

A School Garden Calendar

Month	Topics	Curricular links, competences and skills	Materials
Mid-August/ September(*)	<p>School grounds and school gardens</p> <p>Survey of the school grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find out about growing spaces in the school - identify plants, animals and human activities - sun and shade; mapping the soil (covered; exposed) - touching/feeling materials and surfaces for growth - discuss and harvest what might be edible/non edible 	<p>Surveying the ground</p> <p>Measuring lengths and areas</p> <p>Making sketches, drawings, maps and plans</p> <p>Discussing and making decisions Observing and record-keeping</p> <p>Asking questions</p>	A. From School Grounds... to School Gardens.
	<p>Planning and designing</p> <p>Children develop a design for the gardens to include containers of different size and shape; paths and other features.</p> <p>Designing a garden:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - size, shape and location; - paths and decorative features - estimating materials (wood; soil) and access to water taps 	<p>Keeping a school garden journal</p> <p>Drawing and Observing: Leaf colours, shapes; sizes; disposition.</p> <p>Researching school gardens</p> <p>Discussing the design of the school garden</p> <p>Suggesting containers of different varieties, sizes and shapes to be placed in the garden</p>	B. Designing and Constructing a garden
	<p>Reviewing designs</p> <p>Reviewing plans outside; measuring space and agree final plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measuring using tape-measures; using the body to measure; - Observing how much space is used by different plants growing at different sizes. 	<p>Measuring spaces for planting in the school garden</p> <p>Locating the planters in the measured space</p> <p>Creating paths in the garden</p> <p>Allocating plants to planters depending on size and sun exposure</p>	C. Measuring and Estimating
October	<p>Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is 'growth'? (i.e. growing bigger, longer; different from/similar to...) - What can you grow?(vegetables; herbs; bushes; trees) - Seasonality: what grows/when? - selecting seeds and types of plants to grow - Rate of growth - Growth and death 	<p>Discussing and sharing ideas about growth</p> <p>Observing growth</p> <p>Discussing conditions necessary for growth</p> <p>Researching different types of vegetables</p> <p>Sharing knowledge of Scottish foods and vegetables</p> <p>Choosing produce to grow</p> <p>Selecting spaces to grow their vegetables</p> <p>Listing vegetables to be grown</p> <p>Comparing nutritional qualities of different vegetables</p> <p>Discussing death</p>	<p>D. The mystery of growth</p> <p>E. What can you grow... in Scotland?</p>

November	Soil <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is soil? - Soil analysis - Soils around the world - Soil erosion - Garden name and logo design. - Changing weather/changing soil: observation of wet soil; cold soil; frozen soil. - Investigating where the sun goes to in winter 	Comparing the different types of soils from the school garden Separating the different types of soils from the school garden Discussing the soil types from the school garden Touching and feeling different soil types Designing simple experiments to show different types of soil from the school garden Mapping the course of the sun across the seasons	F. The secrets of the soil
December	Winter food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserves, jams and compotes - Tubers - Making winter puddings; - Making winter stamps - Winter dishes from different countries 	Discussing what produce is available in winter Researching how to preserve produce in winter Preparing dishes with winter produce Making art and getting to know winter produce	G. When the soil is at rest...
	<i>This is the pre-Xmas period. Teachers can continue investigating growth, tubers and soil if they wish.</i>		
January	Soil and Composting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who lives in the soil - Rubbish in the soil: understanding organic and inorganic products - The roles of air, water and microorganisms - Enriching the soil: compost - Making compost: from rubbish to humus - Sorting out waste in the school kitchen - Building a compost bin 	Exploring soil Understanding decay and recycling of minerals Feeling and making soil texture Finding out about microorganisms Sorting out rubbish Re-using materials	H. Crazy Compost.

February	Germination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different types of seeds - Environment and seeds - The process of germination - Growth cycles - Germination activity with seed potatoes - Seed germination in class. - Seed germination in the nursery - Germination of wild plants outside 	Exploring different types of seeds Comparing several seeds, tubers, roots, shoots and leaves to get to know the variations in structure and appearance. Drawing several seeds, tubers, roots, shoots and leaves and comparing relative sizes Describing and enacting the life cycle of a sunflower from seeds through germination, and maturation to the development of seeds Carrying out an experiment to surface the basic needs of vegetables (sunlight, air, water, and soil)	I. From Small to Big: Seeds and Germination.
March	Planting and Growing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition and companion planting - Germinating plants in the garden - Planting in vertical growing spaces or in pots - Watering - Tendering; caring; - Prepare text for the school's web-page 	Preparing the ground Allocating space for different plants Spreading compost Sowing of seeds or seedlings Establishing watering routines Weeding Updating the garden journal	J. From Planting to Growing.
April	Maintenance and Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planting, writing, observing, talking. - Outdoor planting after Easter. - Weeds and pests. - Care and attention. 	Recording observations on plants in school garden journal Maintaining (watering, weeding) plants in the garden Measuring stems, leaves, branches Drawing plants Asking questions Describing leaf colour, shape, size, flowers Removing rubbish, debris, pests	K. Tending to the Gardens.
May	Harvesting and Tasting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuation of planting – different crops – idea of crop rotation. - Favourite food - Famous dishes - Different vegetables for different countries - Open garden day for community 	Discussing their favourite vegetables Planning to harvest Involving the community Writing blogs Collecting recipes Revisiting knowledge and expectations about growth Assessing factors for growth or lack of growth/death of plants	L. Harvesting
June	Harvesting and Cooking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue planting for over the school holidays - Harvesting and healthy eating – nutritional qualities: fibre, nutrients, vitamins, water. 	Harvesting of vegetables Cooking of vegetables in the school kitchen Eating of vegetables in the school canteen Writing down comments on paper Planning for watering and harvest during the holidays	M. From Harvesting to Cooking.

*This calendar of activities is aimed largely at pupils and teachers who may wish to get started on a garden project. We recognise that in some schools a garden may be already present. In that case, for the August/September months there will be harvesting and planting to do as the garden space is already available. In other cases, the survey of the grounds is aimed at getting children to find out if there are plants already growing in the school grounds and plan for further growth.