

Getting Growing at St John's Primary School

This year, our year 5 cohort have taken on the challenge of going green and getting growing. It all started with a change to the Autumn year 5 geography curriculum, introducing a topic all about sustainability. Whilst discussing food miles, the class had the brainwave to turn part of the school grounds into an allotment area.

Year 5 planned the area for this section of the school playground and got the green light from the headteacher.



The year 5 class teacher decided to run a competition to design murals linked to our school vision statement of sharing joy and hope in the community. Four murals have been selected from across the school and year 5 will help to paint these onto the back fence panels in the summer.

Over the course of the year, the class have begun to transform the area. They couldn't really start this area until spring, so in the meantime they thought about other ways to help.

The first was to apply for the fruit trees being given to the community by Wellington Town Council. They managed to secure some, and these are now in the school's front garden as part of a growing orchard. The school's wellbeing champions took delivery and year 5 keep a close eye on their progress. The year 5 class teacher donated an apple tree too (which affectionately has a name!)



Year 5 then decided that they needed to start involving the community, so held a Christmas fair to raise some money to buy beds. They invited the other classes to help by making items to sell.



The class have also tried hard to source materials from our kind community by writing letters to ask for their support.

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Dear Community,
We are a group of people trying to help St. John's school and help with their environmental gardening. All we ask is if you can please support us and be by our side. As we don't have enough wildlife and allotment.

We are trying to make an allotment, to be able to do gardening and help the community with your help and your great pleasure to be with us. We also may need some extra supplies. It is important that we might be able to help the biodiversity and teach children to be kind to our planet.

All we need is: nice ripe seedlings, rocky but hard stepping stones and the forgiving light of the world. We may need some compost also we need to help the Earth thrive and grow. If you can help contact the school's office. We would personally, thank you if you could help.

Kind regards,

Thamira from Pankhurst class

From these letters, the class have managed to source tyres that would have otherwise gone to the scrap yard, plants such as black currents and strawberries, seeds, plant pots, soil improver and seedlings as well as some wood that over the summer will become large beds for planting.

The school used the money from the Christmas fair to purchase some items to get the allotment started and the children from year 5 have beds in place ready to plant up the seedlings that they have been nurturing in class. They met with the school site manager to share their plans and he prepped the area ready for us to start.

The year 5 class spent lots of time during the spring planting and preparing and as soon as the weather turns to summer, they will plant up the beds in full glory but are well on their way to realising their vision.



In order to make sure there was a clear vision, the class looked at how the area could develop and as part of their geography work came up with future designs for the area to make sure it grows over time and is not just a one-year project.



The idea is the next year 5 class will add to it and the year 5 after that and the year 5 after that and so on bringing growing potential to the whole school and making sure there is a growing culture at St Johns for years to come.