

# Coombe Boys' School

## GROWING IDEAS



**Commitment level:**



### Equipment List

- Compost
- Old containers
- Baby plants



### Project Timeline

**2010**

Spring 2010 and beyond



## PROJECTS

**Hanging Garden:** In April 2010, Coombe Boys' School organised an Environment Day. This was the perfect opportunity to work with pupils on a food-growing project that was truly sustainable. With as yet no allocated space for growing, the school's Environmental Day co-ordinator Julie Burnett, came up with ingenious idea of using old plastic bottles and other discarded containers to create a 'hanging garden'. Baby salad plants, flowers, tomatoes and beans are happily growing in the bottles and larger plants such as potatoes and pumpkins which have been planted into recycled plastic containers and potato bags.

## Commitment level



Year 7 boys, under the supervision of the Art Department, have carried out the project. In order to build on their excellent work, the boys have now been invited to join the Eco Group and Gardening Club. The school is completely committed to achieving the goals of the 2020 Sustainable Schools initiative and know that food growing covers seven of the eight doorways. An Environment Awareness Co-ordinator is soon to be appointed and the school has also allocated a governor's committee to cover each of the eight doorways.



## Eating & cooking



The school chef, Daryl from Wilson Jones is right behind the project and has the freedom and encouragement to use vegetables produced by the pupils in school lunches. He would like to encourage the students to grow herbs for the kitchen, and is involved in the planning to make this happen.

## National curriculum



So far Art and DT but with a more developed growing area the school will be able to deliver more of the curriculum through outdoor learning.

## Disappointments & challenges



In secondary schools there is always a strong demand on staff time and resources, so lots of support is required to realise ambitious plans. A mixture of dedication, tenacity and a clear vision seems to be the recipe for success!

## Successes



The 'Hanging Garden' seems to have worked a treat and the plants are thriving. It has proved the perfect solution to the problem of limited growing space and has livened up a rather dull space in the school.

## Outcomes & results



Many pupils do not get much of a chance to grow food at home and the 'Hanging Garden' project has completely engaged the Year 7 boys. The school also discovered that there is lots of support out there if you want to grow food at school, particularly through the borough's sustainability unit and the School Food Matters website.

## Whatever next?



The Art Department is actively working on plans for a dedicated food growing area so that they don't rely solely on the 'Hanging Garden'.

## What we grow



- Lettuces
- Tomatoes
- Runner beans
- Pumpkins
- Potatoes
- Flowers
- Rocket



## Top Tip

**Get started! Ask for advice from experienced gardeners and start with crops that are robust and easy to maintain.**



**SCHOOL  
FOOD  
MATTERS**

## GROWING IDEAS

[www.schoolfoodmatters.com](http://www.schoolfoodmatters.com)  
[www.kingston.gov.uk/growing\\_ideas](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/growing_ideas)

