



RETTENDON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY RETTENDON PRIMARY SCHOOL GARDENING



The Rettendon Horticultural Society has pleasure in maintaining links with Rettendon Primary School. This includes a weekly Gardening Club held at the school and a lesson during the day with one of the classes, wholly encouraged by their teacher. In fact we have been and are encouraged by the head teachers, past and present.

We are lucky that there is an area where the children can grow their own vegetables and flowers. The gardening club area is challenging, being in a shady area with no water supply nearby, but we are hoping to move it to a new area where it will receive more sunlight and be easier to water. The area for the class is in a courtyard where there are troughs, planters and pots to grow the vegetables and flowers.



Our remit is to teach the children the practical side of gardening and encourage them to be active. It also teaches them that their vegetables, fruit and flowers are grown and not “magic’d” into existence at the supermarket. Perhaps it will also give them an inkling into how much effort is put into growing and providing the food for the shops to sell.

The club children grow their own plants from seed, putting them in the pots and watering and nurturing them until they can plant them out in the bigger plot to grow and produce vegetables or flowers. Not only have we been able to let them grow the vegetables and take them home to eat, but we have also been able to teach them about the value of insects, including making their own “bug house” to put up for the various insects to overwinter in their own gardens. We were amazed how much they enjoyed doing this, and look forward to giving them another chance later in the year.

The class grow their own as well, and we encourage them to take as much home as possible. We liaise with the teacher about the curriculum so that we can teach the practical side of their science lessons. For instance they learn about bulbs, what roots and leaves do and what the actual bulb is for (food), so we plant bulbs, making sure they know which way up they should go to let the roots collect water and nutrients, and the leaves collect sunlight for food to produce the flowers, etc.

This term we also had an experiment with different types of seed and how they germinated. They noticed which seeds germinated first, and when the stems and leaves grew, and how they leaned towards the light.

Chairperson: Hazel Dale-Evans,

Treasurer: Paul Wright,

Membership: Beryl Wilkinson

Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/>



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Our summer show is full of exhibits by the children, not just gardening but arts, crafts and cookery. In particular we have two competitions throughout the school. The first is where each child plants a seed and grows it on for entry into the show in the vegetable section. This gives the children a chance to look after their own individual plant and when the show is over to take it home to harvest the results. The second competition is for each class to grow a bag of potatoes, with the heaviest crop being the winners. Again we split up the potatoes into smaller lots and the children take them home to eat.



We are all volunteers. We have events during the year to provide the funds to enable us to sponsor the competitions for the children, and to buy the compost, seeds and some of the other equipment the children require for their gardening. Unfortunately our funds are not limitless, we are only a small society with about 60 members. This year the school is in need of some new troughs in the courtyard. The present ones were built by a parent about 15 years ago and are rotting away – as most things do when they get wet all the time.

Barbara Wright
Rettendon Horticultural Society Secretary

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