

Get Growing!

Each year we have children come to Edgmond Hall to learn more about how plants grow. They sow seeds or plant vegetables in our kitchen gardens well as water or weed if it is needed. Sometimes our chickens even get some worms to eat!!



It's the time of year to 'Get Growing!' I have taken some Sweet Pea seeds collected from our plants last year and will grow them at home. It would be great if we are back at Edgmond to plant them out later in the summer!

We mostly grow vegetables, herbs and fruit at Edgmond but we always grow some Sweet Peas for their scent and colour! We also grow sun flowers and have a competition to see whose grows the tallest! This is a fun thing to try with your family.

Easy steps to sowing and growing Sweet Peas.

1. These seeds were collected from sweet peas grown last year at Edgmond Hall or get a packet of seeds! Soak the seeds overnight. This will help them to germinate.



2. Create a pot from an old toilet roll you can fold in the sides if you want – but you don't have to as the roots will be free when you replant them.



3. Stand in a tray or on some old newspaper. Fill the toilet roll with damp compost not far from the top.



4. Gently put one or two seeds into each pot. They like it near the edge. Push down a little bit and cover with about 1cm of compost.



5. Give them a little bit of water. Don't drown them or soak the cardboard tube! Put them on a window sill in the light and warm



6. Label and date your seeds – I just used another loo roll! Check each day. If the compost is dry give them a little more water.



Seeds sown: 2.4.2020

Progress Week 1

9.4.2020

The seeds have germinated they are showing little shoots. Keep the compost slightly damp.



Progress Week 2

16.4.2020

The first leaves are forming. It has been lovely weather, so they have been outside in the daytime, back in at night.



I wonder how big they will be in Week 3? – Check out the website or our Facebook page to see how they grow www.sandwellresidential.co.uk

Facebook page: Edgmond Hall Centre for Outdoor Learning

What else could you try growing at home?

If you don't have a garden: Carrot Tops and Sprout Beans.

Carrot Tops - Cut off a carrot or parsnip top and grow it in some water!

1. Cut the top off your carrot or parsnip leaving about 5cm of the orange / white part. If it has green tips already leave the same amount on the top. Don't worry if there is nothing sprouting yet!
2. Place a little water into a small dish (bowl or saucer) and put near a window or on a window sill.
3. Soon you should have leaves sprouting
4. The root will not regrow even if you planted it outside, but if you did plant it the greens would keep growing and you might get flowers which would be beneficial for pollinating insects!

Starting off....



Week 1.. a little growth



Week 2...leaves starting to grow



How many more leaves in week 3?

Add or change the water each day, it can dry up from the saucer very quickly!

Some people also regrow the green tops from the spring onion bulbs and garlic cloves. Try to keep them upright maybe in small glass. These tops can be cut up and used when cooking e.g. stir fry's, salads or soups.

For more experiments with carrots – and everything carrot – have a look at the following link: <http://www.carrotmuseum.co.uk/experiment.html>

Sprouting Beans – Use any dried beans you might have in the cupboard and see if they sprout

If you have dried beans in your cupboard you could try sprouting from different beans – Mung Beans, Chick Peas or any dried bean in the cupboard. Not all beans will sprout from beans bought for cooking but you can experiment!

Get some beans and put them on wet newspaper or damp kitchen towel and leave on a window sill to see if they will sprout. Keep paper damp. It will take a few days so be patient!

Starting off...



7 days in...no sprouting yet....



Check out the website sandwellresidentials.co.uk or Edgmond Hall Facebook page to see if they did or did not sprout!!

Important Note: If they do sprout, please note eating raw beans is not recommended! See guidance below.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/sprouted-seeds-safety-advice/>

Sowing in the Garden

If you do have a garden – speak to whoever is in charge of the garden and find some space to get growing! You can sow straight into the soil or into pots. Pots will need compost which might be hard to get just at the moment but you might be lucky at the local supermarket.

Things that you can sow outside right now!

Raddish and Lettuce or Rocket– these grow quite quickly so will give you something to see and try while you are waiting for other crops to be ready.



Potatoes – need a bit of space, if you have a sprouting one in the cupboard dig a hole put it in and see what happens!

Peas and Carrots – these can go straight outside now and are familiar vegetables for most children.



Why not try a new vegetable – something you have never eaten before?

There are lots more vegetables you could try that can be sown outside now or very soon. You could look online and see when you can sow different seeds straight outside into the garden. The back of seed packets will show you when and how to sow.

Try sowing a few seeds of different things to see what works well in your garden. Not everything will work and birds and mice like young seeds too!!

You should be able to get seeds posted out to you, you may find some in supermarkets.

If you are still working with children in school you could get some free seeds by registering with the RHS School Gardening Scheme

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/about-us>

Growing things fills me with joy! I hope it does you too. So get growing!

Sue

Edgmond Hall Centre for Outdoor Learning