



STORMONT HOUSE SCHOOL

'The Mindful Orchard'

Stormont House School is an SEN secondary school that has taken on the Young Tree Champion Project in Autumn 2024, and is well on its way to Beacon Status just four months later. In this short space of time Stormont House students and teachers have re-greened their school by planting nearly 200 trees on their postage-stamp size campus in the centre of Hackney.

THE PROJECT:

This project aims to:

- Introduce trees to our school environment.
- Create a space for mindfulness and reflection.
- Connect students with nature and the importance of nature to wellbeing to physical and mental wellbeing.
- Encourage responsibility and ownership over communal spaces.
- Establish links across the curriculum through our 'Mindful Orchard'

Progress so far:

- 🌿 Planted 180 hedgerow whips to replace a screen of plastic plants.
- 🌿 Planted five fruit trees to create a mini orchard in a quiet corner of the school.
- 🌿 Presented a student led assembly to the whole school explaining the tree planting.
- 🌿 Made a film of their work for nature day to share with the rest of the school.
- 🌿 Created postcards to nature to express their feelings towards it.

IMPACT

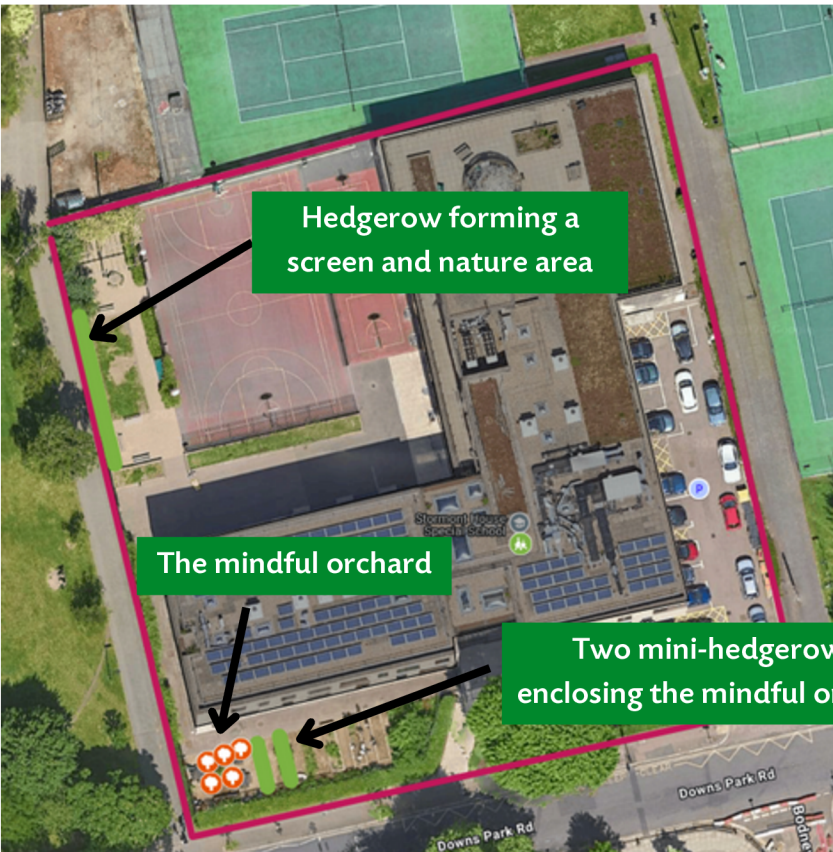


Quote from lead teacher:

"Their [the students] understanding and experience of nature varies hugely. I think it's important to narrow that gap and give plenty of opportunities for students to get hands-on experiences of seeing different habitats, different trees, different green spaces and to actually be in them so they can feel those benefits. It is nice that we can start to introduce pockets of that in our school and although we haven't got much space, we can use those little bits so they can experience it."

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Green Skills learnt

- Tool use.
- Confidence and communication.
- Empathy with nature.
- Habitat identification and mapping.

Future plans

Curriculum

To allow each tutor to have regular time for tree care and horticulture. To integrate it into the art and DT curriculum, including building bug houses and bird boxes to support the nature brought in by the trees.

Campus

To make the trees into a sensory provision. A space where students can go to have time to talk, reflect on things, and to have a quiet moment.

Community

Ask parents or relatives of students with expertise to come in and engage students in the green spaces. To develop a seed bank where we can grow and give trees to the community and other schools.

Nature is calm,
Nature is happy,
Nature is OK,
Nature is exciting.

– Young Tree Champion, Stormont House School