



# NATURE - CASE STUDIES

Explore school initiatives in Suffolk that are improving outdoor learning and connecting schools with nature

## Nature-rich school grounds

Across the Our Schools, Our World Hub, school grounds include a mix of established wild areas, allotments and newer nature-focused projects. Each school has plans in place to further develop its outdoor spaces.

Most outdoor areas are accessible and are used for curriculum learning, gardening clubs and wildlife clubs. Some areas are designated specifically for wildlife and are protected from regular use.

Outdoor spaces are often designed with pupil input. Larger features, including polytunnels, ponds and raised planters, are frequently supported by PTFA or HSA working groups during weekends or school holidays. Schools also work with parents, local organisations and community volunteers to source materials and labour.

Planted spaces serve a range of further purposes, including celebratory gardens such as Queen's Platinum Jubilee gardens, as well as memorial and quiet reflection areas.



## Ponds as learning resources

Ponds are present at several schools. At **Great Barton**, a pond was created in an area that had been unused for several years and includes a platform designed for pond dipping. **Broke Hall**'s pond supports large numbers of tadpoles in early spring and is used to teach about frog life cycles and metamorphosis.

## Creative and practical solutions

All schools have had fantastically resourceful ideas when it came to creating planters. **Great Barton**'s planters have been made from upcycled products such as car tyres and railway sleepers.

The wooden planter is made from a hollowed-out branch from a school tree that had to be felled.



During the review visit, **Birchwood Primary** asked a team working on a nearby road, if they might be able to use their digger to prepare a space for a new sandpit. The team were happy to oblige, and the pupils enjoyed watching the digger at work. Proof that it is always worth asking!



## Supporting wildlife

Some school grounds have included wildlife features such as bug hotels, hedgehog houses, bird boxes and bat boxes. **Kyson Primary School**, located within a key bat habitat area, worked with local experts to monitor bats on and around the school site. At **Broke Hall**, a hedgehog doorway provided a simple intervention to support local hedgehogs.

