

How to grow your own allotment

Learning aims

As part of National Allotments Week 2021 running from 9th August till 15th August, why not get the children involved in growing your own mini allotment?



- The key theme for 2021 is 'Plotting for the Future'; this will enable you to share information with the children about creating a sustainable future
- They will learn about how growing things and where things come from
- They will have the opportunity to use their physical development to build the allotment and plant the seeds
- Children will be involved in looking after the plants, making daily observations of what they see and developing their understanding of the natural world.

Resources

- An area of the outdoor garden space or some planters sectioned off
- A selection of seeds suitable for small hands e.g. Broad beans, sunflowers, pumpkins, beetroot, onion sets, garlic bulbs, potatoes etc.
- Herbs like mint, lemon balm, basil and lavender, and flowers like sweet peas, offer great scents to your allotment
- A selection of plants that support wildlife such as marigolds and corn poppies
- Compost
- Gardening tools.

Activity outline

1. Talk to the children about allotments, what they are and show photos of what they look like or visit ones local to you
2. Research together what things you might include in your allotment
3. Identify together where the mini allotment may be. Remember it needs to be in a place that attracts sunlight to help things grow
4. Either separate an area of the garden or create an area with planters
5. Together using the seeds, compost and gardening tools, carry out your planting
6. Consider making sticks with labels/photos of what they have planted
7. Talk to the children about how to care for this area i.e. remembering to water the plants and not to stand on them
8. Observe them daily and take lots of photos of their progress
9. Enjoy what you have grown!

Extending the activity

- Enjoy reading 'The Scarecrows' Wedding' by Julia Donaldson and make a scarecrow for your allotment
- If you do not have space to create an allotment, consider visiting some allotments in your local area or planting some seeds and talking to the children about what an allotment is
- Ask your parents/carers if they, or anyone they know, has an allotment. Encourage them to talk about it and/or share any photos of produce
- Join in with the allotment week by creating a veggie monsters creature with veg, fruit and herbs, submit photos to <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news-events-campaigns/national-allotments-week/> for a chance to win a prize!

Special considerations

Some seeds and bulbs are poisonous to eat, so risk assess the activity and what you use. It may be beneficial to try to block off the allotment to prevent this. This would also make the allotment a special place to visit rather than having free access.

Supervise the children and make sure children do not eat anything. Always wash hands after gardening.