



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Third Ealing primary school develops Edible Playground

Blair Peach has become the third primary school in Ealing to develop an Edible Playground, following in the footsteps of Berrymede Junior School and Lady Margaret Primary school, whose edible playgrounds are enabling pupils and the wider school community to learn about food growing and eating healthily.

**Edible Playgrounds** are exciting outdoor spaces that help to bring the curriculum alive, providing a fun, practical way to teach children about growing food and healthy eating. In June of this year, Trees for Cities started to build an Edible Playground at Blair Peach Primary school to bring food growing to over 500 children, many of whom live in homes with very little or no garden space.

The school had decided to embark on this project to engage and motivate the children to enjoy and respect their environment, improve creativity in the outdoor curriculum and improve healthy lifestyles by encouraging children and families to grow their own crops. **Anita Puri, Head Teacher said:** "The children have voiced their desire to see the grounds improved and this project supports the school in meeting the children's needs. We have linked with other schools that have worked on a similar project and have seen that it can transform the school community"

The edible playground is designed specifically for the school, including raised beds for growing salads, root vegetables, brassicas, soft fruits and herbs, fruit trees, a green house and a composting area. Pupils will enjoy planting and harvesting workshops throughout the year, and teachers will receive support to teach outdoors through gardening.

Blair Peach Primary has already made great strides in getting their students active about food and healthy eating; they already run a regular cookery club and are currently working towards the Gold Healthy Schools accreditation.

**Anita Puri said:** "We would like our students to be active and responsible citizens when using outdoor spaces. This project will enable us to develop the skills of all members of the school community and reinforce key messages about valuing green spaces and looking after them now and in the future."

A growing number of children are becoming obese as young as four or five years old, NHS figures have shown, sparking renewed concern about the obesity crisis. **David Elliott, Chief Executive at Trees for Cities said** "Our Edible Playground programme addresses several key areas of concern around children's health. They teach pupils where food comes from, that healthy food can be the easy choice, in and out of school and encourage physical activity.

This project has also been kindly supported by the Heathrow Communities Together Fund, City Bridge Trust and Spot Deco.

## Ends

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Images available upon request

## Notes to Editors

**Trees for Cities** is the only charity working on an international scale to create greener cities. Since 1993, we have engaged over 70,000 people to plant over 600,000 urban trees in parks, streets, schools and housing estates across the UK, as well as internationally, revitalising these areas and improving the lives of the people who live in them. We strengthen communities through volunteering opportunities and inspire children to grow and eat good food and to connect with nature.

Edible Playgrounds is a programme led by Trees for Cities who have been working in schools to plant fruit and nut trees for over 10 years. “**Edible Playgrounds**” transform areas in school grounds into vibrant outdoor spaces that excite and teach children about growing and eating healthy food.

By instilling healthy eating habits at an early age, they help tackle obesity, food poverty and lack of access to nature head on, and provide a platform for fun and engaging lessons that support the school curriculum. An Edible Playground typically includes raised beds, a greenhouse, wormery, fruit trees and an irrigation system.

[www.treesforcities.org](http://www.treesforcities.org)

**Heathrow Community Fund** is part of an independent grant-making charity set up by Heathrow’s owners to support and strengthen local communities close to the airport. In the past two years it has donated more than £1 million through three grant programmes, funding projects which support young people, help protect the environment and support active local communities. Funds come from an annual donation from the airport, donations from airline passengers and fines imposed on aircraft that breach noise limits.

More information about the fund and how to apply for grants is available on the website

[www.heathrow.com/communityfund](http://www.heathrow.com/communityfund)

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