**The Wider Curriculum – Walton’s Grounds**

Walton has a proud record of utilising its grounds to educate and support its students. We have achieved this by working in partnership with the ; Learning Through Landscapes, RHS Campaign for School Gardening, Grow Wild, British Bee Keeping Association and Woodland Trusts

Walton’s 50 acre grounds are primarily sports field but every opportunity has been taken to develop the rest as a landscape for education.

In the last 15 years, the students have planted extensive woodlands and a Hazel coppice which is managed by the students with the material being used in school projects.

The students have planted orchards containing rare heritage varieties and each autumn pick them for use in food tech, for sale and juice them for sale.

We have planted extensively to provide material for Christmas decorations such as Holly, Ivy and Mistletoe. The students make and sell decorative wreaths each Yule made from woven grape vine cuttings from our extensive vineyard.

In 2011 the school was awarded a 10K lottery grant to create a pond. The subsequent Harmony Garden contains a 6,000-litre Koi Carp pool and formal Italian style planting in a quadrangle between the SEND classroom, the behaviour managers offices and the house office. It provides a tranquil sanctuary for students and a place of calm where the vulnerable can find some respite.

In 2014 the school was awarded a 10k lottery grant to develop an allotment garden. For the last 5 years students have grown produce for sale and for use in the school kitchens. Home grown organic produce frequently appear on the school menu. The community has donated 5 greenhouses to the school and the students growing season has extended accordingly

In 2017 the school was a warded a 10k lottery grant to create a bee friendly garden and to set up an apiary. With the support of our neighbours and the SSBKA the students harvested 20 kilos of honey in 2018 which they sold locally. The garden provides a private area of respite for our Sixth Form and is bounded by a 70 meter pathway covered by a wooden pergola festooned with climbing roses

As reward for our many student led projects the school has received the Royal Horticultural Society 5 Star Award for School Gardening and the Woodland Trusts Gold Award

In 2017 the school was selected to host Major Tim Peake’s Rocket Science experiment which he initiated on the International Space Station. The project led the school to receive national media coverage.

Staff and volunteers conduct the maintenance of our outstanding grounds. They have provided an invaluable resource for the whole school and for the curriculum, but in particular they provide us with a means of engaging with and nurturing some of our most disengaged students - because as Andrew Marvell wrote:

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness **:**
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find **;**
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas **;**
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.