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Young gardeners learn to cook

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Gardening club students had a masterclass in how to make use of their school-grown produce. Year 8 students at Nightingale Academy, in Edmonton, are turning an overgrown area of the school grounds into a functioning allotment and orchard.

They have already provided salad produce to the school canteen and set up stall at Enfield market. To educate them further on living off the land, chef Ruth Quinlan demonstrated how produce grown by the students can be used during a cooking masterclass.

The class cooked a healthy Indian-inspired dish using produce from the allotment.

Alec Laing, assistant vice principal, said: "It is showing students that we are growing for a reason and demonstrating to them how they can make use of the produce.

"The smell in the room was delicious."



Determined students are enjoying the challenge cultivating an allotment is bringing.

Ne'lli Coy Ramos said: "I was interested to learn about gardening as I live in a flat and do not have a garden at home. We have got a balcony and I wanted to learn what I could grow on there. I am getting some good ideas, such as growing tomatoes as it will look beautiful. "We are so lucky to have this space at school. It will take time to work on our plans, but we are determined to have a kitchen garden that has everything. We want to be able to provide everything the school needs for lunch.

"I am so glad I joined the gardening club. It is so interesting."

Mr Laing said: "All of this is giving our students an insight into the importance of growing their own food, of organic growing and of sustainability.

"A lot of our students live in high-rise buildings without gardens and so have expressed an interest in learning about gardening at school. The gardening club gives them an opportunity to do something they would not normally have the chance to do.

"They have shown a commitment to say they will look after the plot and the produce they are growing. They are getting a sense of ownership because they have created something themselves. They love it."

The long-term project includes clearing the rest of the site and setting up an outside gazebo to create another learning space.