

St Matthew's GROWING IDEAS



Commitment level:



Equipment List

- Spade
- Forks
- Hoes
- Trowels
- Watering cans
- Greenhouse
- Shed
- Composting bins
- Water butts



Project Timeline

2000

Millennium Garden established

2009

St Matthew's enter School Food Matters competition and win their allotment space – The Organic Garden

2009

Invited to Hampton Court Flower Show to work on Capital Growth stand

PROJECTS

The Organic Garden: St Matthew's began gardening with children at the school when they established the Millennium Garden in 2000, a small area for planting flowers and herbs. The school was able to fly to a new level of growing in 2009 when St Matthew's entered, and won, a competition run by School Food Matters. Their prize was a completely landscaped allotment space with four new raised beds, a shed, greenhouse, tools and fencing to keep the area contained.

Gardening takes place during a Wednesday lunchtime club, on Friday afternoons as a curriculum module, and after school by the Crystal Kids After School Care programme. Children from all years get a chance to grow food, starting in Reception with potatoes. KS1 and KS2 pupils have also entered a competition from the Potato Council to grow the heaviest potato.

Commitment level



Gardening at St Matthew's is led by Carol Webb, year 5 class teacher and member of the senior leadership team and by the Deputy Head, Vicky Wales. The school caretaker is happy to step in when things need fixing and an enthusiastic parent, Sam, keeps up the general maintenance of the allotment. During the holidays, plants have been watered through the dedication of one of the children's parents and grandparents who live locally.

Eating & cooking



- Tomatoes, courgettes and lettuces have been used in the Crystal Kid's suppers
- Produce has also been sold to parents
- Children get to taste fruit, vegetables and herbs straight from the garden.
- Parsley was described as "Nearly nice!"

National curriculum



The Organic Garden is used for science throughout the school and DT in KS1 when children were asked to design and build windmills to distract the birds.

Also linked to Global Dimension project on "Seeds and Growing" through links with a school in Malawi, Masiye Primary School, with the support of the charity, 'Landirani'.

The garden also supports the Sustainable School agenda, by using food waste for composting, old orange cartons for bird boxes and newspaper for seed plugs.

Successes



Winning SFM competition by making a film about food production called 'Food Behind Closed Doors' – script written and film production by Year 5.

Joining Capital Growth and helping with their stand at Hampton Court Flower Show

St Matthew's pumpkin competition – producing a huge pumpkin and challenging parents and children to guess the weight.



Disappointments & challenges



- Foxes digging up the plants
- Runner bean crop being destroyed by an unidentified pest!

Funding



- SFM competition sponsors, Mears, built the Organic Garden
- £50 received from Waitrose Community Matters via School Food Matters
- PTA gives ongoing support
- Parent Donations

Whatever next?



Carol Webb dreams of developing a seed collection project and would also love to extend the growing season by kitting out their greenhouse to make it a work space for the children all year round.



What we grow



- Potatoes
- Strawberries
- Cabbage
- Pumpkins
- Carrots
- Runner beans
- Courgettes
- Broad beans
- French beans
- Tomatoes
- Lettuces
- Herbs

Top Tip

If you want to plant vigorous herbs, like mint, make sure they are contained in a pot before popping them into the ground, otherwise you'll be digging mint out of your potato patch!



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GROWING IDEAS

www.schoolfoodmatters.com
www.kingston.gov.uk/growing_ideas

