

Sacred Heart Primary School

GROWING IDEAS



History

When Jared Brading became headteacher he saw a big patch of green with a sign reading 'please keep off the grass'. This was swiftly removed and replaced with vegetable patches, one for each class to grow their own produce. At the same time, the underused garden area was turned into a living garden, with a pond and growing spaces, and made available to children.



New steps

Developing stronger links with the science curriculum, for example using it for work around habitats, as well as expanding the gardening club to include more students and to take place more than once a week.



Learning and teaching

All children from nursery upwards use the garden as a learning environment, identifying plants and animals. There are plans to set up a sun dial, which would be used for teaching about seasons and the movement of the earth. However, the garden is also used for pleasure, with children using the space for reading and writing in the summer.

Biggest challenge

Ensuring that water is not wasted by over-enthusiastic young gardeners and making sure the garden is looked after and harvested in the summer holidays.

Biggest success

Having such a successful garden that it has caught the attention of Boris Johnson, Michael Gove, Ken Livingstone and Thomasina Myers amongst many others.

Changes in the last 10 years

Teachers, with their already busy schedule, found it difficult to maintain their own class patches. The garden is now managed by a regular volunteer and a gardener who comes in once a week, meaning that growing spaces are now used well with many fruit, vegetables and herbs being grown. Chickens have been introduced and a couple of years ago there were even pigs!



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