

Nelson Primary School

GROWING IDEAS



Commitment level:



Equipment List

- Cold Frame
- Top Soil
- Compost heap
- Watering cans
- Trowels and forks
- Wheelbarrow
- Seedling trays



PROJECTS

The original growing initiative first got underway as a Year 6 post KS2 SATs project. This precipitated a gardening club, and the Richmond Environment Network helped in sourcing a volunteer to assist the club. The volunteer is accredited by the RHS, and comes on a weekly basis throughout the year.

Gardening Club: was first offered to Year 3 and 4 students. Fifteen places were offered to pupils and 40 applicants. All members of the gardening club are incredibly enthusiastic, with watering being the favourite activity. Since the start of the academic year 08/09, the club has been extended to Year 5 gardeners, to help with some of the more physical tasks.

Woodland Area: is also looked after by the Gardening Club. It is interesting for the students to identify the mushrooms, and the school hopes to enhance the area with a pond.

The volunteer gardener is used as a consultant and students ask them where it is best to locate beds and plants - this way the students feel they have ownership of the project.

Given the short growing season, plants are brought on early in hand made newspaper pots. The newspaper pots, and similarly the compost heap, illustrate the emphasis on recycling at every turn.

The Gardening Club meets in all weathers, and wet weather activities include leaf rubbing.

Students are given potato cuttings, strawberry and tomato plants so that

they can continue growing at home over the holidays. Produce is presented in assembly.

Whatever next?

If the growing area can be fenced off the gardening club hope to add a pond to their woodland area.

To maintain the gardening club's momentum over the winter, the gardeners will be cooking seasonal produce from November to February;

The PTA have agreed to fund 6 raised beds to enhance the permanence of the gardening club.

Project Timeline

2006

Year 6 growing project run after KS2

2007

REN helped recruit a volunteer to help with a proposed gardening club

Spring 2007

Year 3 and 4 gardening club started once a week

Future

Six raised beds, and a fenced off area for a pond



Eating and Cooking



Participants of the gardening club take home strawberry plants, and potato cuttings to continue growing and eating their produce at home;

Parents have given feedback that having grown different vegetables through the club their child is more willing to try different things;

The gardening club will become a cooking club of seasonal produce between November and February.

Funding



Equipment and seeds have been funded by the PTA. PTA have agreed to fund six new raised beds (£130 each).

Commitments



5 Year 3 and 4 students attend a weekly after school gardening club throughout the year. The club is supervised by a teacher and a RHS qualified volunteer;

The teacher occasionally has to tend the garden in the intervening period;

A parent 'big dig' event was arranged one Saturday to prepare the growing beds;

During the summer holidays a neighbour waters the beds over the fence and the school's on-site caretaker helps by tending the garden.

Disappointments



The gardening volunteer said she was not familiar with the funding approach in the first year, and she typically ended up paying for seeds and plants herself.

What we grow



- Radishes
- Cabbage
- Onions
- Pumpkins
- Cucumbers
- Marrow
- Spring onions
- Potatoes
- Corn
- Red onions
- Runner beans
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries

