

Spring in the School Garden

News from the garden volunteers by Vicky Myers



The spring months have provided us with a great opportunity to get growing, planting and moving shrubs around the garden to continue improving the area for the children. We have been busy in the areas we look after which include the learning garden, pond and raised beds and plant pots around the school. Everything is looking good and the teachers have been using these outdoor spaces as a learning resource for the children more than ever. In the learning garden, fruit like strawberries, blueberries and blackberries are coming on nicely. In the greenhouse, Year 2 have been growing sunflower seeds, tomatoes and runner beans as part of a microenterprise project. They will be selling the produce to parents later this term, so if you see the children with a stall, please support their green fingered efforts. Meanwhile, the pond is teeming with wildlife and the bug hotels are buzzing away with insect activity.

Most recently we have:

Revamped the school wormery and it is now back in action! It is designed to show how worms move through the soil and bring food underground. You will see layers of soil and sand, then on the top are leaves, moss and vegetable peelings. When the children look closely, they can see where the worms have made tunnels next to the glass. It is covered in an old pond liner to keep it in the dark as worms move away from light so they won't tunnel next to the glass unless the cover is kept on it. The wormery is behind the shed so it is out of the sun and cooler for its wriggly inhabitants.

Added a wind vane to the shed to support the children learning about the seasons. It's not the most accurate (it needs a gale to get it pointing in the right direction!) but it points to the north and is a good educational tool. Also, we have a thermometer in the greenhouse and on the back of the shed and a rain gauge in one of the plant pots.



And finally, **we need help**, especially watering the garden over the next few months. We have recently planted new plants in the raised beds in the reception playground, around the pond and in the learning garden. These need a few people coming into the school, possibly once a week to water the new plants. This would be outside school hours and only over the warmer months. Regular watering for the first year after plants have been put in the ground really helps them to become established for future years. We would love to hear from anyone who may be able to help. You can message me on 07900 392772 or email vicky_myers@me.com to find out more.

We also would love to hear from anyone interested in volunteering with us more generally. As a group of volunteers, in addition to gardening, we also take the children outside, using the garden as a learning resource to get them involved in growing plants and discovering more about nature. Most of our volunteers help on a regular basis, but others drop in for just an hour or two. It's a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and find out more about growing plants, fruit and vegetables. We also need help with a variety of other tasks, like fundraising for some benches, weeding and small practical jobs.