



Rowledge C of E Primary School Garden

Volunteer Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the Rowledge C of E Primary School garden! The garden is currently maintained by a group of volunteers who run sessions for pupils at the school as part of the “Busy Bees Gardening & Wildlife Club” on a weekly basis during term time. We welcome external volunteers to come and participate in activities in the garden and pass on their experiences and knowledge to the pupils. The activities undertaken in the garden are supported by the Friends of Rowledge School (FORS) charity as well as other external grant and finance providers including the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

The garden is part of the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and the volunteers aim to keep activities running throughout the academic year for pupils. The vegetable garden and the planters maintained by the Club are entirely organic.

The Club’s principle aims are to encourage all of the children in the school to:

- learn the joy of growing their own food;
- understand, appreciate and care for wildlife;
- learn how to reuse and repurpose everyday items; and
- garden for themselves and wildlife in harmony.

New volunteers and registering for sessions in the garden

As with all visitors to the school, external volunteers will be asked to assist the school office in running a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check on them.

On attending the school for gardening sessions volunteers should register in the first instance at the school office and wear a designated lanyard for identification purposes for the duration of their stay on site. Please sign out with the school office and return your lanyard at the end of your visit.

In case of a fire alarm

In the event the fire alarm is sounded, please leave your belongings and walk to the nearest exit if inside a school building. Gather on the playground at the front of the school near the school garden and boat. Designated fire marshals will direct you.

If you discover a fire please sound the alarm immediately.

Safeguarding of pupils

We are all committed to safeguarding. The school’s designated safeguarding officers are here to help you with any concerns. **If you have a concern, however small, it should be reported to one of these people directly or via the school office:**

Ms Sarah Oliver (Headteacher) s.oliver@rowledge.hants.sch.uk

Mr Joe Yates (Deputy Head) j.yates@rowledge.hants.sch.uk

Health & Safety in the Garden

Gardens can provide adults and children alike with an amazing opportunity to develop a huge number of skills and are great for supporting physical and mental wellbeing. However, it is vital to ensure that anyone working out in the garden, no matter what age, understands how to work safely in the garden and how to look out for hazards and risks.

In the event of an accident or injury in the school garden the office should be informed immediately where first aid can be given and contact made with emergency services or external healthcare providers if necessary.

The table below sets out the key risks and precautions which must be taken when working in the school garden and we ask that all volunteers to familiarise themselves with these details for both themselves and the pupils:

Risks / hazards	Precautions
Transmission of the COVID-19 virus within the group/class/club	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide the class or group into smaller groups where possible and follow current guidance on social distancing and the wearing of face coverings.• Carry out activity outdoors where possible or indoors with lots of space and ventilation.• Wash hands regularly.• Have equipment such as tools and gloves for each member of the group, which are not shared.
Working in the garden or other outside space Potential hazards: ingestion of plants, stings, falling branches, drowning in water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Familiarise yourself with the site regularly, looking out for possible trip hazards, falling branches and the presence of the school's wildlife pond.• Ensure the gate to the wildlife pond remains closed at all times and locked whenever one of the coordinators of the Club is not present in the enclosure.• No children should be left unattended in the school's wildlife pond area at any time without direct adult supervision.• A minimum of 1 adult must be delegated to supervise no more than 5 pupils when inside the school's wildlife pond area.• Do not pick plants or eat plants on the site.• Please inform the school office if you have any allergies or health conditions which the school should be aware of.• Please wear adequate foot protection, i.e. no open toed shoes and ensure your arms and legs are properly protected from potential scrapes and scratches.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please wear clothing to protect you from the weather – eg sunscreen in the summer and warm clothing in the winter.
<p>Slips, trips and falls</p> <p>Potential hazards: scrapes, serious bruises, cuts, lacerations, broken bones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure shoes and clothes are appropriate for the weather and for working outdoors. • Check the garden / work site for trip/slip hazards, dangerous debris etc. before and after sessions. This includes trip hazards such as hosepipes. • Please ensure that gardening tasks are always carried out in a tidy manner so that the creation of trip hazards is avoided. • Please ensure tools are stored tidily and away from walkways when not in use.
<p>Lifting, pushing and pulling</p> <p>Potential hazards: back injury, muscular or skeletal injury, strains and sprains.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please ensure you use correct lifting techniques (back straight, knees bent) and let the school office know if you have any back or muscular problems which we should keep in mind. • Do not overfill wheelbarrows. • Do not lift heavy objects, such as bags of compost, without help. • Use a wheelbarrow to transport materials. • Do not help in the moving of the Market Cart in the event that you have known back problems and ensure at least two adults help to move it.
<p>Use of tools</p> <p>Potential hazards: cuts, lacerations, injured fingers/limbs, electrocution.</p>	<p>All tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All tools must be stored safely in the potting shed or garden shed at the end of each session where they are not accessible to pupils. • Pupils should be taught at the beginning of each session what tools are for, how they are used and how they should not be used. • Please help ensure adult supervision when pupils are working with tools. • Participants should work a safe distance away from each other to prevent damage to themselves and others around them. • Participants should only be given tools appropriate for their ability and the task. • A safety visor or glasses to be worn when there is a risk of tools or debris contacting with the eyes e.g. using power tools. <p>Power tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the unlikely event that power tools need to be used, only use the tools in dry weather and if you know how to use them. • No power supplies to be placed or power

	<p>tools to be used near water, in poor or wet weather.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trailing leads to be kept out of walkways, to be clearly identified with hazard tape if crossing paths.
<p>Soil and manures</p> <p>Potential hazards: tetanus, diseases, sickness, skin irritation, soil in eyes, flies, vermin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check site before work and remove any animal mess while wearing gloves and dispose of in the commercial waste bins. • Gloves to be worn when working with soil and all pupils to be provided with gloves for their use. Aprons should also be offered to pupils to protect clothing. • Cover any cuts or abrasions with plasters, sleeves etc. • Instruct young people on using tools correctly to avoid soil being flicked up. • Avoid digging or using loose soil in windy conditions.
<p>Seeds, bulbs, plants and bird food</p> <p>Potential hazards: digestion, inhalation, skin irritation, sickness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check packaging or information of new plants or bulbs. • Wear gloves when handling seeds and bulbs and all seeds and bulbs to be stored safely out of reach of pupils. • Please help to explain dangers of eating or consuming seeds and bulbs to pupils. • Wash hands before and after handling. • Use hand tools where appropriate. • Be aware of any allergies or hayfever. • Supervise vulnerable children at all times or anyone who may be more inclined to try eating the seeds, bulbs or plants. • Do not plant anything that could be toxic or poisonous (e.g. daffodils) alongside edible plants. • Due to nut allergies amongst pupils, no bird food must be brought into the school grounds other than plain sunflower seeds or hearts which must be stored in the garden shed or potting shed out of reach of the pupils.
<p>Insect bites and stings</p> <p>Potential hazards: bees stings causing anaphylactic shock, bad reactions / infections caused by Horse fly bites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please advise the office if you are allergic to any form of bite or sting. • Identify areas/vegetation which might harbour biting insects and work with caution. • In very warm dry summers, please be aware of horse flies and their potential dangers; bites can become infected and can even cause sepsis. • Check body for ticks after working in high risk areas, bracken/long grass.

<p>Chemicals</p> <p>Potential hazards: inhalation, skin or eye contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's vegetable garden and planters maintained by the Club are entirely organic and no chemicals of any sort should be brought on site. • In the event that organic plant feeds such as seaweed feed are used in the garden, they should be kept out of reach of small children and only allow older children to use if they have been taught to use them properly and safely.
<p>Fallen leaves</p> <p>Potential hazards: risk of piercing wounds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If leaves are to be collected for making leaf mould or for clearing away, check the area in advance to make sure there are no hazardous objects such as sharp items buried in the leaves. • Wear gloves when collecting leaves or use leaf grabbers. • Use a rake to collect leaves into smaller piles before picking up.
<p>Plant supports</p> <p>Potential hazards: damage to the eye</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If needed, keep plant supports, such as garden canes, as tall as possible so they are above eye height. • All plant supports should have a cane topper covering the pointy top.
<p>Water and hoses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please help to show children how to water carefully and correctly to avoid spilling water onto pathways, clothing etc. and to protect this limited resource. • Please help to ensure the hosepipe is properly stored away at the end of each session to avoid it becoming a trip hazard.
<p>Weather</p> <p>Potential hazards: sun stroke, sun burn, slips, illness from cold</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure clothing is appropriate for the weather. • In strong sun, ensure everyone is protected from the full glare of the sun. Use hats, suncream etc. • In cold weather, ensure participants are wearing appropriate layers, warm socks, gloves etc. Ensure they do not stand around, keep them busy and moving around to stay warm. • In wet weather, ensure showerproof coats and wellies are worn to help stay dry.

Thank you for offering your time and support in volunteering in the school garden. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have any queries, feedback or would like to know more:

Ms Sarah Oliver (Headteacher) s.oliver@rowledge.hants.sch.uk

Sarah Womersley (volunteer garden coordinator): rowledgebusybees@gmail.com