

Health for Life at Our Lady of Fatima School

Newsletter 6 – July 2018



The Health for Life Committee consists of two representatives from Years 1-6, we aim to meet on a weekly basis. Throughout the warmer weather we meet more often on an informal basis to care for the flourishing crops.



During the Autumn Term the committee spent time preparing the raised beds so they were ready for each class to plant their selected crops. Preparation for the beds involved spreading manure over the top soil and covering each raised bed in black membrane to suppress weed growth. The whole committee were fully involved in this and particularly enjoyed manure spreading. We are very grateful for the support we received from Mr Jamieson (father of Rhys and Dara) in the form of collecting and delivering manure to replenish the nutrients on the soil.



In early Spring we started planning the *Meal in a Barrow* competition recipe. The annual Gardeners' World exhibition at NEC has a feature for schools which involves growing a meal in a wheelbarrow. The wheelbarrow and soil were provided and school had free choice of a theme. To link with the release of the Peter Rabbit film, the committee decided on a recipe based on Mr McGregor's leek and potato soup served with Peter Rabbit's delicious dish. Due to the growing of crops by individual classes we were able to have a huge school input into this; Year 2 provided a selection of mixed salad leaves, Year 6 grew crimson beans, Years 3 and 4 grew impressive garlic and onions along with some carrots and potatoes.

A parent generously donated some young courgette plants which were incorporated into the wheelbarrow.



As recognition of our entry into this exhibition, members of the Health for Life Committee received complimentary tickets to the NEC for Sunday 17th June 2018. Families who attended were very complimentary of our contribution. Our entry, though not a winner, did not look out of place!

One of the challenges of growing crops in school is checking they will reach maturity before the end of the school year. The committee spent time researching this and planted extra crops to supplement any needed in the raised beds. The extreme wet weather during the May half term did see some crops ruined but we replenished as many as possible from our reserves.



During the recent, extreme heat we have a tremendous team of children who water the plants on a daily basis. Children carry out watering during playtimes. Watering cans and access to the outside tap are freely available all day. These children provide an essential role in our school while getting a great amount of exercise from running back and forth to the tap.

The dwarf fruit trees which were planted three years ago (near the blossom trees) are showing signs of producing fruit this year. Although not all of these trees have survived we look forward to a diverse selection of cherries, apples pears and plums.



This year we were reunited with our scarecrow, Chloe. She was made by a current Year 6 parent and was used in 2017 as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations, even featuring in a special edition of *Gardeners' World* (June 2017). Unfortunately, she could not be located for several months following this. During Easter I was able to track her down and she stands proud, doing what she was made to do, though slightly weather beaten she makes a statement in our raised beds!

Next year we look forward to developing the area by Hannah's Way which has slipped into disrepair this year. We are also going to be looking into ways of utilising the greenhouse which was partially donated to us by John Lewis. Mr Rollason is spending a considerable amount of time preparing it for our use. Once again if any parents have advice and are able to offer some hands on support in this area, it will be greatly received. Please do get in touch with me if you, or you and a group of parents are willing to support the Health for Life Committee.

Mrs N Levack

Health for Life Co-ordinator