

Gilford Primary School Biodiversity

Case Study - Wildflower Garden

Gilford Primary School pupils take ownership of their wildflower garden.



1. Why did you choose this particular project?

We worked alongside the Ulster Conservation Volunteers and asked the children what they would like to see in the school grounds.

2. Did you integrate it in to the curriculum? How?

Yes, we gave the children ownership of the wildflower garden. They prepared the soil and planted the seeds. They also identified the seeds as they were growing using identification cards. When the flowers bloomed they took samples and talked about the process from seed to flower. The older children also pressed the flowers and created bookmarks as part of a topic on Victorians.

3. Did you encounter any problems and, if so, how did you overcome them?

The only slight problem was the weather! We had to rely on the weather to be good to allow the soil to be prepared and the seeds to be sown.

4. How did you encourage pupil participation? How did they have ownership of the process?

The children worked alongside the Conservation Volunteers preparing the ground in the shape of a snake, raking the soil and finally adding the mixture of wildflower seeds. The children were very keen to get involved, bringing in old clothes and wellington boots!!

5. How did the pupils/whole-school benefit from this project?

- Identifying the parts of a flower and creating Wildflower ID cards
- Knowing what is involved in the transformation of a piece of grass into an attractive wildflower garden
- Identifying the number of minibeasts and butterflies which are attracted to the wildflowers

6. Did you receive any support form parents, staff or outside agencies? Did you have to source any funding?

Funding was supplied by Extended Schools and we worked alongside the Conservation Volunteers. Staff and pupils, particularly Key Stage 2 pupils assisted in the creation and maintenance of the garden.

7. Is there any advice you could offer to other schools embarking on a similar project?

Carefully plan the area in which you would like to create your wildflower garden-possibly seek advice from an outside agency.

Allow the children to take ownership of the garden as they gain so much from the experience both academically and socially, working as part of a team to create a finished product.

8. Has doing this project driven other Eco-Schools ideas? What are your future plans regarding Eco-Schools?

- To create a seating area close by the wildflower garden so the children can appreciate the diversity of flowers and wildlife
- To install an outside water butt to water the plant and garden boxes to conserve water.
- To maintain the Eco activities we already have in place: garden boxes, vegetable boxes and a willow dome.