



Tuesday is our allotment day! Come rain or shine we head across the road to our allotment for some digging, weeding and planting fun. Our journey takes us along the riverside where we enjoy routine stops to say hello to friends, check the pond for tadpoles or count the chickens in their coop.

Our time at the allotment helps the children to appreciate the outdoors as well as develop an understanding of what all living things need to grow; water, sunshine, love and care. The reward of taking home our fabulous fruits and vegetables to share with our family is the best part! The added bonus of mini-beast hunting and the excitement of finding the longest worm or wriggliest centipede adds to the overall fun of the session. We always remind children not to pick, squish or eat anything they may find, helping them learn to respect all living things whilst staying safe outdoors.

Whilst at the allotment children use a wide range of tools that enable them to develop their physical abilities, gross motor skills, co-ordination and strength. As the seasons change our rakes, spades and trowels are put to use helping to prepare the beds ready for planting seeds and bulbs, keep the weeds at bay, water and care for the growing produce before digging them up to share between us.

Our allotment also houses a willow dome which children enjoy spending time in, using their imagination to create and play games together. Another part of our weekly routine is filling up our bird feeders with seeds and nuts, providing opportunity for mathematical language and developing vocabulary.

Our curriculum is based on the principles set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is the framework that all early years providers work within to ensure the best standards of care for your child.

The framework identifies 3 prime learning areas;

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED): Our exciting allotment sessions allow your child to be actively learning, developing their self-confidence, self-awareness and independence whilst building positive relationships through shared experiences.

Communication and Language: Children gain the confidence to naturally express themselves, their thoughts and how they are feeling during every session. As we explore and play in different environments, we provide the opportunity for discussion, questions and learning; talking about what we see, hear, smell and feel.

Physical Development: Our walk to the allotment allows children to run, balance, jump, climb, crawl, roll and everything in between! Children are given the opportunity to use tools to dig, developing their fine and gross motor skills. Throughout the year we plant seeds, maintain the beds, harvest crops and prune the willow dome – all contributing to your child's physical development.

In addition to the 3 prime areas, the EYFS also includes 4 specific learning areas;

Mathematics: Our adventures provide natural opportunities for counting, observing sizes, shapes and patterns within the environment.

Expressive arts and design: Children are encouraged to use their creativity to produce crop markers, decorative stones and bird scarers to keep our crops safe, bright and beautiful.

Literacy: Along our walk we observe any signs, identifying numbers and letters around the village. As a group we are constantly discussing the world around us along our route.

Understanding the world: We visit the allotment in all weathers. As the seasons change, we watch as the world around us changes too, embracing all the seasons and observing nature. Children develop a sense of responsibility and watch as the crops they've planted begin to grow and mature. We are lucky to be able to watch the local wildlife in the pond, for example frog spawn and talk about life cycles.

If you would love your child to come along and join in our allotment fun, please email us on gepsupervisor@hotmail.com or visit our website on www.grindlefordandeyamplaygroup.org.uk