

Youngsters help transform old playground into lovely garden

A PROJECT to create a garden on a disused playground at the old Ridgeway School site in Southborough has inspired a new generation of youngsters.

"I've learned how to do so many different things," said Luke McCafferty, 13, who had been digging a pond with fellow Tunbridge Wells student Liam Warman, 14.

The boys, members of a scheme run by the West Kent Learning Federation offering time out from mainstream schools, worked with professional landscaper John Blithe and fellow students to design and build the garden area.



For centre manager Alison Stone, who is working with 17 students aged 11 to 14 who are at risk of permanent school exclusion, the project was a way of involving youngsters in caring for their environment and also provided a much-needed outdoor area.

She said: "The students and staff have worked really hard. They have built and planted raised herb and vegetable beds, painted fence panels and laid decorative mosaic tiling."

Students attend the centre for three hours each day, working in small, well-supported groups to follow a balanced curriculum.