

Fox Class Visit to Lopemead Farm

In June 2024, Fox Class (Year 3/4) embarked on an inspiring and thought-provoking learning adventure at Lopemead Farm in Long Crendon. This visit formed part of the *Six Inches of Soil* initiative - a national project that raises awareness about soil health, sustainable agriculture, and the importance of regenerative farming for the future of our planet.

The trip provided a rich, real-world context that deepened children's understanding of the Science and Geography curriculum, while also powerfully reinforcing our commitment as an Eco School to environmental responsibility, food sustainability, and caring for the natural world.

Curriculum Intent in Action

The visit was carefully aligned with our Science objectives around plants, living things, soils, and working scientifically; and with Geography knowledge related to land use, food production, environmental change and sustainability.

The Story Behind the Soil – Inspiring Young Environmentalists

The day began with children hearing the powerful and uplifting story of a group of young British farmers who are challenging industrial food systems and promoting regenerative farming practices.

This narrative provided:

- cultural capital, offering children insight into real issues facing modern agriculture
- an understanding of how farming methods impact soil, climate and communities
- links to our Eco-School values such as sustainability, responsibility and positive change
- an example of young people leading innovation — developing ambition and aspiration

Fox Class were fascinated to learn how restoring soil health can support both human wellbeing and the environment.

Workshop 1: Soil Health – Investigating Life Beneath Our Feet

Children explored the difference between healthy and unhealthy soil samples, using magnifying equipment and microscopes to identify signs of life such as microorganisms, humus content, and soil structure.

This activity strengthened:

- scientific observation and classification skills
- understanding of how soil quality affects plant growth
- knowledge about ecosystems, decomposition and nutrient cycles
- appreciation for biodiversity beneath the surface

It also supported the Working Scientifically curriculum through hands-on enquiry, comparison and drawing evidence-based conclusions.

Workshop 2: Water Testing – Analysing Local Water Sources

Children carried out a comparative investigation using water from three different sources, analysing clarity, pH, and signs of contamination or biodiversity.

This workshop linked directly to:

- the Science curriculum on states of matter, materials, and environmental quality
- Geography learning around human impact on water systems and land use
- developing fieldwork skills and interpreting environmental data

The children demonstrated excellent teamwork and problem-solving as they discussed why some water samples were healthier than others.

Workshop 3: Food & Soil – Growing Our Own Salad

To bring the learning full circle, children planted trays of salad leaves using healthy, nutrient-rich soil. These trays were brought back to the Fox Class classroom, where pupils continue to nurture them and observe the growing process.

This experience supported:

- understanding of plant growth, life cycles and the conditions plants need to thrive
- Eco-School values around sustainable food production and local food systems
- Geography learning about farming, land use and how food reaches our plates
- long-term observation and responsibility

The children have taken real ownership of caring for their crops back at school, checking for moisture, growth rate and leaf health.



Personal Development, Engagement & Behaviour

Throughout the visit, the children demonstrated exemplary behaviour, curiosity and resilience. Staff noted:

- high levels of engagement in all activities
- excellent question-asking and scientific thinking
- thoughtful discussion about sustainability and farming choices
- teamwork, cooperation and respect for the environment



This trip provided a meaningful opportunity for children to develop environmentally conscious attitudes - an *personal development* in action!

Impact of the Visit

By the end of their time at Lopemead Farm, Fox Class had:

- deepened their scientific understanding of soils, water systems and plant growth
- applied fieldwork and investigative skills in real-world contexts
- developed awareness of sustainable agriculture and its global importance
- strengthened Eco-School values and environmental responsibility
- gained cultural capital through meeting real farmers and exploring modern food production
- shown high engagement, curiosity and positive attitudes to learning

This experience significantly enriched their learning and broadened their understanding of the natural world and their place within it.

