

## **Bretforton First School**

### **Peace Garden Project**



Bretforton First School has just come to the end of a year long project to create a Peace Garden in the school grounds. The school's Eco Team, made up of children from across the school, have led the project after it was kindly given a donation from the Bretforton Gardening Club and a grant from the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies. The Eco Team had previously worked on many smaller grounds projects but wanted to use this money to develop a larger area of the school grounds.

We are an Eco School that values placing environmental themes at the heart of the children's learning and the Eco Team soon came to the conclusion that they wanted to create a space that would support and enhance our native wildlife. The children had also been marking the Centenary of the First World War and VE Day to mark the end of the Second World War, and felt the theme of a Peace Garden would be a lasting way to remember all those who fought for our freedom.

The whole school has been involved with the project from the initial design and choice of planting through to the practical construction of the garden itself. They researched which plants would attract bees, butterflies and other insects into the garden and what habitats they could include. The children decided they they wanted to include log piles, bug hotels and hedgehog homes along with a place for birds to feed. All of these ideas have been incorporated into the garden along with the development of a bird hide, where the children can observe the wildlife without disturbing it.

Work commenced in the summer term 2015, the children started to clear the site, cut back trees, replace fencing and build insect homes. The second phase saw the development of the pathway and the planting of hardy, insect friendly shrubs and a multitude of spring flowering bulbs. Phase three saw the planting of the hornbeam hedge and the erection of the archways. The final phase focussed on the children creating some amazing art work depicting many of the birds and insects that we hope to attract to our garden.

During the process the children have learnt and developed many useful life-skills and gained a real sense of achievement when each phase was completed. The younger children learnt from the older pupils and all came to realise that team work was vital in getting the different areas of the garden completed.

“It has been so rewarding for the children to see their original design become a finished garden. The children have gained so many new skills and have understood the value of working as a team. They are fascinated by the wildlife that they are able to observe and enjoy discovering more about the different habitats that these creatures require. “

Jo Ellis Eco Co-ordinator

#### Children's comments

“We have learnt how to work together to look after the plants and wildlife.” Warren aged 6

“I have enjoyed putting the trees and pretty plants in that help attract the wildlife.” Martha aged 7

“We hope the Peace Garden will increase the wildlife population now we have improved their habitats.” Amy aged 10

The children will now have the opportunity to use the garden as a quiet reflective space to enjoy watching the visiting wildlife. Over the coming year the Eco Team will monitor and record the different species that are observed in the Peace Garden throughout the seasons and this will inform any future plans for the area.

[www.bretfortonfirst.co.uk](http://www.bretfortonfirst.co.uk)

PHASE 1 - Clearing the site.



PHASE 2 - Laying the pathway.





PHASE 3 – Creating art work for the garden.



The finished garden.





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