

Trafalgar Infant School

GROWING IDEAS



Commitment level:



Equipment List

- Planters
- Trowels & forks
- Spade
- Watering can
- Wheelbarrow
- Tunnels to protect brassicas from pigeons
- Compost heap



PROJECTS

Elmsleigh Site: The Elmsleigh Site, which is occupied by six classes in Years 1 and 2, was surrounded by buildings and completely tarmaced.

The Healthy School coordinator responded to the students' requests to make the site greener by initiating and overseeing a planter scheme, including one that resembles the rigging of a ship, in keeping with the school's name.

Each class has responsibility for a bed containing plants, vegetables, fruit and herbs. It is hoped that each bed will have a distinctive character, and it may even become a competitive pursuit.

Crop failure is considered to be as worthwhile as success, as students launch enquiries into why their plants may have failed, and put measures in place to guard against it in future.

Meadway Site: The Reception classes are located at this site. It is far greener, and more spacious.

There are a number of raised beds where students can grow vegetables, overseen by a teacher or parent helper.

Paths are cut through the long grass to give students the experience of the variety of habitats during bug hunts.

A nature trail leads to a woodland area where mini beast hunts are hosted, and there is the Rainbow classroom under the horse chestnut tree for shaded play in summer, and a sapling wood where teddy bear stories are often read.

Whatever next?

A pond at the Meadway site for pond dipping, and a mini beast alley at the Elmsleigh site.

Signs will be created for each of the raised beds at the Elmsleigh site to increase awareness, and highlight the project.

Project Timeline

2002

First growing plot was introduced at the Meadway site, but too much rubble prevented children from working it

2003

Beds were raised built at Meadway site

2004

Work started on 'greening' and 'softening' the Elmsleigh site

2008

More planters added to Elmsleigh site, one allocated to each class

Future

Pond and Mini Beast Alley



National Curriculum



Each year group touches on healthy living in some form, however, Year 2 has a particular emphasis on healthy eating, including a look at the benefits of organic growing.

Produce from the garden is used to illustrate the balancing meals groups e.g. potatoes for carbohydrates and cherries for the fruit and an increasing variety of vegetables for the vegetable category.

Experiencing unexpected flavours, such as when tasting rocket, provides an opportunity to look at new adjectives.

Funding



The PTA pay for seeds and tools

Planters were originally bought when the playground was rebuilt as part of the school's renovation project. The number of beds has increased through the school's capital expenditure.

Commitments



The school council, having consulted their peers, made recommendations to 'green-up' the Elmsleigh site.

A recurring theme in the Year 2 exit surveys, is to make the Elmsleigh site softer like the Meadway site.

Parents were involved in the original hard landscaping of the Meadway site, and given the number of siblings in the school, parental involvement is sustained, despite students moving up to the Elmsleigh site.

Teacher involvement has been forthcoming, which is necessary as most gardening takes place during lesson time

Playground helpers are occasionally used for maintenance of the planters.



Disappointments

The first year of planting at the Meadway could not be hands on for the students owing to the amount of rubble in the soil. Raised beds were introduced to protect the students from the sub-soil.

Japanese knot weed at the Meadway site has required council consultation.

What we grow



- Herbs
- Beans
- Potatoes
- Rocket
- Apples
- Carrots
- Broad Beans
- Leeks
- Peas
- Cherries
- Strawberries
- Flowers

