

Our Lady of the Annunciation Primary School

Session 2007/08

The Garden Club or plot work party consists of 20 children from P5 and P6, ten attend on a Tuesday after school and the remainder on a Thursday. The children are in the charge of a member of teaching staff and a parent.

This session they elected to operate the plot like a traditional allotment with vegetables, fruit and flowers. They are preparing a report entitled 'the cost of feeding a family of four on home cultivated fruit and vegetables.' They are proposing to distribute their findings to the school and the Community Council.

They are getting ready to sell their produce at the Merrylee Plotholders Association Open Day in September. They consider that they are selling local organic fruit and vegetables to the local community and also raising funds for the enhancement of the Gardening Club by providing, for example, seeds and tools for next session

Away from the actual plot the school pupils

- monitor and record the weather conditions, rainfall etc throughout the year
- recycle materials for the use of the Gardeners eg collecting eggshells to crush as slug bait.
- recycle materials for the Club, for example toilet roll holders for planting peas and beans, plastic cups as pots, discs as bird scarers.
- Computer orientated pupils prepare labels and artwork for the Gardeners
- As MPA would not allow a greenhouse, tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers are grown within the school and looked after by pupils other than the Gardeners.
- A great advance this year is that the Gardeners have been working over the school holidays, under the auspices of the parents, and organised by the school. Twenty one families have been involved. A further spin off is that two parents have put their names on the waiting list for a plot in our Association.
- Throughout the year younger pupils are invited to visit the plot to spot birds and do some artwork.

Merrylee Primary School

Session 2007/08

The Garden Club consists of 20 children under the auspices of the Parent School Council and in the care of two parents, Jackie McAulay and Jackie Hunter, who themselves are experienced allotmenters.

Merrylee Primary school decided to get actively involved in the development of an allotment as part of an action plan proposal raised by the school's Eco-Committee. The children set up an initial plan based on sustainability and then gained support from two parents with allotment maintenance and development experience.

This session Merrylee decided to have a raised bed system, taking account of access for disability by having broad paths. This also makes participation easier for all. They have varying crops in their rotation and understand that the yield will be lower because of the plot layout. The plot is well maintained and shows pupils the different food groups and what vegetables and other crops are like in real life and how they are grown.

They have a wildlife section with interesting features, birdbaths and a pond which is intended to be used to encourage our younger children to visit the allotment and learn about their natural environment as part of our science and environmental studies curriculum.

Merrylee looks forward to having increased access to other pupils in the school when we move into our new building in November which is adjacent to the allotments

Like Our lady of the Annunciation Primary School, Merrylee have participated throughout the summer holidays and are extremely diligent and enthusiastic.