



Centre for  
Social Justice & Wellbeing  
in Education

School  
Farms  
Network

# Improving the quality of student learning through school farms

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Thanks also to Ian Egginton-Metters, the School Farm Network coordinator for his continuing support of the idea of school based research of the processes involved in learning with plants and animals.

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**“The experience of taking part in the research project with the University of Lancaster has been great fun. All the farm ambassadors really liked working with Murray and Mason and coming up with ideas/questions that could be used for the interviews/questionnaires. The process of being able to interview the children and people proved to be difficult at times because it was difficult to find a time to interview the teachers when they were not busy teaching in class. Mrs Baber helped us by producing a schedule over 4 weeks when we could interview people which helped us. The results of the research project have given us a good idea of what we need to do next to develop the farm and the learning experience even further for the children”**

## **Introduction and background**

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<sup>1</sup> The FASS framework enabled us to undertake this collaboration and provide very good resources for onward work. Its flexible and responsive approach was both apt and motivational.

This is a project to build joint understanding of how school farms might improve the experience of young people's learning. It is a partnership between the School Farms Network (SFN) and the Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University.

This partnership has developed over two years and has identified a potential area of knowledge which focuses on ways in which increased understanding of food and its production through school farms might also have broader educational purposes.

The project will integrate the practice based knowledge of schools and the curriculum design and inquiry skills of the Department of Educational Research to produce resources for CPD and research.

### ***The objectives***

The project aimed to

- Develop strategies for using school farms to challenge lack of engagement and improve the learning process.
- Produce curricular designs for use in school settings
- Build the collaborative relationship between the SFN and the Department of Educational Research toward developing an international network

### ***The main activities and their relevance***

1. Visits to schools to undertake collaborative design of case studies, identification of school teams, training in case study inquiry, designing together research instruments, analysis and case study writing, co-construction of strategies and development of use scenarios
2. Co-design and delivery of a dissemination workshop at a national conference and develop materials to support student research of their experience of school farms.

### ***Collaborative Research***

The project is based on knowledge building within schools. The University team works with school based teams, helps build their capacity in reflective enquiry and encourages, what has become known as the 'student voice'

### ***Continuing Professional Development***

The project will offer teachers in each of the participating schools direct CPD in reflective student led enquiry and curricular design skills. It will also yield resources for future CPD across all 90+ schools and others who may be thinking of school farm development.

### ***What are the likely benefits of this project?***

The aim of the project is to develop skills and knowledge in collaborative methods of R&D in learner and teacher teams. These include working in 'vertical age' teams of young people and adults to produce guidelines and materials and the design and carrying out of a 'use' strategy. It will provide resources for use by the SFN by the provision of a knowledge base of school farm practice and ideas and guidance for future practice. It will provide a catalyst for development for the case study schools that will advise and participate in the design of guidance.

### ***The impact of the proposed work for policy and practice***

This project addresses policy about pupil disengagement reflected in the White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching' (2010) which advocates a new approach to engagement. The outputs of the project will provide a resource for outcomes in the area of policy learning in the consideration of a suite of school based mechanisms to improve engagement and reduce truancy and exclusion through increased wellbeing. Practice in schools will be enhanced by increased understanding of an appreciation of what works in the area of school farm activity

***Within the project lifetime, success indicators include***

1. Developing methods for successful knowledge exchange partnerships
2. Establishing the range of strategies used by schools to use school farms for general educational purposes
3. Identifying examples of interesting and useful practice in integrating school farms into general curricular practice.

***Sustainability and relevance***

Because the six schools with which we will be working are part of the SFN and the project is co-sponsored by them, all outputs from the project will be disseminated to the SFN and will form the basis of future CPD with the SFN.

Several factors have converged to make knowledge exchange with the SFN a persuasive initiative;

1. The emerging practices of integrating **wellbeing, social and personal development** within 'general learning' processes is often associated with working and learning with plants and animals.
2. There is a worldwide interest in **sustainable futures in food production (food security)**. School farms have the potential to provide a direct resource for this type of consciousness-raising by involving young people in the realities of producing food.
3. There is increasing understanding and interest in the way in which working with wider communities (farming, food producers, other working environments) **enrich and embed learning effectively** for all young people.
4. There is an interest in healthy eating (Healthy Schools) as part of a brief to encourage broadly, **more healthy lifestyles**<sup>2</sup>. School farms can provide first hand resources for diet, food types and cooking techniques that can be integrated into school curricula.

A preliminary study provided some preliminary findings (see Saunders M., Minnitt M., Egginton-Metters I., Gelston A. 2010) that suggested a national development project will develop resources for the improvement of curricular approaches and school strategies which link school farm activity leading to increased engagement. The work is designed to contribute to the resources available for the growing number of school farms nationally and internationally. At the present time, what we know about the way learning through working with plants can address engagement with school is limited. The project draws on the experience of the team in participative and co-constructed research involving vertical school based research teams of young people, teachers in school and other stakeholders from the community and family.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://home.healthyschools.gov.uk/>

As we note at the outset, at the heart of this project is the proposition that involving young people in working with plants and animals provides both personal and group 'cognitive momentum' (i.e. seems to aid learning by embedding 'sense making' in the semantic memory) so promoting short and longer term skill, knowledge and emotional learning. It is the development of emotional learning and wellbeing, particularly of those young people at risk of disengagement and exclusion that is the specific focus of this project.

While the main focus is on those schools that have active farming activities within school sites, it will also take account of the role of other types of learning opportunity offered to school children based on visits to working farms. The SFN in the UK defines a school farm as "a teaching facility within school grounds that provides some of the following:

- Access to farm livestock
- The facilities and land needed for their up-keep, and appropriate machinery, incubators or other farming equipment

The interest in learning opportunities that are 'beyond the classroom' has a long history<sup>3</sup>. It is underpinned by theories of learning that stress the way such activities (including engaging in problem solving in a wide range of 'beyond school' environments in work, volunteering and activity based experiences) enhance learning by directly engaging learners in 'active' learning.'<sup>4</sup>

The preliminary study to which we refer above provided evidence of the way in which school farms can enable the integration and embedding of social and personal development within 'general learning' processes. The data suggests the way emotional and social development gains are made with working and learning with plants and animals. The following extract identifies this aspect.

*There were references to learners engaging, being motivated, building confidence and self esteem, raising aspirations and achievement and achieving personal and accredited success were typical observations. Potential vocational learning pathways were also highlighted.*

*"The farm is seen as an asset by most students, a centre of vocational excellence and a fantastic link from field to fork. Students remain in education and progress as individuals as a result of their experiences on the farm. The farm enhances and enriches most curricular areas and can give students responsibility beyond their years. The farm has a very positive effect."(The Living Classroom: School Farms in the UK: a mapping survey, p 22)*

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<sup>3</sup> In a contemporary context see the work of the registered charity 'Council for Learning Outside the Classroom' which exists to promote and champion learning outside the classroom so all children and young people can benefit from increased opportunities for high quality and varied educational experiences. The Council took over responsibility for the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto in April 2009. See <http://www.lotc.org.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> Alongside this there is considerable evidence that the ASDAN 'progression through guided reflection' approach which recognizes small steps of learner achievement- through motivational active learning challenges- provides a means of scaffolding achievement by developing in parallel 'learning to learn' skills. (See: evaluation presented to HEFCE Independent evaluation of the Aimhigher ASDAN Higher Education Progression Support and Accreditation Project: 2008-2010 March 2011 ERS. This project involved 1000 disadvantaged learners and their teachers in schools across Coventry and Warwickshire.

See Also: ASDAN Aimhigher National Activity Project Overview, School of Lifelong Learning and International Development, Institute of Education, London University. July 2006.)

The direct and indirect impact on wellbeing was a feature of the schools' experience and is congruent with broader agendas. There is no necessary connection between wellbeing and achievement as conventionally measured in public and school based examinations and assessments. It is clear that achievement may be high (in so called 'hot-house' school environments for example) with young people experiencing low levels of wellbeing under highly pressured conditions.

### ***The context of this project: addressing a gap***

Internationally, the interest in farms based in schools has mushroomed (although throughout the 19th and 20th century, there are many examples of education policy that includes a school farm element<sup>5</sup>). The growing interest in the UK in learning which takes place beyond the classroom is suggested by the DCSF sponsored website dedicated to such activities and the growing number of related case studies of analogous projects.<sup>6</sup>

The SFN <sup>7</sup> outlines the background to School Farms within the UK in their introductory paper, "School Farms: a vital resource". During the 20th century School Farms have ebbed and flowed in number, with some 2,500 school gardens in 1912 to a sharp decline during the 1980s to resurgence during the early years of the 21st century. There are over 90 schools registered with the Network as we write and many others in preparation.

### ***Innovatory aspects of the project***

The innovative dimensions of the project lie in two distinctive areas.

First, in the review of the literature undertaken by the DERL and the SFN it was clear that there was a steady increase in the number of and interest in school farms. However, while there were many anecdotal accounts of the positive benefits of learning with plants and animals, the lessons from these experiences were not universally known or systematically presented and there had been no systematic development of the role they could play in increasing engagement in school by 'at risk' school students. The project proposes work to address this lacuna.

Second, the project will use the ground breaking methods developed in South Cumbria to include 'vertical teams' to undertake mapping activities and design and evaluate materials and guidance. It is through this participative process that the quality and authenticity of the outputs and their potential effect on better practice can be enriched and enhanced. The participants in all stages of this project will be fully involved in central decision making and skill and knowledge development in the area of change management.

The project develops the potential of school farms to build cogent and authentic learning and social partnerships with local, national and global communities by providing for

- a focus on diet, physical, mental and spiritual health
- community learning which engages families, local businesses and the wider community
- developing an accreditable enquiry skills curriculum

### ***Media and other dissemination activity***

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<sup>5</sup> For an extensive review of such historical examples see Stephen Castles, Wiebke Wustenberg (1979) *Education for the Future* (Better world books)

<sup>6</sup> See the Growing Schools website for example <http://www.growingschools.org.uk/>

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/education/school-farms-network>

<http://www.itv.com/news/granada/topic/reddish-vale>

Granada report on the Reddish Vale experience and the school farm project

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-22014346>

Prof Murray Saunders, of Lancaster University's faculty of arts and social sciences, says the way that supermarkets price and present food is distorting the reality of food production, particularly for young consumers. "When supermarkets sell four litres of milk for a pound, the reality is that they are screwing down milk farmers in an absurd way. Selling six chicken thighs for 50p means you are not reflecting the reality of a real bird being slaughtered for food....if you have a school farm you bring that reality to pupils. Even growing a line of cabbages and realising that you have to work quite hard to get something decent - or thinking about what happens to animals when they go off to slaughter, even just having a cow or a real live pig standing there - can have a profound effect."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojC3kQrX2qE>

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Filmed on Friday 5th July 2013 at Phoenix High School, White City, London. This was part of a 2 day conference around growing in schools. Starring Michael Wale (Chair), Kevin Gould, Colin Tudge, Stephanie Wood, Ben Stockwin and Professor Murray Saunders.

## **2.0 Approach to school based research teams**

We see this kind of collaboration based on enquiry as concerned with the depiction of the experience of stakeholders, in this case within schools in the project. The design of the project (including the enquiry, development and engagement dimensions) is based on co-construction by which we mean the embedded involvement of young people, their teachers and families as researchers, developers and disseminators. This approach has been developed by members of the team in their work in South Cumbria<sup>8</sup> in their Inspiring Communities project and is fully explained in the following section.

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<sup>8</sup> Evaluation of the Inspiring Communities Programme, Barrow-in-Furness, October 2011, Paul Davies and Mason Minnitt, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University



Members of the team have extensive experience of this approach and have adapted the Learning Futures Model in their work in South Cumbria. By extending ownership on aspects of evaluative research and development design, this approach encourages 'by-in' which enables future use and dissemination of outputs as well as providing a learning resource of high value and effectiveness.

### **Designing the focus for the enquiry dimension**

The overall focus for the enquiry dimension can be expressed as two different foci, one descriptive and the other more analytical and explanatory. The enquiry dimension involved teams of young people and teachers in the design of enquiry instruments (see below) using the RUFDATA evaluative research planning tool developed by the Lancaster Team<sup>9</sup>. The project developed an innovative approach to collaborative research by combining a central enquiry team to coordinate the overall project alongside school based enquiry teams in five schools. The task of these school based teams will be to:

- Contribute to the design of the 'focus' of the enquiry
- Contribute to the design of instruments and questions
- Undertake case studies of practice within their schools
- Analyse evidence
- Design approaches, principles of procedure and teaching and learning resources
- Advise on whole school approaches to school farms for engagement

School teams were involved in the following process: :


- Identification of a school based development teacher (SBDT) from each of five volunteer schools
- Identification of student volunteers (five) from each school
- Two training workshops at which ideas for the instruments will be generated using RUFDATA
- Refinement of the instruments by the Lancaster team
- Editing and finessing by the school based teams
- Piloting of the instruments

Appendix one provides examples of some of the instruments produced as part of the project.

See below for slides used to describe this process:


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<sup>9</sup> See Saunders M (2005) Beginning an Evaluation with RUFDATA: Theorizing a Practice Based Approach to Evaluation in *Evaluation Research Methods Volume 11* Eds. Stern E (Sage London) pp 294-311

A photograph of two pink piglets standing in a grassy field. The piglet on the left is looking towards the camera, while the one on the right is looking down. The background shows green trees and a clear blue sky.

### Aspects of the research process

- Identify school based research team
- Identify school based teacher involvement
- Identify: purpose, focus data, audience for the school based enquiry from
- Skill development in deciding on enquiry instruments e.g. how to collect data and information. ( school based with Lancaster team)
- Action plan

A photograph of two pink piglets standing in a grassy field. The piglet on the left is looking towards the camera, while the one on the right is looking down. The background shows green trees and a clear blue sky.

### Aspects of the research process

- Begin to collect data
- Evidence collected
- Analysis and reports completed by end of spring term
- Synthesis by end of June 2013

### **3.0 The case studies**

The schools involved in the case studies were the following:

**Court De Wyck CoE - Primary**

**Edwalton Primary School - Primary**

**Oathall Community College - Secondary (11 - 16)**

**Ripley St Thomas CoE School - Secondary (11 - 18)**

**The Warriner School, - Secondary (11-18)**

**Reddish Vale - Secondary (11-16)**

The cases we have reproduced here are those that were able to complete within the time frame of this summer term and the end of the funded period. All schools were able to contribute to the design and development of research instruments which were exchanged and collaboratively developed.

All young researchers have received a certificate of participation from Lancaster University,



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**Oathall Community College**

## INTRODUCTION

### *Oathall Community College*

Phoebe Burton

Oathall is a mixed 1400 pupil comprehensive community college for students aged between 11 and 16. Oathall is situated on the boundaries of the town of Haywards Heath and the village of Lindfield in the heart of Mid-Sussex. Oathall is designated a specialist college in an innovative and creative combination of specialisms; science and visual arts with a rural dimension.

The college has a full spectrum of specialist accommodation, including a 5-acre farm, a music centre, recently opened specialist art building, conference facilities and well-equipped classrooms. We have a rolling programme of building development and refurbishment to reach all parts of the school over the next 10 to 15 years.

### *Oathall Farm – An Introduction Keris Self*

Oathall farm was created during World War II by the head teacher to help the war effort as part of the “Dig for Victory” effort. The playing field was dug up to grow crops and animals such as pigs, chickens and bees were kept. The farm was used as an outdoor classroom linked to every subject on the curriculum. Since the war years the farm has had its ups and downs reflecting changing educational policies. It has fought off closure on two occasions, latterly in 1999 when an intervention by HRH The Prince of Wales responding to letters from the students. The Prince subsequently visited and has shown a keen interest in school farms ever since.

Today students within the college have the opportunity to do an NVQ Level One in Agriculture and land-based operations (farm machinery and horticulture – which is a new addition to the farm) and a Level 2 Specialist Diploma in environmental and land-based studies. There is also a very popular Young Farmers’ Club where students can work on the farm before and after school, at weekends and during school holidays. Oathall’s farm acting as an outdoor classroom encourages the practical side of subjects such as ICT, maths, science, business studies, English and art. In fact most subject areas at Oathall use the farm where it is written into schemes of work. The farm regularly wins prizes at shows, for example Oathall won Pig of the Year at the South of England show in 2008 and had the champion pig at the same show in 2010. This year one of our cows was champion Ayrshire for the second year running. Oathall’s farm gives a diverse range of experience for different students which are beneficial as there are lots of different types of people. The farm can help bring the people together.

### *Main Themes Oli Bates*

As Oathall students, we wanted to find out about what sort of impacts the farm has on people related to Oathall and also people who aren’t. Parents, pupils, teachers and governors are all involved with Oathall in certain ways, therefore we wanted to find out their individual opinions on the farm and the farm shop. We felt this was important to find out because different views from different people who are related to the school in some way would be interesting to compare together.

Oathall farm provides extra-curricular activities and benefits in educational levels, people related to Oathall can benefit from this so collecting views helps us find things out about what the benefits are and roughly how many people benefit from the farm.

The farm shop brings benefits to many people: parents; teachers; governors; locals and customers. Because of this we wanted to find out what all of the benefits are and how many people benefit from the farm. We also wanted to get feedback from customers about the business, what they want to sell, how they get it, how often they get it and why they buy food from the farm shop.

## **METHOD**

### *How we collected our data Caitlin Heslop*

WE did two types of data collection. We did surveys where we got different people to answer a questionnaire; and we did interviews where we asked people questions.

We interviewed our form tutors and our parents. We interviewed five teachers and three parents. We also interviewed the farm shop manager. We surveyed teachers, students, school visitors and farm shop customers. Teachers and students were sent electronic questionnaires. 42 teachers did the questionnaire and 78 students did the questionnaire. The customers and visitors were asked to complete paper copies when they visited the school. 13 visitors did the questionnaire and 13 customers did it.

### *What are questionnaires and interviews? Matthew Leesmith*

A survey/questionnaire is where you give some people a list of statements. Each statement has five options: strongly agree, agree, don't know/no view, disagree and strongly disagree. Then the answers are taken in and studied to see what people have put.

An interview is where one person asks another person a series of open ended questions. The interviewee answers in as much detail as they can. The interviewer will keep asking questions so the interviewee can say everything they need to. These types of interviews give a lot of detail and can be really helpful.

### *What are the Advantages of these two Methods? Mia Drayton*

The advantages of doing a questionnaire is some people are more likely to tell the truth. This is because they won't be ashamed, embarrassed or afraid to tell the truth when they're writing their answers. When we read it we will understand what they mean., but will not know them or their names. As well as this, that way we also can't tell what gender or age they are. This means we can't put them into groups or stereotypes of what they would be put into.

The advantages of doing interviews is people put more detail and explaining their answers and why. Plus when you are doing interviews you can get what you want out of people, and on questionnaires people don't always put what you want, or make sense, or they put notes or short phrases and you don't exactly know what they mean. As well as you could interpret wrong to what they meant or had in mind.

What are the Disadvantages of these two Methods? Justin Seiderer

There are obviously going to be disadvantages to questionnaires. For example, we couldn't always make links from one question to question. There might also be low level answers or questions, this could then be hard to get a good full detailed answer sheet. Finally we would often find that we ask more questions than we get answers.

There are disadvantages to making and interviewing. For example, people might be busy and not have time.

## **FINDINGS**

### *Teachers' Interviews and Teachers' Survey*

All teachers surveyed thought that the farm should be continued as an on-going project even if they didn't make use of it themselves. Three-quarters of all teachers surveyed thought that the farm added to the school's appeal and that it helps with teacher recruitment. 98% of surveyed staff were proud to be associated with a school that has a farm. All teachers thought that the farm is a valuable teaching resource, with 84% having used it as a resource. Some subject areas use the farm more than others with certain topics being embedded in the schemes of work. According to the teacher interviews the subjects using the farm the most are: science, English, ICT and art. According to the teacher interviews some curriculum areas don't use the farm at all. This needs to be investigated further to find out why some areas don't use the farm. Is it because there is insufficient relevance to the subject's schemes of work or are their barriers such as teacher resistance or time. 84% of the surveyed teachers have used the farm at one time or another. This needs investigating further. How frequently do the staff use the farm? With which year groups is the farm used as an educational resource? How is the farm used through the year, are there seasonal patterns? Over 90% of teachers thought that the farm plays an important role in raising students' awareness of the origins of food and that the farm has a valuable role to play in the students' personal and social education.

### *Students' Survey*

Many of the students' responses echoed those of the teaching staff. 79% of students think that the farm raises their awareness of the origins of our food. 62% of the students don't have much to do with the farm, although their perception is that a majority (64%) of students do have something to do with the farm outside of lessons. This suggests that there is a gap between the students' perceptions and of reality. Nevertheless, just over half of the students expressed a desire to get more involved with the farm, and 83% think that getting involved with the farm is a worthwhile experience. This gap between their perceptions and reality is an interesting one, not least because the evidence suggests they value the experience but don't actually turn their desires into reality. This needs further investigation. What is it that is preventing them from getting involved in the first place? Is it lack of time? Shyness? Lack of opportunity? Ignorance? Two-thirds of students have used the farm at some time as a resource which supports the evidence provided by the teacher surveys and interviews. Slightly more (75%) think that the farm is an integral part of what goes on at Oathall. More than one in ten claimed that the farm makes Oathall a more interesting school than other schools. For 41% of students the farm was a factor in deciding which school to attend. This needs further investigation. Although, 41% said the farm was a factor in their decision to come to Oathall, it's not clear how important

a factor the farm is, was it the most, third or least important factor. What socio-economic influences determine the various factors? 62% of students think that a farm shop is a useful facility. This needs further investigation to ascertain why they think it's a useful facility?

### *Visitors' Survey*

The visitors' survey was administered at the school's main reception. To reach the reception visitors would have to pass the farm and so would be aware of its existence. For only 7% of the visitors surveyed did a visit to the farm form part of their agenda. Visitors to the school farm do not normally report to the main reception, and so do not form part of this particular survey. Most visitors (over nine in every ten) enjoyed their visit to the school. Everyone would like to visit the school again. These two statistics may or may not be related to the farm. (This needs further investigation). The majority of visitors think that the farm adds a lot to the look of the school and nobody thought that the farm makes the school look untidy. Two years ago to the right of the main drive an old cabin style classroom was awaiting demolition. This has been replaced with an immaculate market garden, which along with a new meadow currently in bloom to the right of the drive, has vastly improved the visitors' first impressions. Every visitor thinks that the farm makes the school look distinctive compared with other schools; and everyone thought that the farm is a great resource for the school. One visitor wrote *that "It (the farm) is a very important element to Oathall as a school"*, while another reported that the farm is *"A hugely positive additional dimension to the learning environment"*.

### *Farm Customers' Survey*

The results from this survey show that in a relatively short period of time the business of the shop has greatly increased. There is no doubt that the customers value the shop as an addition to the locality's facilities. Most of the shop's growth has been in the last 12 months. Most of the customers are local; just over half of the customers walk to the shop, while 55% live within one mile of it. 41% of customers travel to the shop by car, and 44% are travelling up to five miles which is a healthy sphere of influence. It would be interesting to map the origins of customers and to establish whether their visits are multi-purpose i.e. are they making a specific trip to visit the shop or is it combined with, for example, picking up their children? Most customers (81%) do their shopping after school. Everyone buys meat. This is unsurprising as the arable side of the farm and its market garden are relatively recent elements of the farm. Traditionally, the farm has been known for pork, lamb and beef production. However, the shop is sourcing some produce from elsewhere and now a third of customers are buying vegetables, although less than 1% of customers are buying bread. The main reasons for using the farm shop are quality of produce (this may reflect the recent horse meat scandal and people's increased awareness of the provenance of food) and friendly staff. *"I would not buy meat at the supermarket again"*. The freshness of the produce and convenience (presumably resulting from a multi-purpose visit) are of less importance but still significant. Some of the customers' comments were fulsome in their praise and would be effective sound bites in an advertising campaign. *"We love Oathall farm shop and can't imagine getting our meats from anywhere else! The butcher is a wonderfully friendly man and we look forward to our weekly visit"*. *"Great idea! Fun for the children to be involved"*. *"I hope it goes from strength to strength. A fantastic opportunity for pupils, staff and the wider public."*

### *Shop Manager Interview (by Matthew Leesmith)*



The current shop manager has been working at the shop for about six months. The opening hours are 1.00 – 6.00 p.m. on Fridays and 9.00 a.m. The busiest periods are 1.00 – 3.00 pm on a Friday and most of Saturday between 10.00 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. The shop never opens outside of the published hours. Currently the farm shop averages 30 – 40 customers a week generating a monthly turnover of about £3,000. This represents an average customer spend of just over £20 (calculated by taking the mid-number of customers (35) multiplying by 4 (weeks) and dividing £3000 by the sum). The shop manager says trade is increasing. This is worth investigating further: what is the rate of growth? Can future projections be based on this growth? What are the reasons for this growth? What can the farm do to encourage further growth? Is there a limit on the volume of trade the farm can manage? The shop is promoted through advertising in local papers, leaflets and word of mouth. The manager says that most customers arrive by car. 75% of the shop produce is produced on the farm itself. There is very little waste from the shop. The shop helps students develop commercial skills by working alongside the shop manager and other staff. About eight students each week benefit from this aspect of the shop's activities. The manager thinks the shop should be open for more hours and that more staff should use the shop. There is no evidence to conclude the degree to which staff use the shop. The customers' survey indicated that customers would like the shop to have longer opening hours and stock a wider range of produce. Does the farm have plans to widen its range of produce? If so, what lines? If not, why not?

#### *Farm Manager's Observations*

It has been a long process to provide an outdoor classroom at Oathall Community College and to use our farm and gardens as a resource to enrich and enhance learning and attainment across the curriculum. We are grateful for visionaries like HRH The Prince of Wales for supporting us, and for encouraging ministers to visit us. Although our core function is to create educational opportunity, we do try to run the farm as a mini business supplying meat, fruit, vegetables and flowers into both our own farm shop but and the school canteen. In this way, in a world which is becoming increasingly distant from the land, we really can demonstrate where food actually comes from. The students have so many opportunities to develop life skills and to develop confidence as they work with plants and animals or learn about hygiene and retail skills in the shop. I wish I could guarantee that future governments will take note of the positive comments made so readily by Ofsted about school farms and give us the credit we deserve.

#### *Observations – a teacher's perspective on the process.*

Seven students were chosen at random from the whole school population. This was a mistake and based on a misunderstanding. As a consequence their commitment and ability to meet the project's demands were compromised. Finding time and communicating with the students remained constant problems. The energy for the project did not come from the students. It would have been a much easier project to manage if a group of hand-picked students were selected. However, the students themselves have benefitted a great deal from being part of the project. And, furthermore, these students are, in the main, not the kind of students who would normally be involved in such a project. Providing these students with such an opportunity is in itself sufficient justification for their participation. The students realised how much time and effort is put into a research project. Being students not normally associated with the work of the school farm gave them the opportunity to appreciate how much is involved in this resource both in educational and commercial

terms. Each student did make a contribution to the project; they may have conducted an interview, organised the logistics of a survey, contributed to compiling the survey and interview questions, analysed the results or written part of the report. Consequently, each student has gained some greater expertise and understanding of the research process.

For my part, working on this project has demanded more time than I have had. All meetings occurred either at lunchtime or during non-contact periods. It was frustrating to call a meeting to find that only two students have turned up. Despite this I think we have found out some valuable things about the role of the farm in the school and in the wider community. The issues outlined above have, to an extent, limited the findings. For example, with more time we should have conducted a pilot survey and this would have enabled us to address some of the issues suggested for further investigation.

#### Possible lines of enquiry for future projects

- Investigate the farm's use by outside organisations e.g. primary schools, G&T etc.
- How could the farm be used better (students' views)?
- Why do some curriculum areas use the farm very little or not at all? Is it because there is insufficient relevance to the subject's schemes of work or are their barriers such as teacher resistance or time.
- How frequently do staff use the farm as an educational resource? With which year groups is the farm used as an educational resource? How is the farm used through the year, are there seasonal patterns?
- What is it that is preventing students from getting involved in the farm? Is it lack of time? Shyness? Lack of opportunity? Ignorance?
- Although, 41% said the farm was a factor in their decision to come to Oathall, it's not clear how important a factor the farm is, was it the most, third or least important factor? What socio-economic influences determine the various factors? Why do students think the farm shop is a useful facility?
- It would be interesting to map the origins of customers and to establish whether their visits are multi-purpose i.e. are they making a specific trip to visit the shop or is it combined with, for example, picking up their children?
- What is the rate of growth of the shop's trade? Can future projections be based on this growth? What are the reasons for this growth? What can the farm do to encourage further growth? Is there a limit on the volume of trade the farm can manage?
- To what extent do teachers use the farm shop? What factors influence their decision-making as to why they do/do not use the shop? Does the farm have plans to widen its range of produce? If so, what lines? If not, why not?

## Recommendations

- The school should consider ways of encouraging some curriculum areas to make some/greater use of the farm as an educational resource. This objective should feature in the college and faculty development plans.
- Student voice should be used to find out how the farm might encourage greater student participation.
- The college should consider the farm as part of a wider community project involving the whole school, so that for example, a community café based on the farm site would be seen as a community/college resource not just a farm resource.



**School  
Farms  
Network**



# Improving the quality of student learning through school farms

**Court de Wyck Church of England Primary School**

## Introduction

Court de Wyck Church of England Primary School can be found in the beautiful village of Claverham, North Somerset and is surrounded by big green fields. Currently there are 123 students and 14 staff, split between 5 classes. The school has strong family links with the local community. It was built in 1972 on the site of an orchard which originally belonged to the old Court-de-Wyck estate and it's name came from there because they used to grow Court of Wyck apples in the orchard.

The school farm was introduced in March 2012 by the head teacher (Mr Riddiough) to help enhance the children's learning and it is run on a daily basis by Mrs Baber. The setting up was financed by various local companies and money was also obtained from grants from companies like Bristol airport. In the future we are hoping to get some different animals but we may be limited by the amount of space we have available. It was in March 2012 that we hatched five chicks in an incubator. To add to this we were given 10 hybrid chicks from the supplier of our hen house and run. We also have two rabbits and two guinea pigs which were donated to the school. In November 2012 we were given two piglets which we fattened up and they went off to slaughter in May this year. The sausages were delicious! We are hoping to get some more piglets later in the autumn.

The farm helps children to understand where our food comes from ie. sausages/pork from pigs and eggs from chickens. We sell the eggs to parents and staff which helps to pay for the animal feed and bedding. There are 8 farm ambassadors who are children which go out every day to feed and care for the animals on a rota basis. We also have farm families who come to school and look after the animals at weekends and during school holidays. Once a week all the ambassadors clean out the animals.

By taking part in this research project with Lancaster University we wanted to find out if having a school farm has helped to improve the quality of children's learning.

## **Method**

First of all the ambassadors worked in two groups (Ambassador Heroes and Pink Parrots) and decided who they thought they could approach to find out their thoughts relating to the school farm. It was decided that a selection of children from years 4, 5 & 6, parents, governors, teaching and non teaching staff should be approached.

Next we had a brainstorm on the type of questions that we wanted to ask. With help from Murray and Mason these questions were put into instruments to be used for interviews and questionnaires. Mrs Baber helped us by creating an interview schedule so we know who we had to interview and when; we had four weeks to complete the collection of data. We interviewed 34 children from years 4, 5 and 6, 26 parents and governors and 14 teaching/non teaching staff.

It was quite difficult to find the right time to interview the teaching/non teaching staff as they are very busy people. Some of the interviews were carried out using the ipad and as we only have one in our class we had to share it. This meant that we could only interview one person at a time and there was some arguing about who was going to use it and when.

After we had collected all the data, we analysed and collated the responses to each question. Then we decided the best way to present each question from the research material using a selection of bar/tally charts and tables. Finally we typed up the responses and Mrs Baber helped us to format this report.

## Responses from parents and governors

### Question 1 - Do you think the school farm is a good idea?

Yes	Maybe	No
### ## ## ##	###	

It has provided a great educational opportunity for the school because children get to see how different animals grow up and the type of food they produce, ie eggs and meat. Also the children learn about what is involved in making sure all the animals are looked after correctly. On the other hand, it could be better if the school farm was available to all children in the school and had stronger links with local farmers.

### Question 2 – The school farm helps children to understand where their food comes from.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	14		

Every one interviewed agreed that the school farm increases the children's ability to understand where their food comes.

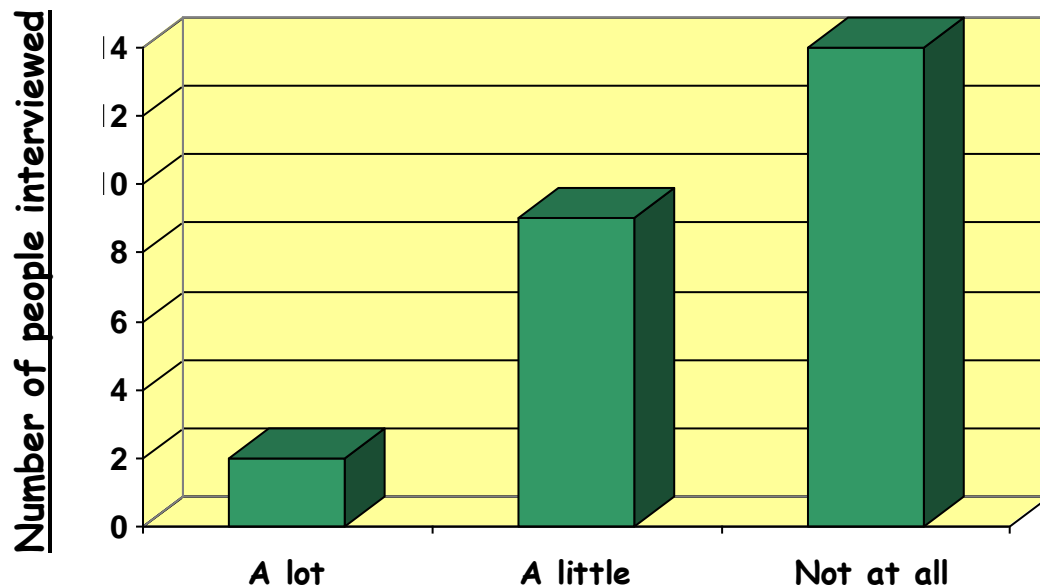
### Question 3 - In general, children are learning from the responsibility of looking after the animals.

Yes	Maybe	No
20	5	0

Children see the ambassadors feeding the animals and learn how the animals are raised and looked after. It is good because your child can learn about the animals and gain a clear understanding about the importance of looking after the animals correctly. It helps the children learn about the life cycles of animals and where their food comes from. The ambassadors are certainly enhancing their learning by taking part in the farm. Also it shows the difference between farm animals and pets. The children also get to know and take part in the yucky part of helping out with a farm ie. Cleaning them out.

Question 4 – Are you involved in the school farm in any way?

**Bar chart to show if people are involved in the school farm**



**How much are you involved with the school farm?**

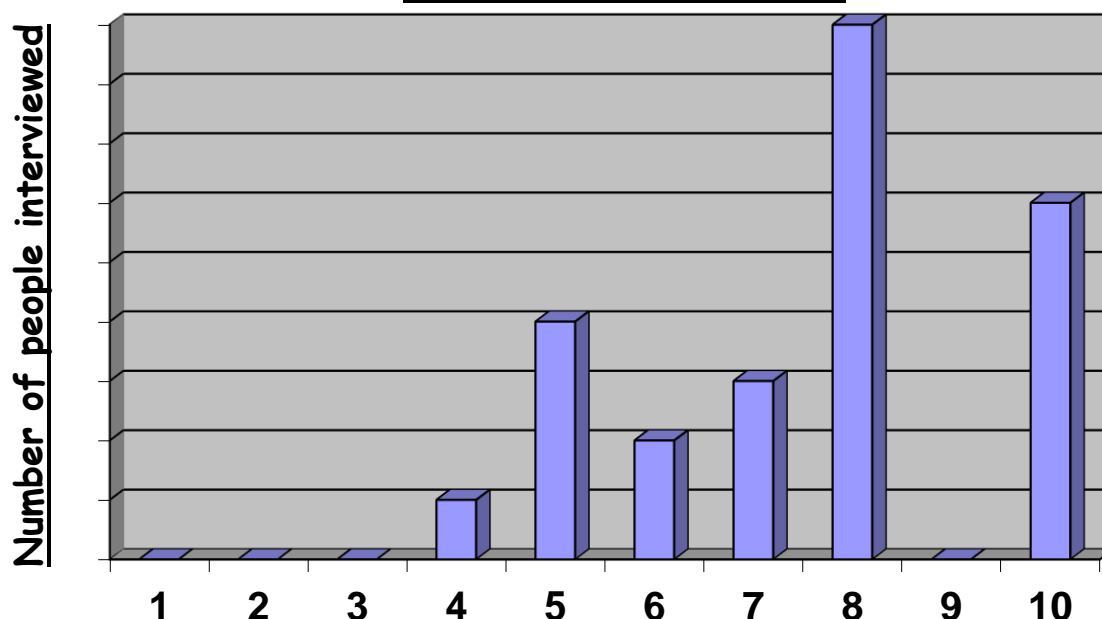
Involvement in the school farm included: being a farm family and helping to look after the animals at weekends and during school holidays. Parents provide bread and vegetable peelings for the animals and some bring their child into school early so they can carry out their duties as a farm ambassador. Many parents end up washing dirty clothes after their child has cleaned out the animals on a Monday lunchtime, therefore the school needs to think about providing some protective clothing.

Some parents said they would like to be included but were not sure what it involved in being a farm family. Some parents didn't want a lot of responsibility but would be happy to help out now and again. Others said that they would like to be involved but can't due to the fact that they live too far away or don't have enough spare time.



Question 5 - On scale of 1-10 how do you rate the school farm as an experience for children?

**Bar chart to show how people rate the experience of having a school farm for children**



**Scale to rate the experience**  
**1 being not good and 10 being excellent**

People think that the school farm is a good idea as it is a unique opportunity for children to learn how to look after the animals. Some people think that once the farm ambassadors are trained they should take other children in to the farm to help look after the animals so then everyone is involved. Sometimes if there are not enough people helping with the farm it can become onerous. Lots of children are talking a lot about the school farm when they get home which means they are enjoying the experience.

However some parents and governors commented that there have been no visible benefits as yet E.g. evidence of learning, feedback from those involved etc. also people think that more children should be included in the school farm and not just the ambassadors.

Responses from children in years 4, 5 and 6

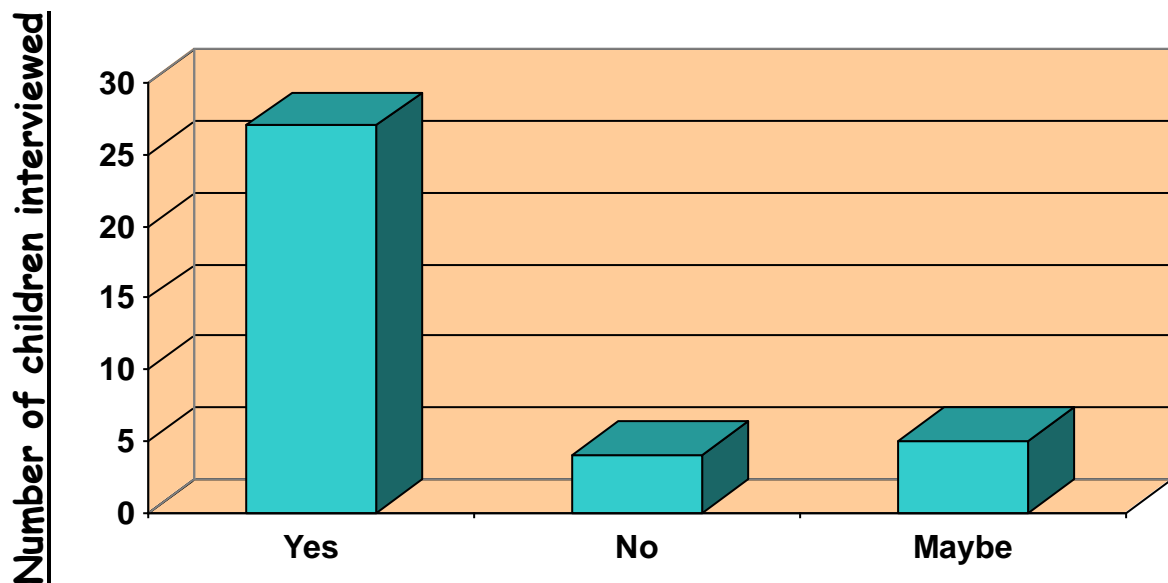
Question 1- Have you heard of the farm ambassadors? If so, do you know what they do?

Yes	Know what they do	No

The farm ambassadors look after and care for the farm animal by feeding them giving, them water and cleaning them out.

Question 2 - Do you think the school farm helps children's learning?

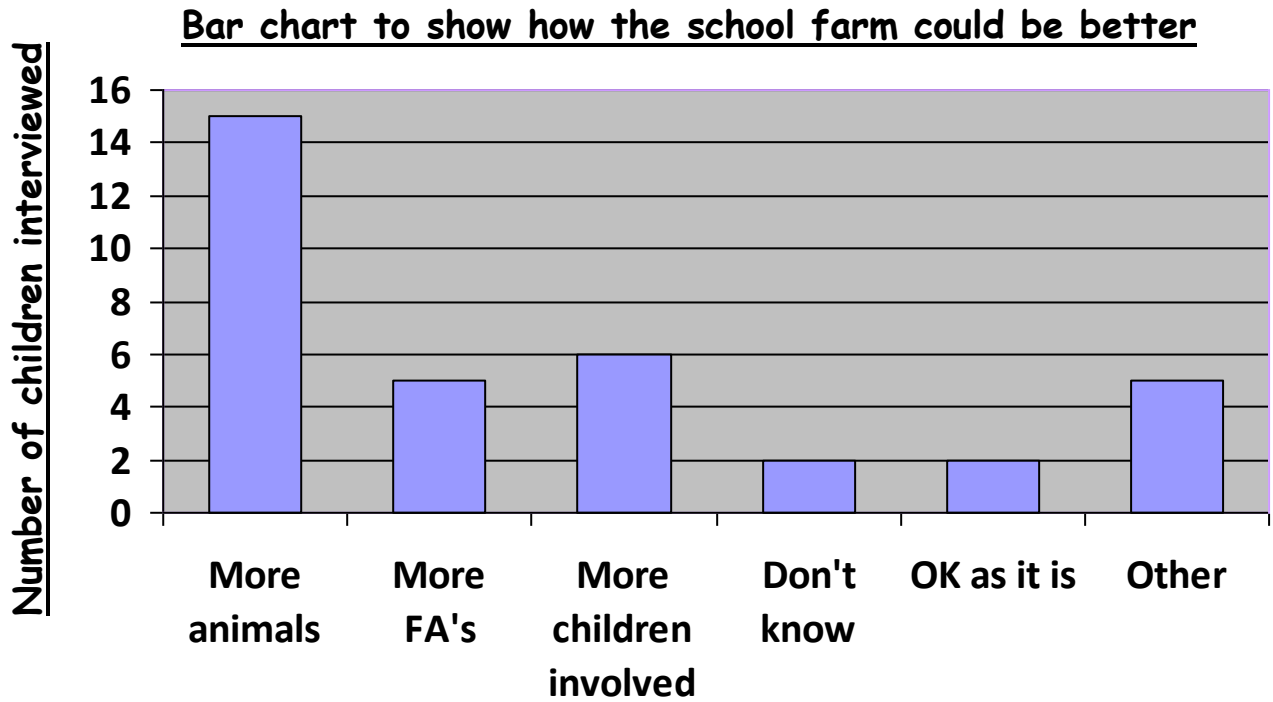
**Bar chart to show if children think the school farm helps their learning**



**Does the school farm help their learning?**

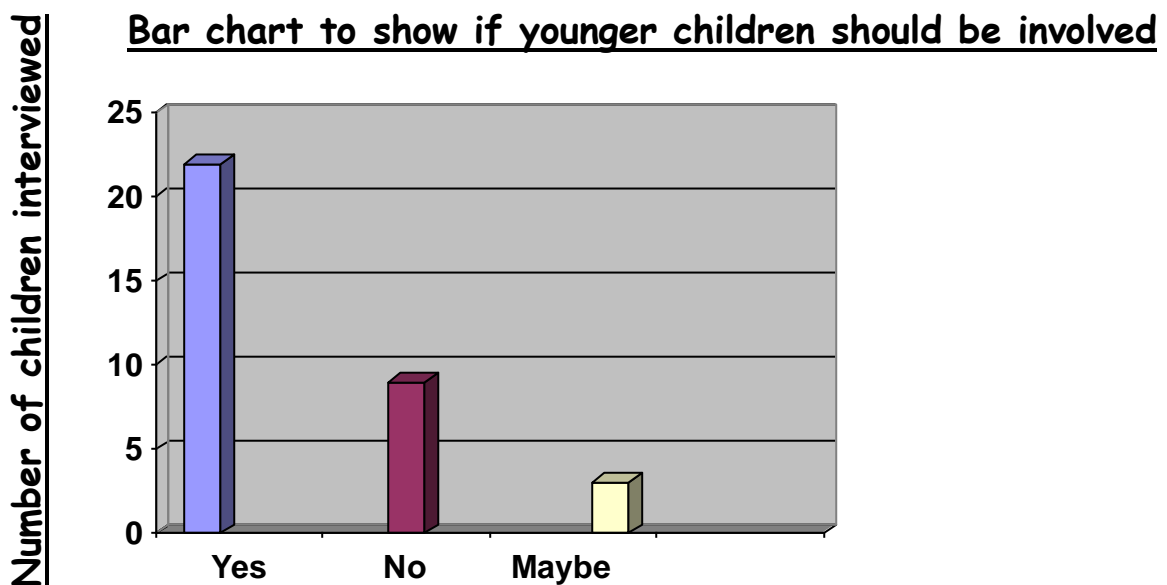
The children think that it helps with their learning because it teaches them to be responsible and they learn where their food comes from.

Question 3 -The school farm could be better if... (please complete sentence)



**Ideas that would make the school farm better**  
 Children thought the school farm could be better if there were more animals.

Question 4 - Do you think a younger age group should be involved, if yes why?



**Should younger children be involved?**

The majority of children interviewed thought that younger children should be involved with the school farm because it will be a good experience for them. It will give them

the opportunity to learn more about the animals themselves, help them to understand what is involved in looking after them and make them more responsible. Some children do not have any animals to look after at home so by being involved with the farm it will give them an opportunity that they may not necessarily get at home. Also it doesn't seem fair that only the older children are involved in the farm.

However, some children thought that younger children should not be involved with the school farm as they are too young and would not be serious enough about the responsibility of looking after the animals. It would also take a lot of time to train them in what is needed in order to look after the animals properly; they would also find it difficult to clean them out. The younger children may also get scared about looking after the pigs especially when they get big as they are very strong and could hurt the little children.

## **Responses from teaching and non-teaching staff**

### **Question 1- What do you know about the school farm ambassadors?**

The school farm ambassadors (who are in year 5 and 6) are children who do a good job of looking after the animals. They have set days to check for egg's and once a week they clean out the animals. In addition to this each day they check the animals are ok and that they have enough food and water. Teachers have seen good work such as looking after the animals and also cleaning them out. The children have been lovely to watch as they have been well trained to do so. Responsibility is a good skill to have because if you have a farm of your own or your own pets you always need to be responsible.

### **Question 2 - What kind of educational value does the school farm have?**

The school farm is a fantastic opportunity with heaps of educational value. It encourages social and personal development through the children learning how to look after the farm animals. They learn about what the animals eat, their life cycle, different aspects of animal welfare and husbandry and how to give them a good quality of life. This is particularly important for those children who do not have animals/pets at home to look after. It boosts their confidence and gives them the responsibility and a better understanding of themselves as a person, how we live and where our food comes from. Children sell the eggs in the playground to parents after school which is a life skill and teaches them how we make money. It brings elements of science, biology and maths into the curriculum. The younger children learn by watching the older ones carrying out their duties. It is also a very enjoyable experience for the children to be part of.

The school farm has only been running for about 18 months and we now need to look at ways of increasing the educational value to ensure that all children benefit and learn from this experience.

### **Question 3 - What are the problems of having a school farm?**

The school and every child who is a farm ambassador have to agree to take on the responsibility of looking after the animals which is a huge commitment. We also need to make sure the children finish their duties on time because time can be an issue; if they take too long it can impact on their learning in class. A lot of money is needed to set up the farm, buy the animals, their food and bedding; however we do sell the chickens eggs and pig meat which helps with the running costs.

Children need to be trained to look after the animals and know how to care for them so they get what they need. In order for us to keep more animals we would need extra space and extend the farm because space is an issue.

We need to be organised and ensure that we have enough support from the children, parents and the community especially during holidays, and when the school is closed to care for the animals. We also need to make sure there are enough farm ambassadors looking after the animals ensuring they are committed to going out to check on the animals whatever the weather. Some children get nervous and anxious that they are doing the job correctly.

If there is a problem during the weekend or holidays then there needs to be an emergency contact number so the people looking after the animals can get the help they need.

### **Question 4 – What do you think the future of the school farm is?**

The school farm should continue as it is a valuable asset and there is more to be gained from the experience of looking after the animals. It adds to the quality of school life; it can only get bigger and better and grow from strength to strength. We need to go slowly and not get too many animals at once. We have learnt how to look after the chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs and have just sent our first two pigs to slaughter. It would be good to get more pigs and other animals although we are restricted by space. In the future the children could benefit if the farmer/breeder where we get our animals from came in to school to talk to all the children about them. It is a great resource which needs to be made available to all children and used more within the curriculum.

## Overall Headlines

### From interviews with children

- 97% had heard of the School Farm Ambassadors
- 82% knew what Farm Ambassadors do
- 85% thought that the school farm helps with their learning
- The majority of children thought the school farm could be better if . . . there were more animals
- Younger children should be involved with the school farm

### From interviews with parents and governors

- 73% agreed that the school farm has proved to be a great educational opportunity
- The school farm needs to be available to more children
- Needs to be linked to the curriculum more, although appreciate the farm has only been running for just over a year
- Everyone agreed that it helps children understand where their food comes from
- 80% agreed that children are learning from the responsibility of being involved with the school farm
- Almost half of parents/governors interviewed were involved with the school farm in some way
- The majority of parents/governors interviewed agreed that the school farm was a positive experience for the children

### From interviews with teaching and non teaching staff

- *'The school farm has heaps of educational value, teaching the children about animal welfare, animal husbandry, how to care for the animals and be responsible for them'*
- The school farm has encouraged children's social and personal development from being responsible for looking after the animals
- *'It is a valuable asset to the school and can only go from strength to strength'*
- The school farm needs to be used more within the curriculum

## **Recommendations for the future**

We need to find ways of involving more children with the running of the school farm. This could include the older children taking some of the younger ones in to check for eggs and feed the animals. Children would like to see some different animals such as goats but we need to have one that has just had babies so that we can milk her and either sell the milk or make goats cheese which can be sold.

Although the farm has only been running for 18 months, we need to look at ways of including it in the curriculum. This could include children working out how much the animal feed costs compared to how much we get back from the sale of eggs and meat. Some children had the idea of producing our own labels for the egg boxes.

## **Reflections on the process**

The experience of taking part in the research project for the University of Lancaster has been great fun. All the farm ambassadors really liked working with Murray and Mason and coming up with ideas/questions that could be used for the interviews/questionnaires. The process of being able to interview the children and people proved to be difficult at times because it was difficult to find a time to interview the teachers when they were not busy teaching in class. Mrs Baber helped us by producing a schedule over 4 weeks when we could interview people which helped us. The results of the research project have given us a good idea of what we need to do next to develop the farm and the learning experience even further for the children.





# Improving the quality of student learning through school farms

**Reddish Vale Technology College**

## Introduction

1. In 1986 Reddish Vale School acquired funding under the Technical Vocational Educational Initiative (T.V.E.I) to build a school farm. Since 1986 the farm has expanded and now consists of the original farm buildings plus a large barn, technician's office, and a purpose built classroom. The finance for the recent developments came from the capital bid, submitted to get through the previous governments Environmental and Land-based Diploma gateway. The large Polly tunnels funding came from the "Greater Manchester Challenge" for working with partner schools throughout the area.
2. The farm is used daily as a "before/lunch/after school club", with up to 10 students on the farm during each time slot. It also acts as a work experience centre for students studying animal care at NVQ level, animal management courses and for many local schools. Students at RVTC are able to opt to study OCR GCSE Environmental and Land-based Science in year 10 and vocational courses are soon to be offered in Animal Care and Horticulture.
3. The main points we wanted to determine from the survey were to see if the farm was being utilised to maximum potential throughout all departments, to enable us to offer the farm to all departments to use as a teaching resource enabling learning to take place out of the classroom, and to find out what the learners wanted from the farm. We also thought the survey would be a good foundation for learners to think about where the food they eat comes from. This year wasn't a typical year for the farm (see challenges below) due to extensive construction work throughout the school which interfered with the day to day running of the farm.

### 1. Method

1. We only carried out a few interviews as time was limited and we agreed that it would be more beneficial to spend time focusing on tutor groups with the survey as we could get a bigger response using less time this way.

#### **Student's views**

Very few interviews were carried out due to the tight time schedule. Some interviews were carried out to Agriculture students who found the farm valuable in order for them to take a GCSE in Agricultural Science. One student said "*The ability to put into practice the theory we have learnt in the classroom is invaluable, I have really enjoyed the course*". Another student stated "*working on the farm with the animals is really good and rewarding*". Vocational learners were also interviewed and one student who is about to complete a Level 2 City & Guilds Animal Care course said "*Even though the piglets are sent for meat I feel comfort that during their short lives they are well cared for and I play a part in looking after them. I know from the start this is what they are bred for so I do not allow myself to become too attached and we do not name them. I think it is important to be aware of what you are eating after the recent horse meat scandal*".

#### **Teacher's views**

Teaching staff who were interviewed were keen to use the farm as a teaching resource. Of those interviewed comments included "*Taking part in this interview and the survey has made me think about the farm and what an incredible teaching resource we have. I am already thinking of ways I can use this resource to benefit my department*". Another teacher said "*I haven't given much thought to*

*the farm previously and thought of it as a separate entity. I have decided to include the use of the farm in my lessons and am already thinking up exciting new projects for the course".* It was identified that most teaching staff would be interested in using the farm as a resource for their department.

2. Information was collected using a paper based survey. A questionnaire was devised for teachers, learners and visitors to the farm, the answers were listed as strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree or strongly disagree. Some surveys were sent electronically via email post-visit. We decided the best approach to include a diverse age range was to target tutor groups, as each tutor group contains a range of ages of learners from years 7 to 11. As there are 54 tutor groups and 1400 pupils we printed off a list of tutor groups and selected 20. A questionnaire was placed into every teacher's pigeon hole in the staff room, an email was sent to inform them of the purpose of the survey and directions of who to return the completed questionnaire to. Some staff and pupils were interviewed to give their opinions on the positive benefits or negative thoughts of the farm. A total of 273 surveys were completed, 233 by pupils, 34 teachers and 6 visitors.
3. The main challenge for us was the disruption to the farm as the school was having new windows and the swimming pool was undergoing work to have a new roof. This meant there was scaffolding all around the farm so visits were not possible for a number of months, hence the low numbers of visitor questionnaires. We were unable to have learners on the farm during some periods of construction work which went on for 4 months. Usually we have 30-40 primary school visits, but again, these numbers were considerably lower as we were only able to commence visits at the end of May. We joined the research project after it had initially started so time was also a challenge.

## **2. Findings**

**Visitors** – 7 questions were asked with space at the end to write further comments about the visit. Results have been presented as percentages.

### **Question 1 – I really enjoyed my visit to the school**

Strongly agree = 87%

Agree = 17%

### **Question 2 – Visiting the school farm was an important part of my visit**

Strongly agree = 100%

### **Question 3 – I would like to visit the school again**

Strongly agree = 83%

Agree = 17%

### **Question 4 – The school farm adds to the look of the school**

Strongly agree = 100%

### **Question 5 – The farm makes the school look untidy**

Strongly disagree = 100%

**Question 6 – The farm is a great resource for the school**

Strongly agree 83%

Agree = 17%

**Question 7 – Having the school farm makes RVTC a distinctive school in comparison with others**

Strongly agree = 100%

**Summary**

The main findings from the visitors questionnaire were that the farm is a positive attribute to the school, visitors thoroughly enjoyed the time spent at the farm and would be happy to return.

**Teachers** – 34 teaching staff completed questionnaires which consisted of 10 questions aimed at finding out how well utilised the farm was as a teaching resource.

**Question 1 – I think the school farm enhances the attraction of the school**

Strongly agree – 62%

Agree = 32%

Don't know = 3%

Disagree = 3%

**Question 2 – the school farm helps with recruitment to the school**

Don't know = 44%

Agree = 32%

Strongly agree = 12%

Disagree = 9%

Strongly disagree = 3%

**Question 3 – In general, the farm is a useful teaching resource**

Strongly agree = 41%

Agree = 41%

Don't know = 18%

**Question 4 – I use the school farm in my teaching**

Never = 53%

Rarely = 26%

Sometimes = 15%

Often = 6%

**Question 5 – The school farm helps to raise awareness about where food comes from**

Agree = 59%

Strongly agree = 23%

Don't know = 15%

Disagree = 3%

**Question 6 – participating in the school farm helps with personal and social education**

Agree = 50%

Strongly agree = 44%

Don't know = 6%

**Question 7 – learning with plants and animals is useful for students with all abilities**

Strongly agree = 56%  
Agree = 44%

**Question 8 – I would like to get more involved in the school farm**

Agree = 50%  
Don't know = 23%  
Strongly agree = 12%  
Disagree = 9%  
Strongly disagree = 6%

**Question 9 – I feel proud that RVTC has a school farm**

Agree = 47%  
Strongly agree = 44%  
Disagree = 9%  
Strongly disagree = 6%  
Don't know = 3%

**Question 10 – The school farm should be continued**

Strongly agree = 65%  
Agree = 35%

**Summary**

The results indicated that the majority of teaching staff think the farm is a really useful teaching resource, however, it is clear that it is not used to its full potential by staff. Half of teaching staff who responded would like to become more involved with the school farm.

**Students**

A total of 223 questionnaires were completed by students covering all age ranges.

**Question 1 – having a school farm was one of the reasons I came to this school**

Disagree = 38%  
Strongly disagree = 37%  
Don't know = 15%  
Agree = 7%  
Strongly agree = 3%

**Question 2 – Having a school farm makes the school more interesting than other schools**

Agree = 48%  
Don't know = 21%  
Disagree = 14%  
Strongly agree = 10%  
Strongly disagree = 7%

**Question 3 – I don't have much to do with the school farm**

Strongly agree = 46%  
Agree = 31%  
Strongly disagree = 8%  
Disagree = 8%

Don't know = 7%

**Question 4 – there are lots of students who use the farm outside lessons**

Don't know = 46%

Agree = 35%

Strongly agree = 10%

Disagree = 6%

Strongly disagree = 3%

**Question 5 – the school farm helps us understand more about where food comes from**

Don't know = 29%

Disagree = 27%

Agree = 27%

Strongly disagree = 13%

Strongly agree = 4%

**Question 6 – I use the school farm in some of my lessons**

Strongly disagree = 42%

Disagree = 36%

Agree = 11%

Don't know = 6%

Strongly agree = 5%

**Question 7 – the school farm is an important part of what goes on at RVTC**

Don't know = 39%

Agree = 28%

Disagree = 19%

Strongly disagree = 9%

Strongly agree = 5%

**Question 8 – the school shop is a useful facility in the school**

Don't know = 43%

Agree = 35%

Strongly disagree = 11%

Disagree = 9%

Strongly agree = 2%

**Question 9 – I would like to do more to help out on the school farm**

Strongly disagree = 26%

Don't know = 23%

Disagree = 22%

Agree = 22%

Strongly agree = 7%

**Question 10 – participating in the school farm would be a useful experience**

Agree = 37%

Don't know = 22%

Disagree = 19%

Strongly disagree = 13%

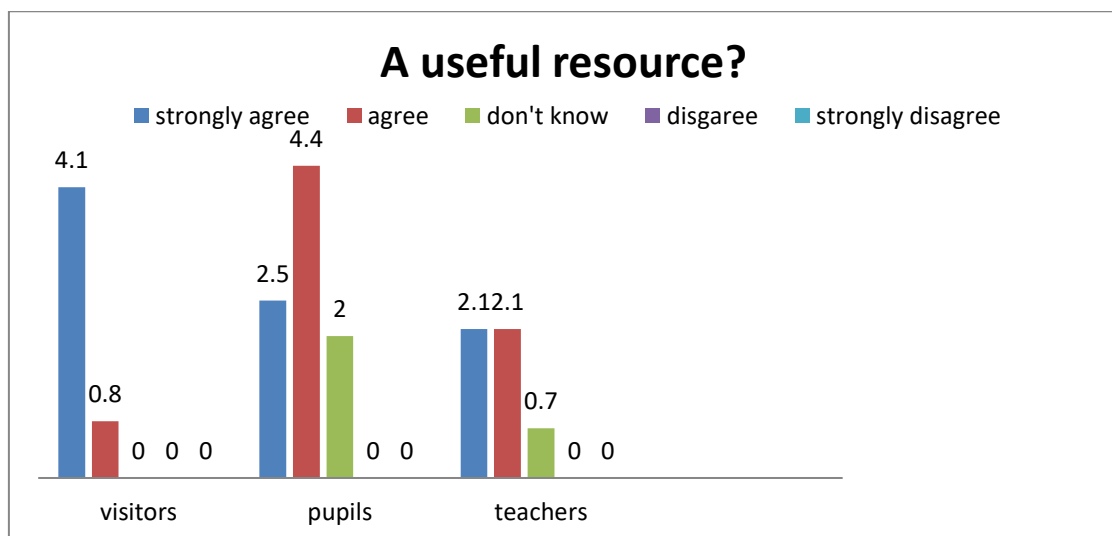
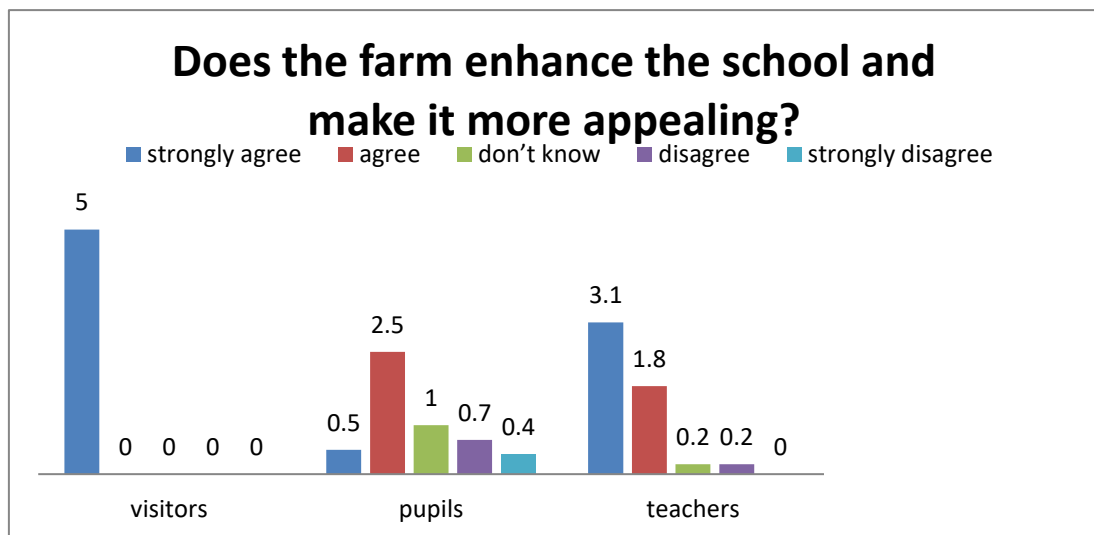
Strongly agree = 9%

**Question 11 – I would mind a lot if we didn't have a school farm**

Don't know = 31%  
 Disagree = 25%  
 Agree = 20%  
 Strongly disagree = 16%  
 Strongly agree = 8%

### Summary

Very few pupils chose to attend this school due to the farm, however, a small number of pupils indicated that the farm was the reason of choice of school. Nearly half the pupils questioned said the farm made the school more interesting and again, nearly half didn't have much to do with the farm. Nearly a third of pupils questioned stated that they would like more involvement. Only 16% of the learners asked said the farm was used in their lessons. Just under a third of the pupils believed that the farm made them think about where their food came from and a slightly higher ratio said it didn't. Overall general consensus was that the school farm enhances the school and is an appealing feature.



## Overall headlines

1. The most important findings for us were the fact that the farm could be used a lot more than it is throughout the school curriculum. It was identified by 62% of staff questioned that they would like to use the farm more for their lessons. Now the construction work is completed it is an ideal time for the farm to be promoted and all teaching staff encouraged to bring classes to the farm in order to enable learning to take place out of the classroom. It was also identified that there are more pupils who would like to help on the farm. This highlights the need to reach out to all learners via bulletins and letters to tutors as not all feel confident to come to the farm and ask, or possibly don't realise they can come and work on the farm. It was great to hear how enjoyable visits from the community are to the school farm and this was an important factor which again can be promoted now the renovation work is complete.
2. The research suggests that a high percentage of teaching staff would like to use the farm as a resource for their lessons. This is really positive for the farm and the next step will be to have meetings with departments and come up with ideas for each department to utilise this excellent resource to its full potential. There are a lot of children who help on the farm before, school, during lunchtime and after school as well as vocational learners, agriculture classes and support groups. The survey indicated that more than a quarter of the learners questioned would like to help out on the farm.
3. In the future we will be looking for ways to use the farm in every curriculum subject throughout the school. Possibly opening up our vocational courses to other schools and colleges. We want to ensure that as many learners as possible are able to benefit from the farm.

## 4. Reflections on the process

We enjoyed taking part in the research project and found it an enjoyable experience. It gave the learners a sense of responsibility and taught them how important communication is when working with others. Our meetings were important as this enabled us to discuss what we had done and where to go next. The most challenging part was collating the data from the surveys. We found everyone that we asked very supportive and nobody seemed to mind taking the time to complete the survey. I will do the exact survey again in two years' time, when the farm will not have the restrictions on it which it has this year.





# Improving the quality of student learning through school farms

**Edwalton Primary School**  
**Headline Findings**

## **Introduction**

Edwalton Primary School is in the south conurbation of Nottingham and has a long and proud tradition of caring for animals. We have had a farm since the mid 1970's and continue to grow our reputation for caring for the environment. We are an Eco school and are actively involved in an Eco hub of schools who visit our site to gain practical experience and advice on animal care

We were happy to participate in this project in order to get a greater understanding of the thoughts and feelings of our staff, pupils and the larger community on the farm and its values and uses. Especially in the current economic climate and with rising costs it is important that the farm offers value for money and a variety of learning opportunities for all of our pupils.

## **Method**

1. We used questionnaires to collect information from a variety of sources including pupils, staff, governors and parents.
2. Every pupil in school was given a questionnaire as well as all staff and governors. This equates down to 366 pupil questionnaires, 48 Staff questionnaires and 10 Governors questionnaires.
3. We encountered the following problems in administering our questionnaires:  
Some pupils in the younger age groups were not able to elaborate on their feelings/thoughts effectively even though they did not have to write their replies and could dictate them to an adult. Finding time to administer the questionnaires in an already full school week was a challenge but was managed well within the different key stages. Some respondents may not be privy to some key decisions made within school regarding health and safety etc and this may impact on the comments that they have made. Also we have had 5+ new staff appointed this school year and it appears that some did not feel that they knew sufficient about the subject to pass a judgement.

## Findings

### Teachers' views

#### **Do you think having a pet in your classroom is beneficial?**

All respondents replied yes apart from one "No" 'I do not like caged animals' and 2 responses of not sure which expressed concern about the quality of care given in class to cleaning, feeding etc, due to the young age of the children in that class. There were also concerns expressed regarding some pupils who may have allergies to particular animals in their class.

#### **Is missing class time to work with animals at the start and end of the day likely to have an impact on children's achievement?**

Mixed answer in regards to yes/ no/ not sure box here. Due in most cases to newer members of staff not being sure how the animal care is arranged in the year 5/6 classes. All staff who teach in those classes expressed no concerns. Some staff ticked "yes" and some "no" but all answers were in affect positive replies to the effect that 'when done on a rota basis and was well organised it was not a problem'

'It's a small fraction of days learning. This time is recouped during booster sessions'

'Children gain more by having responsibility'

'It can improve children's confidence'

'Time lost from class is minimal compared to the skills it teaches the children'

Do you use the School Farm as a learning resource?

Overall responses positive, some newer members of staff replied in the negative and this is an area that we need to address. We have listed possible ways ahead regarding this issue in the "Overall Headlines" section Most responses positive and lots of activities listed

Maths, graphs, working with HLN pupils, hedgerows, lifecycles, eggs for cooking in foundation, scientific processes, SEAL, literacy topics.

#### **Do you think that the cost of equipping and running a school farm is worthwhile, given that school raises funds to cover the farms outgoings?**

All respondents were positive that the fundraising was worthwhile

#### **Does the farm encourage children to develop their sense of responsibility?**

Overwhelming positive response from all staff

'Those that get included form an attachment and enjoy looking after them'

'I think our children show their maturity when providing tours of the school to visitors'

'The children really enjoy being able to help with the animals'

'Taking responsibility for monitoring the animals health'

'The farm is more than a place of learning it is a place of caring, sustainability and development of the whole child and every individual child is a vital member of that society'

### **Have you any ideas for improving how the school farm is organised and used?**

'The key staff need time to organise rotas etc '

'Maybe an animal week?'

'New animals – Alpacas'

'farm days for different classes – some teachers are much keener to get involved than others'

'It's well organised now'

'Steps for the smaller children to stand on so they can see over the fences'

'Develop the growing aspect of school with poly tunnel'

### **Which aspect of the school farm is most successful?**

'The children's and staff's love of looking after the animals and seeing them have a happy life'

'The general upkeep is the biggest success'

'All of it!'

'Good that you show the children the realities, like pigs being slaughtered for meat'

'Animal club'

'Sale of eggs, meat, honey'

'The pigs'

### **Children's views**

Key stage 1

Most popular animal on the farm in order of popularity are Rabbits, Goats, Chickens and the bees.

### **Do you like having a school farm?**

All respondents replied yes

### **Would you like to work on the school farm when you are older?**

Only 2 no responses were found all other respondents answered that they wanted to work on the farm when they were old enough. One child answered no 'because Mum says my clothes will get dirty'.

### **What do you like most about the animals?**

Overwhelming positive responses from pupils

'I get to learn about animals and I like that none of my friends outside school have a farm at their school'

'I like feeding them and seeing them everyday'

'They are cute'

'That I can see them every day at school'

Key Stage 2

### **Do you think it is valuable having a school farm ?**

Overwhelming positive response from all respondents

### **What is special about our school farm?**

'We have loads of great animals'

'We are one of only a few schools to have one'

'We send our pigs to get made into sausages'

'It is unique and we are very lucky to have it'

'The animals are more like our friends than animals'

### **Would you like a greater variety of animals?**

Most respondents replied not sure other suggestions were;

Peacocks, cows, horses, ducks, different birds,

### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of having bees on the school farm?**

'It's good because they give us honey'

'Stinging because it hurts!'

Are you happy about the way the animals are treated?

All respondents said that they were happy with the way that the animals were treated.

### **Are you happy that the pigs are bred for meat?**

Of the 141 replies received 80 children replied "No"

31 children replied "Yes"

30 children were "not sure"

'We use the pigs for sausages, sausages are nice'

'I don't like that the pigs get slaughtered because children love them and the pigs trust them and they get killed!'

'I don't like to see them go but I do like pork!'

Is there anything you don't like about the farm?

Overwhelming positive responses from respondents, the only responses that may appear to be negative are:

'It smells!'

'The chickens are hard to catch'

'Some children might have allergies to the animals'

I don't like to eat meat from a pig I have looked after but they have had a happy life here

'I'm sure the pigs don't like being killed!'

All other responses were very positive including:

'I like it very much'

'No it is just perfect'

'There's nothing I don't like about the farm'

'No it's lovely'

'No it's wonderful!'

### **Have you any ideas about how to improve the way the farm is organised and used?**

'Don't put the hay in the goat paddock'

'I think the farm is fine the way it is'

'We should have more lessons on the farm'

'More lessons with the animals'

'More space for the animals'

## Overall headlines

We feel that the farm is a positive resource for our pupils and feel that this is reflected in the responses we have received. The majority of children are involved in age appropriate activities involving the animals and farm area. One thing that stood out for me was the strong feelings that some pupils voiced regarding the rearing of the pigs for meat and this may be an area that we as a school will reflect on at a later date.

Recent changes that have had to be made in order to comply with recommendations from DEFRA re health and safety and the possible spread of E-coli have impacted on our practice and the number of pupils who can be involved with animal club and animal care at any one time. Younger children can no longer enter the paddocks for egg collection purposes for use in cooking activities in the foundation classes due to advice given in the Griffin report that advised restricting access to the animals for children under the age of 8. There may be feelings lower down the school that the animals are "remote" from these pupils. The new fencing has also impacted on accessibility for all pupils, even the older children cannot see over the fencing as well as they could before. This may be another area for us to reflect on at a later date.

In complying with guidelines outlined in the Griffin report we have purchased overalls which are laundered and stored in school. The numbers attending animal club have had to be limited due to health and safety and the cost implications of purchasing suitable overalls for all the pupils involved. This may also have impacted on the number of children involved at any one time although we actively encourage all pupils who are old enough to become involved should they wish to do so.

Regarding the comment made by a newer staff member expressing concerns regarding caged animals in class with children who may have allergies. In the past this has occurred and the animal was moved to another classroom for the duration of the academic year until the child concerned moved up into another classroom.

The concerns raised by some new members of staff who expressed a lack of confidence in using the outside area as a resource can be addressed in a number of ways: reintroducing the folder that we used to have in the staff room which had photos and lessons plans in it of successful lessons and activities. We could also perhaps have an inset/staff meeting on environmental activities to share good practice. We will also investigate any other training opportunities available through our links with the School Farms Network and FACE.

The comment expressing concerns about the care given to the caged animals by the younger pupils in school should not be a problem because the pupils should always be supervised during cleaning, feeding and handling sessions by members of staff.

As a school we will take on board these concerns and reflect on how we can still abide by health and safety guidelines but continue to encourage pupil participation across the school.

The process has been useful to us as a school. It has been a positive experience and has highlighted for us the enjoyment that the children take from having the farm and animals. At a later date it will give us pointers to follow and areas to reflect on.

## **4.0 Key themes emerging from the case studies**

What follows here are some general themes (at this stage in no particular order) emerging from the experience of undertaking this Knowledge Exchange Fellowship with our six project schools

1. The support and collaboration offered by the School Farms Network coordinator Ian Egginton-Metters was necessary for the work to begin
2. The schools were faced with key decisions about the status of animals within their farms (pets or products)
3. Interesting issues of a moral and ethical kind were faced by all students (animal welfare and animals as product)
4. In all schools, the positioning of the school farm as a central curricula resource or as a parallel activity was key. In most cases, full curricular use of the school farm was difficult to achieve but the school farms were viewed universally as an asset.
5. The propositions that informed our approach (see page 5) were broadly supported by this experience.
6. All schools faced financial, curricular, health and safety challenges which did require a whole school policy framework.
7. There was a suggestion that perhaps 2/3 departments might undertake a pilot to test greater integration for the school farm experience within a school for all students and subject areas
8. There was clear evidence from both staff and students that there was support for the view that greater use might be made of the school farm for wider curricular experience.
9. Evidence from the statements within the case studies suggest that the experience of undertaking school based research, while challenging, was valued, acted as a useful curricular resource and as a helpful school planning tool.
10. The likely futures for school farms present a complex picture:
  - Curricular pressures from the present government might militate against the full use of the school farm as a learning resource



- There is a groundswell of interest and commitment to healthy eating, growing and producing within schools and the broader curricular relevance of this domain of activity
  
- School farms act as a catalyst for a wide range of concerns associated with poverty reduction, food security and sourcing, environmental sensitivity and sustainability and the connections between the local and the global.

## **Appendix One: list of instruments**

### **Court de Wyck List of questionnaires/interview schedules Feb 2013**

Questionnaire for Parents and Governors

Interview Schedule for Parents, Governors and Guardians

Interview Schedule for Teachers and School Staff

Questionnaire for Teachers and School Staff

Questionnaire for Years 4, 5 and 6



**If you are involved in the School Farm, please explain your involvement.**

**If No, would you like to be involved and how?**

**5. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate the School Farm as an experience for children?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Please say a little more about your answer



## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Court de Wyck C of E Primary School**

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### **Court de Wyck C of E Primary School Interview Schedule for Parents, Governors and Guardians**

**1. What do you think about the school farm at court de Wyck?**

- good idea
- bad idea
- use of space
- time issues

**2. Does the farm have an education value?**

**Food security – where food comes from.  
Teamwork. Responsibility. – subject e.g. science**

**3. What are the challenges in having a school farm at Court de Wyck?**

**Slaughter, Fear.  
Care.  
Attention.  
Time**

**4. What should the future of the School Farm be?**

**Expansion, e.g.:**

- more animals
- more space
- more pupils involved

**Give it all up and use the space for something else?**



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### **Court de Wyck C of E Primary School Interview Schedule for Teachers and School Staff**

#### **1. What do you know about the farm ambassadors?**

**Prompts**

- what they do?
- who are they?
- is it a good idea?

#### **2. What kind of educational value does the School Farm have, if any?**

**Prompts**

- subjects
- personal/social development

#### **3. What are the problems of having a School Farm?**

**Prompts**

- time
- responsibility

**- cost**

**4. What is the future of the School Farm from your point of view?**



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### **Court de Wyck C of E Primary School Questionnaire for Teachers and School Staff (Please circle one answer for each question)**

<p><b>1. What is your involvement with the School Farm?</b></p> <p>Not involved                  Involved a little                  Some involvement                  A lot of involvement</p>
<p><b>If involved, go to question 2. If not involved, go to questions 3.</b></p>
<p><b>2. If involved, describe this involvement a little more.</b></p>



**3. Do you use themes from the School Farm in your teaching? (if not a teacher/what???)**

Not really

A little

Sometimes

Quite a lot

**If you do, please give an example.**

**4. The School Farm is a 'selling point' for the School.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

**5. I think having the School Farm is important for Court de Wyck.**

Very important

Quite important

Of little importance

Not important



## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Court de Wyck C of E Primary School**

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### **Court de Wyck C of E Primary School Interview Schedule for Years 4, 5 and 6**

**1. Do you think there is any way the farm ambassadors could do more for the Farm?**

**2. How do you think the School Farm animals help children's learning?**

**3. The School Farm could be better if ...**

**4. Do you think a younger age group should be involved?**

**Edwalton**  
**List of questionnaires/interview schedules Feb 2013**

**Questionnaire for year 2 and below**

**Questionnaire for years 3-6**

**General interview schedule**

**Questionnaire for teaching and support staff**

**Questionnaire for parents and the community**







## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Edwalton Primary School**

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

**Edwalton Primary School  
Interview Schedule (Various)**

**(Edwalton Research Team)**

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**1. How is your role related to the School Farm?**

---

**2. What have been the most important benefits of the School Farm?**



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Edwalton Primary School

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Edwalton Primary School Questionnaire for Teaching and Support Staff

(Edwalton Research Team)

(Please tick one answer for each question)

1. Do you think having a pet in your classroom is a good idea?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please elaborate below:

2. Is missing class time to work with animals at the start and end of the school day likely to have an impact on children's achievement?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please elaborate below:



**Oathall Community College**  
**List of Questionnaires and Interview Schedules (Feb 2013)**

Draft Questionnaire for Students

Questionnaire for Teachers

Draft Questionnaire for Visitors to the School

Interview Schedule for Parents

Interview Schedule for Governors

Questionnaire for Customers

Interview Schedule for Teachers



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College

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### Oathall Community College Questionnaire for Students (Please circle one answer for each question)

<b>1. Having a school farm was one of the reasons I came to this school:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2. Having the school farm makes the school more interesting than other schools:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>3. I don't have much to do with the school farm:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4. There are lots of students who use the school farm outside lessons:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5. The school farm helps us understand more about where food comes from:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6. I use the school farm in some of my lessons:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Oathall Community College Questionnaire for Teachers (Please circle one answer for each question)

<b>1. I think the School Farm enhances the attraction of the School:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2. The School Farm helps recruitment to the School:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>3. In general, the School Farm is a useful teaching resource:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4. I use the School Farm in my teaching:</b>				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	
<b>5. The School Farm helps to raise awareness about where food comes from:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6. Participating in the School Farm helps with personal and social education:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Oathall Community College Questionnaire for Visitors to the School (Please circle one answer for each question)

<b>1. I really enjoyed my visit to the school:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2. Visiting the school farm was an important part of my visit:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>3. I would like to visit the school again:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4. The school farm adds a lot to the look of the school:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5. The school farm makes the school look untidy:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6. The school farm is a great resource for the school:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>7. Having the school farm makes Oathall a distinctive school in comparison with others:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please add anything else you would like to say about your visit to Oathall here

.....

.....



## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College**

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### **Oathall Community College Interview Schedule for Parents**

**1. Is the fact that Oathall has a school farm important to you? Please explain your answer**

**2. Should the School Farm be developed? If so, how? If not, what should happen to it? (please explain your answer)**

**3. Do you use the School Farm Shop? Please explain your answer**

**4. As your child goes to a school with a school farm, do you have any view on his/her working with animals/plants?**



## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College**

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### **Oathall Community College Interview Schedule for Governors**

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**1. Do you think the School Farm makes the school standout? Do you have pride in the fact?**

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**2. Do you think the School Farm influences the School's reputation?**

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**3. As far as funding is concerned, does the School Farm add or take away from school funding?**

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## **Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College**

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm shop. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

Many of the questions need a brief answer in your own words,

### **Oathall Community College Questionnaire for Customers**

<b>1. For how long have you (customer) been using the farm shop?</b>
<b>2. Approximately how far do you travel to get to the shop?</b>
<b>3. How do you get here?</b>
<b>4. At what time of day do you tend to use the shop? (Please tick one answer)</b>  Before school Break time Lunchtime After school
<b>5. What do you normally buy?</b>



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Oathall Community College

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Oathall Community College Questionnaire for Teachers (Please circle one answer for each question)

<b>1. I use the School Farm in my teaching:</b>				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	
<b>2. The School Farm helps recruitment to the School:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>3. In general, the School Farm is a useful teaching resource:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4. The School Farm helps to raise awareness about where food comes from:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5. The School Farm should be continued:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6. I think the School Farm enhances the attraction of the School:</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



**Warriner School**  
**List of Questionnaires and Interview Schedules (Feb 2013)**

Questionnaire for Warriner Inclusion Network

Questionnaire for year 8 and year 10

Questionnaire for 6<sup>th</sup> form teachers

Interview Schedule for Teachers



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Warriner School

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Warriner School Questionnaire for Warriner Inclusion Network (WIN) and the Farm (Please tick one answer for each question)

#### (Rabbit Researchers)

<b>1. Tick the box as appropriate. "The WIN department benefits from the farm."</b>										
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure					
<b>2. Circle below as appropriate. (Where 1 is very little encouragement and 10 a great deal.)</b>										
<b>The Warriner Farm encourages:</b>										
Student motivation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Regular school attendance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Learning about where food and meat comes from	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Learning about animal welfare	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Learning about farming	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Improving achievements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
None of the above	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



## Improving the quality of student learning through school farms: joint research project between Lancaster University and Warriner School

This project is about the experience of having a school farm and is funded by Lancaster University. The questions we are asking are about your experience and views of the school farm. Your answers will be confidential and will be seen only by members of the research team. We hope this will encourage you to be as open and frank as you can in your answers.

### Warriner School Questionnaire for Y8/Y10 Students

(Please tick one answer for each question)

(Squirrel Investigators)

<p><b>1. Are you involved in the School Farm in any way?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes           <span style="margin-left: 200px;"><input type="checkbox"/> No</span> </p>
<p><b>2. How regularly do the Farm and Farm activities come up in lessons?</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Always           <input type="checkbox"/> Often           <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes           <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely           <input type="checkbox"/> Never           <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure         </p>
<p><b>3. What proportion of students do you think the School Farm is a resource for?</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> All students           <input type="checkbox"/> Most           <input type="checkbox"/> Some           <input type="checkbox"/> None           <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure         </p>
<p><b>4. How much time do you spend on the Farm during an average week?</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Under 1 hour           <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 hours           <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 hours           <input type="checkbox"/> 11+ hours         </p>
<p><b>5. On a scale of 1 – 10, how important do you see the farm as a resource for teaching and learning? (Please circle one number.)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">           Not important    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    Very important         </p>



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### **Warriner School Interview Schedule for 6th Form Teachers**

#### **(Rabbit Researchers)**

<b>1. Which 'A' level or other 16-19 subjects will you teach in September 2013?</b>
<b>2. How could your subject/s benefit from the resources in the Warriner Farm?</b>
<b>3. In what ways do you think these resources could help 'A' level teaching?</b>



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### **Warriner School Interview Schedule for Teachers**

#### **(Squirrel Investigators)**

<p>1. <b>Does your subject use the School Farm as a resource?</b></p> <p><b>In how many lessons do you visit the School Farm?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Twice a year      <input type="checkbox"/> Twice a month      <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely      <input type="checkbox"/> None</p>
<p>2. <b>Can you give examples of the Farm being used effectively as a learning resource which links to your subject?</b></p>
<p>3. <b>Do you feel you have effective access to the Farm when you need or want it?</b></p>