

## Garden Journal Autumn Term 2

Lots of exciting developments this term!

- Mini-garden competition win for our community gardening club
- Progress on the year 2 garden
- The Big Autumn Tidy
- Plans for the future to increase biodiversity at school
- Winter Crops

## Mini- Garden Competition



Back in July, our community gardening club took part in an RHS competition to design a mini- garden, with the theme of 'no adults allowed'.

We were delighted to be notified that our entry had been selected to win an award of £1000! We are very proud of those that took part and we are looking forward to using the vouchers to implement some of the ideas the children had into our school gardens.



## Year 2 Resilient, Sustainable Sensory Garden



This term we have been working hard in the year 2 garden to create a beautiful new space. The pictures above show how we are creating main paths and mini paths. We lined the main path with membrane that we reused from the old garden and edged it with reused plastic, also from the old garden. This path will be filled with permeable gravel, so that rainwater can drain off into the ground.

The smaller path on the right will allow children to explore the sensory planting. It's covered in a soft layer of leaves and twigs collected from the school grounds.

We are creating more smaller paths too, each providing a different sensory experience by using more recycled materials such as brick, shell or wood.



## Year 2 Resilient, Sustainable Sensory Garden



The newly painted shed doors are a bright, cheerful yellow, which will be reflected in some of the planting.

Our first plants were Stachys, which have soft, furry, silver leaves and are very tactile. They are also drought tolerant and attract bees with their purple flower heads in summer.

We saved lots of Oregano plants from the old garden, which are dotted all over our new planting scheme. Oregano has beautifully scented leaves and attracts many pollinators with the purple flowers it produces in the summer.

The fine leaved grasses were collected from the community garden, where they had self-seeded. They will provide movement on windy days and the very finely textured leaves are drought tolerant.





## Year 2 Resilient, Sustainable Sensory Garden

Our first plant delivery!

We have selected lots of evergreen shrubs for winter structure.

One of our feature trees is a pine, which has amazing sensory qualities. The thin needles are bushy and soft to touch. The pine cones are rough and woody.





## Year 2 Resilient, Sustainable Sensory Garden



Before we planted everything, we practiced setting out the plants in different positions to see how they looked.



## Year 2 Resilient, Sustainable Sensory Garden



The raised beds are going to be filled as 'hügelkultur' style beds. The bottom of the beds has a thick layer of cardboard. On top of this, are logs we have collected from around school, which make up 50% of the space. Following this, we layered smaller sticks, then leaves. The final layer is peat-free compost. As the bottom layers begin to rot, they will help to heat the bed allowing us to grow earlier crops. Next year we will top up the beds with home-made compost!



The gravel for the path is now in place- we will cover the path next term!





**Our Big Autumn Tidy**



As part of our autumn tidy, we are using recycled cardboard from around the school to suppress the growth of weeds. We place a layer of cardboard on top of the beds, then a thin layer of compost or mulch to hold it down. The cardboard will rot over the winter and we should be left with weed-free beds for the Spring.



## Our Big Autumn Tidy



We have been using the leaves and twigs that Ailon and Aston collected to create bug snugs in the allotment garden. These will give insects a place to hibernate over the Winter months.



## Our Big Autumn Tidy



More bug snugs in the meadow on the field!



## Plans for the future to increase biodiversity at school



Back in December we applied for a grant to develop an area of planting and seating on the edge of the field. If we are successful, this area will be transformed into an immersive and relaxing space that attracts more pollinators and wildlife into our wonderful school grounds.





## Winter Crops

During the Winter months, as temperatures fall and daylight decreases, only a few crops are able to survive the cold.

We have planted onions, broad beans and garlic, which will all grow slowly over the Winter, but have a head start for Spring.

All of our perennial crops, such as raspberries and strawberries, have been thoroughly weeded and mulched with manure to ensure good crops for the summer.