

**The Garden Classroom** is a not-for-profit social enterprise that ensures urban children have the chance to connect with the natural environment. It delivers outside-the-classroom, curriculum-relevant workshops to schools.

### **THE FUNDER – The Golden Bottle Bulldog Trust Funding Initiative**

In July 2014 the Garden Classroom was awarded £30,000 over two years. The following targets were agreed at the start of the funding period with 95% achievement attained at the end of Year One:

1. *Continue to manage and expand existing education programme.*
2. *Have in place necessary documentation including Business Strategy to enable reapplication to Big Lottery in 2015.*
3. *Establish and deliver CPD full day training days for teachers and school staff.*
4. *Recruit and manage the expansion of a team of volunteers to support the organisation.*

**Strategic support provided:** A member of the Bulldog Trust’s business network provided TGC team with a tailored marketing workshop. In addition the CEO has attended communications, social investment and branding workshops hosted by the Trust.

### **THE BENEFICIARIES – The Primary School**

“Learning in a natural setting was incredibly valuable for our children. The comments they made about the day and their interest in the activities demonstrated just how much they had gained from the experience. The children were learning through doing and the activities promoted independence, whilst giving the children a sense of freedom.



Some of the children had never had the opportunity to walk in the fields or see wildlife in such close proximity. We were told by several parents the next day how their children had come home 'bursting' with facts, information and tales of their experiences. We noticed a positive change in the behaviour of some children who were engaged all day, remaining captivated by the trip all the way home.”

**Deputy Head Teacher, Newington Green Primary**

### **THE GRANTEE – The Garden Classroom**

“Thanks to funding from The Bulldog Trust for a Programme Manager we have been able streamline the front of house service to beneficiaries and generate new and exciting opportunities. The support has enabled us to grow our service whilst at the same time freeing-up valuable CEO time to represent the organisation at local, regional and national level. Other funders have chosen to fund TGC partly because of the reputation of The Bulldog Trust. The funding has also enabled us to match-fund projects including tree, bee and countryside programmes which have led us to exceed our activity target over the last academic year.



TGC has cultivated an excellent relationship with Islington Council and in December we signed a rare 4 year service level agreement to deliver nature reconnection projects for the borough using its parks, gardens and green spaces with Islington Council. Excitingly we have been given a rent and council tax free office and meeting room as a base as part of this agreement.

All of this has led to TGC earning, for the third time, the Quality Badge from The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom and winning the prestigious Lisa Pontecorvo Award 2015 for outstanding work and recognition of people and spaces. Feedback has remained high with 95% of our beneficiaries rating our service very good/outstanding.

As a funder we have found the relationship with The Bulldog Trust to be one of total support and trust and feel part of a family i.e. being invited to various events at 2 Temple Place and visited at our new base on Newington Green. In short, thank you for an amazing year and we look forward to the year ahead being equally as exciting”

**Marnie Rose, CEO and Founder of The Garden Classroom**