

CASE STUDY

KNAPPLES FRUIT ORCHARD

Knaphill Federation of Schools proudly installs its very own fruit orchard with the support of our amazing local community.

DECEMBER 2024

BACKGROUND

In 2023, The Knaphill Schools PTA consulted with the school community to ask where they would like them to focus their funding efforts with regards to green issues. A key finding was that 86% of parents and carers wanted the PTA to look into options to provide resources for the children to have the opportunity to grow plants and vegetables. Since then, the PTA has been looking into options to make this priority a reality.

OUR JOURNEY

At a school eco summit in 2024, a representative from the PTA met The Surrey County Council's The Tree Planting and Establishment Team who shared details on their climate change strategy, where they were seeking to work with communities across Surrey to plant a tree for every one of the County's residents by 2030 - a total of 1.2 million new trees.

In partnership with the Knaphill Federation of Schools head teachers, the PTA engaged in discussions with the council to be one of the projects to benefit from the initiative. Our idea was to use an area of the school field to create our very own orchard.

Together with Surrey County Council, we planned out a new growing resource for our children, which would include a range of fruit trees that the children would tend to, to grow their own fruit and a wild fruit area to help support local wildlife.

The PTA designed the orchard and made all arrangements for the materials and plants as well as rallied our local community to volunteer to help plant the new space. On Saturday 30th November we came together to create our new orchard.



THE BENEFITS

Trees have so many benefits, helping with the effects of climate change (flooding), improving air quality and biodiversity and helping communities to be healthier, greener and more sustainable.

Orchards in particular are beautiful but they are also so important in the support of wildlife. They are perfect for pollinators.

Our new orchard will deliver so many benefits to our children too:

- Helping them to understand how fruit grows and experience the excitement of growing their own.
- Helping them to re-connect with the natural world and understand more about biodiversity.
- Helping them to understand more about healthy eating.
- Providing an opportunity to deliver an enhanced learning experience.
- Enhancing their school grounds.





COMMUNITY SPIRIT AT ITS BEST

This project has been a shining example of our community at its best and there are so many people to thank!

- Our PTA planned and managed this whole project.
- One of our Year 6 pupils came up with the orchard name.
- Our headteachers, teachers, governors and parents gave their time to help plant trees and hedges.
- Local Councillors came along to share their support.
- Local community groups WeAct and The GoodGym shared their support and volunteers stayed for the entire planting session.
- Surrey County Council provided our fruit trees and led the planting session with three of their team.
- TVC donated our hedges under their I Dig Trees initiative.
- Sainsburys donated refreshments and snacks for our volunteers.
- Squires donated planting materials.
- Wickes donated fencing materials.

The planting day was so much fun - we laughed, we worked hard, we learnt new skills and we created something incredible for our children.

We had some child helpers too and although they could not plant the trees, they built and decorated bee, bird and bat homes that will be put up around our schools to encourage wildlife.

Thanks to the kindness of so many, we now have our own orchard of apples, pears, plums and cherry trees! THANK YOU!

