



Hollickwood Primary School, London

SuDS for Schools

Hollickwood School is one of the ten schools in the successful “SuDS for Schools” project which focuses on the Pymmes Brook catchment in North London.

Aim of the Scheme

The main aims were to reduce playground flooding, improve water quality leaving the site and generate new opportunities for wetland wildlife by creating visible and legible retrofitted SuDS features which could be used both as learning resources and also play areas.

System Description

The school is located on a moderately steep slope meaning that surface water flows from playgrounds on higher ground often flooded playing fields and a hardcourt football pitch rendering these un-useable for days after heavy rainfall. Prior to SuDS construction, rainfall and surface water discharged via drains into a tributary of the Pymmes Brook carrying with it pollutants and sediments that reduce stream water quality and impact on in-stream habitats. Rainfall from a portion of the school roof is now

diverted to a newly-constructed raised bog garden planted with native wetland plants (and which also doubles as a meeting place with an integrated seating area for parents and children). Overflow from the bog garden travels into a grass swale which also receives additional surface water flowing off the tarmac playground. Overflow from the swale then feeds a small retention area and from there it flows into a meandering swale alongside the playing fields. Exceedance flows travel into the surface water drain via a small retention area and overflow feature. The system will manage 100% of a



Photo: Ed Waldron/WWT.

Children planting the bio-retention bog garden.



Photo: Sacha Dench/WWT.

Swale at Hollickwood.

1 in 10 year rainfall event and 50% of a 1 in 100 event.

Staff, parents and children at Hollickwood school were very enthusiastic about this project and were keen to be involved at each stage, from concept design through to ongoing management. This has meant that the SuDS quickly became a talking point in the school and is now central to school life. Hollickwood School will manage the SuDS using a bespoke management guide and training supplied by WWT. The school management team includes the Estate Manager, school governors and school children. Training in plant identification as well as wetland habitats has also proved to be critical in ensuring appropriate management. In reality,

management requirements have not proved difficult or time consuming and have largely focused on weeding and litter collection. In order for the SuDS to be used effectively by teachers as a learning resource, WWT has produced educational resources and supported teaching staff with training workshops and demonstrations.

System Performance

In terms of drainage benefits, water quality has been improved, playground flooding has been alleviated and playing fields dry out more quickly after rainfall as run-off drains into the swales and detention areas. In June, 2013 when local streets were flooded after an intense event, the SuDS coped according to the design

criteria and the school was able to hold its annual summer fair the following day unhindered. Alongside these benefits, the school now has a much richer natural environment that children enjoy learning about and playing in. This cohort of students will grow up with SuDS as an everyday part of their school life and will develop first-hand knowledge of wildlife-rich SuDS and their value.

Team and Details

The scheme was delivered by WWT in partnership with the Environment Agency and Thames Water. The system was designed by WWT and WWT Consulting and was constructed by Warwick Landscaping Ltd.



Wetlands for life



in partnership with
Environment
Agency