WATER - CASE STUDIES

Explore school initiatives in Suffolk that are safeguarding waterways and promoting responsible water use.

Flooding & Water Conservation

A number of OSOW schools were affected by Storm Babet in 2023. One school suffered flooding, another housed pupils, teachers and members of the local community who could not travel home due to flooding.

The school which flooded has since installed a flood door and is looking into how the ditch, that runs along the school ground perimeter, might be maintained.

Many schools are looking at how they might save, or reuse water. Heath School's gardening club pupils make sure that at the end of lunch, any water remaining in the lunchtime jugs, goes on the garden.

Some schools have water butts enabling them to store and use rainwater. The water butts can offer a good solution where planters or growing beds are positioned away from an outdoor tap.

Creative and practical solutions

Planting hedges in areas of high surface water flow can help reduce the impact of flooding by intercepting and slowing runoff. Hedges also provide valuable wildlife corridors and refuge areas for birds, hedgehogs, insects, and other animals.

Hedge types are chosen based on infiltration, light, and soil preferences, as well as health and safety considerations for pupils. Spare branches and off-cuts from maintenance are used to create dead hedges, providing additional habitats and educational resources.

For example, at St. Peter's Pightle, every child at **Wenhaston Primary School** helped plant over 200 trees along a new hedge, mulched with local horse manure to retain soil moisture. Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils participated, gaining hands-on experience in creating a wildlife-friendly, flood-resilient landscape that they can watch develop over time.

Bog, Sensory, & Rain-Gardens

All Saints Primary School in Newmarket has implemented bog, sensory, and rain gardens to capture rainwater from roofs, holding it to soak into the ground or directing overflow to the drainage system. These gardens reduce peak water flow during storms, easing pressure on drains and lowering flood risk, while enhancing green space, supporting wildlife, and offering educational opportunities. Plants are selected for sunlight conditions and resilience to flooding or drought.

SuDS Pods and BioScapes

Boxford Primary's Eco Team has installed 15 SuDS Pods and 4 BioScapes to manage roof runoff and reduce peak flows. SuDSPods store water temporarily, while BioScapes also create habitats for wildlife. The project provides flood resilience, green space, and hands-on learning, with students involved in designing and sharing their work with **Reclaim the Rain**.