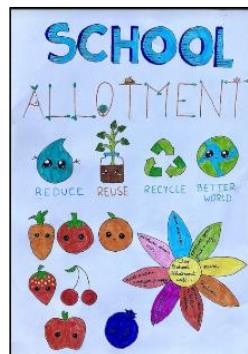
Congratulations to our three poster design winners :



EYFS Sofie



KS1 Eabha



KS2 Bethan

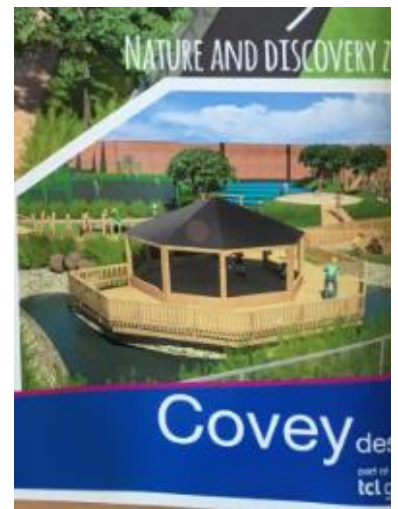
## PCSA seed growing kits

Thank you to the PCSA for the seed growing kits donated to each class to welcome everyone back to school and enthuse children in growing our own plants. Look out for photos of the new plants soon!



## Wildlife pond and garden

The final element of our KS2 playground scheme is to create an outdoor classroom, pond and wildlife garden around the existing 'hut' in the KS2 playground. We are currently exploring designs and funding to make this a reality.





## What is next?

Our next Big Outdoors Project phase will redevelop our KS1 playground (for 5-7 year olds), creating an inspiring space to enthuse and nurture our children. At the heart of the design is the desire to give our children the chance to learn, play and thrive in a safe outdoor space. Their well-being and emotional development, we believe, is the key to successful learning within our themed curriculum.

## How can you help?

We have the challenge of raising £120,000 for the next phase of our Big Outdoors Project. Here are a number of ways you can help:

The **PCSA** are going to be launching an amazing new set of challenges – look out for more details soon.

**Givey** – Our PCSA have a donation webpage if you are keen to make a donation straight away:

<https://www.givey.com/kingathelstanprimaryschoolparentcarerstaffassociation>

**Match funding** – Find out if you can fund match any fundraising you do through the company you work for – contact the PCSA for the letter to present to your employer

**Local businesses** – Can you help us reach out to local businesses for sponsorship?

**Corporate letters** – Do you work for a company who would be interested in offering sponsorship? Contact [outdoorlearning@kingathelstan.rbksch.org](mailto:outdoorlearning@kingathelstan.rbksch.org) for more details

**Grant applications** – Do you have experience in grant applications or know of a good grant we could apply for?

**Giving Machine** - <https://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/> raise money as you shop online!

KS1 Playground Currently		KS1 Playground Design	
 <p>Previous climbing equipment had to be removed as it was very old and becoming unstable.</p>	 <p>Tired worn playground with limited scope for play and physical development.</p>	 <p>Exciting Outdoor Learning space with adventure and climbing equipment, imaginative play and storytelling. Dedicated learning area with sensory garden for Haring, the Specialist Resource Provision.</p>	 <p>Shady canopied performance area. Investigative mud kitchen and gravel 'building site'.</p>

## Contacts:

Outdoor Learning Lead [outdoorlearning@kingathelstan.rbksch.org](mailto:outdoorlearning@kingathelstan.rbksch.org)

PCSA [kingathelstanpcsa@gmail.com](mailto:kingathelstanpcsa@gmail.com)