



DOBBIES' GARDEN CENTRES TEAM TO HELP GLOUCESTERSHIRE SCHOOL PUPILS TRANSFORM GARDEN

The local primary school is to benefit from the garden centre's range of gardening essentials

Green-fingered pupils in Gloucestershire are getting set to transform their school garden and celebrate some early festive cheer after receiving expert advice and support from the team at Dobbies Garden Centres new flagship Tewkesbury store.

Ashchurch Primary School, which has 136 pupils including children with additional learning needs, has a large garden space which they said is in desperate need of a makeover.

Together with one of the school's teachers, Rachel Willis, pupils from year one to year six have enjoyed learning about the benefits of gardening through the school's gardening activities, with some classes enjoying weekly gardening sessions in their allotment with Mrs Willis.

And now with the support of Dobbies Garden Centres team, they are looking forward to bringing new life into their much-loved garden.

Marcus Eyles, Horticultural Director at Dobbies Garden Centres, visited the school this month to discuss future plans for the garden, and was on hand to provide the pupils with some gardening tips and advice.

Dobbies Garden Centre, which opens its new Tewkesbury store next month, will also be donating plants, gardening equipment, peat-free compost, and microgreen kits for Ashchurch's classrooms while it has further plans to help revamp the school's sensory garden.

As part of this, pupils at Ashchurch – along with headteacher, Richard Gibson, Deputy Head Sam Rickaby, and Rachel Willis - have been invited to the opening of the flagship Tewkesbury store to pick out some gardening products from their wish list.

Dobbies Garden Centre is also donating the school with one of its sustainably grown Christmas trees through its Not Your Average Community campaign, which offers special community groups, charities, schools and clubs a real tree to brighten up their festive season.

Richard Gibson, Ashchurch Primary School Headteacher, said: "We are really passionate about gardening at Ashchurch and believe that gardening provides us with the opportunity to teach many areas of the National Curriculum outside of the classroom.

"We are very lucky to have our own allotment alongside our playing field, but it is in need of some tender loving care. We are so grateful to Marcus for his ideas and to Dobbies for their commitment to helping us regenerate the allotment and sensory garden. We look forward to visiting their new flagship store in Tewkesbury."

Marcus Eyles, Horticultural Director, Dobbies Garden Centres, said: "At Dobbies, we are committed to promoting the benefits of gardening, and so it was fantastic to see so many

young people at Ashchurch with a keen interest in the activity. I am very much looking forward to the project and to see the finished transformation.”

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

About Dobbies

- Dobbies was founded in 1865 by James Dobbie and is headquartered near Edinburgh
- It is the UK's largest garden centre retailer, with 74 stores
- The company employs around 4000 team members
- It is privately owned by Midlothian Capital Partners Limited and Hattington Capital LLP