



Connor Downs
Academy

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Head of School: Mrs J Eddy

Outdoor Learning

We are reaching the end of a wonderful autumn term of outdoor learning in Cultivating Futures. Our children have been inspired by getting closer to nature once again. They have enjoyed exploring, observing and discovering more about their local environment. We have seen the positive impact that Cultivating Futures and learning outdoors has on our children. We sincerely believe that nature is a super power that can energise us all.

Children in EYFS have had weekly outdoor lessons with Mr Costello, exploring Cultivating Futures. They have been learning how to use garden tools safely, and how to prepare a plant pot and sow seeds. They have particularly enjoyed our mini beast



hunts, caring for our animals and collecting the eggs from our chickens. All the lessons begin with a discussion and warm up exercises which the children enjoy. These outdoor learning lessons enrich the EYFS curriculum, supporting children's understanding of the world, their physical development and spoken language.



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Connor Downs Academy, Mutton Hill, Hayle, Cornwall TR27 5DH

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Registered in England & Wales - Company No. 07387540

Registered Office: Aspire Academy Trust, Unit 20, St Austell Business Park, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4FD





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EYFS explorers, some pictures from their exciting autumn learning journey.



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In Year 1, children have been exploring Cultivating Futures, observing the variety of birds that visit and listening to nature. They have also been learning new gardening skills, such as sowing seeds, transplanting plants and digging up the ground with a spade. They have particularly enjoyed caring for our animals and participating in our mini beast hunts.



Children in year 1 have been learning how to use garden tools safely, harvesting potatoes and identifying the different parts of a plant. They have also been observing the birds that visit and live in our school grounds.



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Year 2 children have been getting their hands dirty. They have been learning about flowers and insects whilst exploring mini-beasts for a 'What's under your feet?' science experiment. They have been learning about living things, including vertebrates, invertebrates and the importance of insects. Children have learned how to use garden tools safely when taking part in gardening activities. They have particularly enjoyed participating in a variety of team games and outdoor fact finding missions.



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Children across all year groups have been embracing new challenges, showing great perseverance with a never give up attitude.



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In Year 3, at the beginning of the autumn term, our children harvested the fruit and vegetables that had been grown during the summer. These included: radishes, spring onions, beetroot, cabbage and tomatoes. They learned how to use garden tools safely, how to prepare the soil ready for sowing seeds and the functions of the different parts of plants. They have particularly enjoyed discovering nature, participating in team games, and the fact-finding missions around Cultivating Futures. They have gained knowledge about directions, grid references and coordinates through cone orienteering, modelling the use of a compass and using a map of Cultivating Futures to locate key features.



The pond bridge has been a place for observing and discovering the diverse range of wildlife that lives in our pond. They used nets to collect the creatures, which were observed, identified and then the numbers recorded. Many of our children have also been creative with natural materials.



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In Year 4, children have been learning about living things, their habitats and gaining a deeper understanding about the classification of animals and vertebrates. They



have also been learning how to care for animals through hands on activities with our animals. They have taken part in the RSPCA's 'Compassionate Class' that teaches children about empathy. At the beginning of autumn, they discovered the diverse range of creatures that live in our pond. They particularly enjoyed participating in team games, scavenger hunts and solving riddles around Cultivating Futures.



Above - Children in Year 4 have been learning about hedgehogs and making homes for them.

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Children in Year 5 have been learning about the weather and climate, not only in the United Kingdom, but around the world. They have learned through interactive games, weather forecasts, and maps. The children have been observing our weather



instruments and recording data collected from the thermometer, barometer, anemometer and rain gauge. They have also learned about the importance of the water cycle, the formation of clouds and why the sky is blue. All our children have enjoyed participating in team games in Cultivating Futures. Our Year 5 animal cadets have been caring for our animals, including learning how to identify early signs of illness.



Above – Year 5 children observing and discovering how clouds form in the atmosphere.

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In Year 6, our children have been learning about energy, how we use it, where it comes from and why it is important. They have learned the importance of having sufficient renewable solutions in place for the future. They have also learned about the importance of water, it's properties and how we use it. They managed to test our water for hardness and chemicals. Children have been engaged enthusiastically in outdoor team games, riddles, listening to nature and using their senses to create poems. During November, we explored the characteristics of design engineers, looking back at past inventions and participating in the challenges from the James Dyson foundation. They have shared their ideas and gained significant knowledge about how new design ideas become reality.



Year 6 children participating in an outdoor comprehension relay about the importance of water. They all thoroughly enjoyed this game.



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It certainly has been a fun packed autumn term of outdoor learning. We are looking forward to an amazing spring term of outdoor learning where we will continue to immerse ourselves in nature. We are all getting ready!



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