



School Gardening
Resources

PRIMARY LEVEL

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD

Preparing The School Garden For The Summer Holidays





Time of Year	June to September
Aim	To prepare the school vegetable garden for the summer holidays.
Resources Needed	Green manures such as Buckwheat (<i>Fagopyrum esculentum</i>), Crimson clover (<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>), sheets of cardboard, well-rotted manure or garden compost, bricks or stones, dwarf sunflower seeds, annuals such as marigolds, cosmos, zinnias, nigella, clarkia, candytuft, coreopsis.
Cross Curriculum Relevance	SESE: Living things, environmental awareness and care SPHE: Active and responsible citizenship Physical Education: Physical activity, cooperation, coordination Informal Curriculum: Discover Primary Science

Process:



1. Rake the beds vacated by vegetables and remove any weeds that have grown.
2. Sow dwarf sunflowers 2.5cm deep in 10cm pots of peat-free compost on a sunny windowsill in late May. When they are about 5cm tall harden them off outside in a sheltered position. Transplant 30cm apart to a vacant vegetable bed in late June that has been enriched with well-rotted compost or manure. They will suppress weeds and attract bees. Harvest the seeds in autumn to feed to birds over the winter.



3. Sow seeds of any of the annuals mentioned in the resource section. Follow the instructions on the packets. These too will suppress weeds and attract pollinators.
4. Sow green manure in another bed or two. Follow the instructions on the packet. This will suppress weeds and enrich the soil.



5. If there are still empty raised beds place a 5cm layer of well-rotted manure or garden compost on each bed. Cover with sheets of cardboard. Prevent these from blowing away by placing bricks or stone on them to keep them in place. Earthworms will pull the organic matter down enriching and aerating the soil in the process.



6. Some parents may volunteer to look after the beds occasionally during the summer. For example, if very dry spells occur, they could water the sunflowers, green manure and annuals and deadhead fading flowers. If the school has a caretaker, he/she should be included in the whole gardening operation. This would include being made aware of the summer gardening plan so that he/she could help with its implementation.

Health and Safety

- ★ A permanent set of health and safety regulations regarding working safely in the garden should be posted in a prominent place for all to see.
- ★ These regulations should include using tools safely and the non-use of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides.

