



A2 Organising a gardening day



A gardening day is a great way to get the school and community involved in the school garden. The more the whole school community is involved from the outset, the greater the likelihood of growing projects achieving lasting success. See also A1 for ideas about hosting events.

Activity

- 1 Brainstorm ideas for gardening days. There are lots of possible options. Try the following.
 - a Erecting a polytunnel
 - b Building or filling raised beds
 - c Weeding and preparing the soil
 - d Planting fruit trees
 - e Making a scarecrow
- 2 Follow ideas about managing attendance, involving people and spreading the word.



Building a raised bed

Attendance

It helps to know in advance how many people are likely to attend and consider the number of helpers required to make it a success. If you only need six, what happens if 20 turn up or vice versa? It is sometimes better to advertise specific jobs that need to be done so people know what is expected. Having a 'sign up' list beforehand prevents too many turning up.

If your school doesn't have enough tools, ask the volunteers if they could bring some with them on the day – but ensure they are in good condition and safe to use.



Making hibernation homes for wildlife

Health & Safety	B3.4 Manual Handling and back care <i>See also Health and Safety Guidelines (Section B3.3)</i>
Activities on DVD	T4 Garden Risk Assessment A1 Hosting an annual event
Further information	Silver and Gold booklet Garden Organic www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools

Involving people

Weekend events can be for a half or full day depending on the activity and the number of volunteers. Some parents may find it easier to take part if the activity is arranged in the week, either during or after the school day. Perhaps parents could join their children for school dinner. It can be fun for parents and children to work together!

It's a good idea to include a social/food event in the day so those involved can get to know each other, eg a barbecue or over a bowl of soup. You can talk to people about other events the school is organising about sharing food/food culture which they may be keen to join.

Spread the word

Advertise the day in the newsletter and on the website, send letters to parents/guardians, put up posters. Some schools use text messaging to inform parents. In the school reception have a screen showing photos and information. Inform the local community using similar methods and perhaps invite the local press along if the day is newsworthy.

On the day, keep a record of those who attend and their contact details, to keep in touch about future projects. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, make sure you tell people why you are collecting contact details (eg administration) and give them the option not to receive any communication from you or for you to pass on details to anyone else.

After the gardening day, ask the pupils to write a note of thanks and appreciation to all those involved.



Writing plant labels ready for a garden event