

Community garden project celebrates first anniversary

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CHARLESTOWN, Limekilns, and Pattiesmuir (CLP) Nature Conservation Group is celebrating the first anniversary of its school community garden project.

The school community garden project is one of the group's ongoing projects that grows food for children at Limekilns Primary School but is also a site for nature and outdoor learning.

Jo McFarlane, who is part of CLP Nature Conservation Group and runs Wild Planet Explorers, said: "So it's the first year of the garden, we've been doing the main celebration with the school really because they've been the main users, and the volunteers who have been helping with the school.

"It's been running over a couple of days with the children coming in to do Easter activities, and at the same time they're aware that it's the first year celebration and it's also the first time we've ever run a big Easter event in the garden as well.

"With spring coming it's a new year for the garden, for everybody and all the children are back in now. So we've had four or five activities going on in the garden like trails, and egg and spoon races, and kind of throwing stuff, and guess what's in the box.

"And there was a poster competition, and the children have been asked to write a quote about the garden with the winning quote being made into a plaque to put on the teacher's chair in the garden as well.

"It's just been a big celebration of spring and the start of another year really."

The celebrations took place over three days last week. The group have also been keeping at least 50 pairs of wellies in the community garden's shed to ensure that any children who don't have wellies, or who have perhaps forgotten them, can still enjoy getting stuck into nature and learning in the garden.

Amanda Sloper, headteacher at Limekilns Primary School, said: "Our school



Charlestown, Limekilns, and Pattiesmuir (CLP) Nature Conservation Group is celebrating the 1st anniversary of their school community garden project. *Image: David Wardle*

community have gained so much enjoyment and learning from participating in the Community Garden project in its first year.

"Our children's involvement in all stages including; planning, designing, and cultivating the land has ensured genuine participation aligned with children's rights, as well as providing rewarding and transformative learning experiences from our children, families and staff.

"The Community Garden is an amazing context for 'Learning for Sustainability' which enables us to weave together our outdoor learning and sustainable development education experiences and

we are excited to continue working closely with the Nature Conservation Group."

A retired volunteer commented: "Volunteering as part of the collaboration between the CLP Nature Conservation Group and the school has been an amazing experience.

"Seeing the children learn outdoors and have fun is enormously rewarding!"

The group are currently looking for new members, and anyone who is interested in getting involved can email them at clpnaturegroup@gmail.com or contact them on their Facebook page, which is called CLP Nature Conservation Group.

