

PLANNING YOUR GARDEN



1. Find a Space

Take a walk around your outdoor space. Identify areas that would be suitable for different gardening projects, such as hanging baskets, plant pots, raised beds, wild gardens or a mini allotment. Draw up a design for your garden plans.

2. Tools and Equipment

Every gardener needs the right tools to create the perfect garden. Research the different tools and equipment you are going to need for your gardening project. Consider things such as the type of soil, size of tools, and different techniques you will need to use.

3. Purpose

As a group, decide on the purpose of your school garden space. What do you want to achieve in each of your areas? You could create a sensory garden, a flowerbed for the school entrance, or a vegetable patch.

4. Find Your Experts

Take some time to plan how you will create your garden with the help of the whole school community. Do you have a garden expert you can ask to help or maybe a local shop? Also, think about who from school will help including staff, pupils and carers. Set up a responsibility chart for the different gardening jobs, such as watering, weeding and maintenance.

5. Time to Talk...

- Why do we want a school garden?
- How will our garden benefit the environment?
- What skills and knowledge will we need?



SOWING AND GROWING



1. What to Grow?

Research the different plants you would like to grow in your garden. Be sure to think about the purpose of your garden so you can decide what you need to plant. For example, you might plant herbs for a sensory experience or flowers for visual appeal.

2. Calendar

When you know what you would like to plant, take a look at a sowing and growing calendar. You need to find out the best times for planting and when you should be ready to harvest. There are lots of helpful guides online or seed packets will often tell you too. Plan your own school sowing and growing schedule for everyone to follow. Remember to think about times when people won't be at school, such as school holidays!

3. Growing Conditions

Once your planting schedule is in place, find out the different conditions your plants will need. Think about questions such as: • Do they need to be kept indoors first? • What soil do they need? • Do they like to be in sun or in shade? Use all of this information you have learnt to start planting your garden.

4. Observations

An important part of looking after a garden is learning more about the plants and the world around us. Set up an observation diary to record what you notice as your plants start to grow. Check your diary to keep learning about what your plants need and what helps them to thrive. You could also use a data logger to measure the conditions for your plants.

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GARDEN VISITORS



1. Attracting Visitors

Some animals and creatures are good for our gardens. Research the different garden visitors that you would want to attract to your garden, such as butterflies and bees. Find out the best ways to attract these visitors and what benefits they will bring for your garden.

2. Bird Watch

Spend time looking at the different birds that visit your school garden. Identify the type of bird and keep a log of the number of times they visit. You could then plot this onto a graph. Can you spot any patterns based on the time of day, weather or season?

3. Bird Feeder

Using any extra seeds you have, create a bird feeder to hang in your garden space.

4. Observations

Explore the different minibeasts you have in your garden. Where do they live (habitat)? You could use a microscope or magnifier to take a closer look or draw pictures of the minibeasts that you find.

5. Time to Talk...

- What different creatures can be good for your garden? Why is this?
- What different creatures are not so good for your garden? Why is this?
- How many different types of animal or minibeast have you observed in your garden?



PROTECTING YOUR GARDEN



1. Garden Risks

Talk about the different risks that can affect your garden, such as the weather, people, animals, etc. Think about how these different things could impact on the space and create your own plans for how to protect it.

2. Protective Measures

Some birds and animals will love to come and eat the seeds from your garden which is of course not great when you are waiting for them to grow. Research the different ways that gardeners protect their gardens including using materials that create different noises and visual effects. This could include using old CDs, bells and materials that blow in the wind.

3. Scarecrow

Some farmers use scarecrows to deter unwanted guests. Try making your own scarecrow to place in your garden. You could hold a competition to design and make the best scarecrow!

4. Natural Measures

There are lots of natural ways to protect and take care of your plants without using chemicals or fertilisers. Explore different ideas for your garden and try them out. Record your findings to help you plan your garden next steps. For example, can you find out why people often use eggshells in their gardens?

5. Time to Talk...

- What creatures might you encounter in your garden?
- Which techniques will you use to protect your garden?
- How can we protect our garden whilst also respecting that it remains the home for many creatures?



USING YOUR PRODUCE



1. Food

There are lots of tasty foods that you can grow in your garden. Research recipes that include the food you have grown and try them out. Once you have harvested the produce, you could create soup, sandwiches or even some super snacks for break time.

2. Creativity

Use your school garden as a backdrop for creative projects. You could use the plants as a stimulus for drawing, use fallen leaves and petals to create natural art and prints, or use a digital camera to capture nature photographs.

3. Sensory

Let your school garden awaken all of your senses. You could use the herbs you grow to create sensory bottles or potions, or add petals and leaves to potions as they drop. Enjoy the visual showcase of colours and the different fragrances as flowers come into bloom throughout the year, or as leaves change colour in different seasons.

4. Scientific Exploration

Study your garden plants in more detail. As they grow, learn about and record the lifecycle of a plant. You could even set up a science experiment to explore the different conditions your plants need. Take a closer look and explore the plants under a microscope to learn more about the different parts and what they do to help the plant grow or reproduce.

5. Time to Talk...

- What do you want to do with the produce once it has grown?
- Can you find artists who use plants within their artwork?
- How can we use every part of the plant to promote sustainability within our school?



