



Project Fruitful

A warm welcome from the project founder

Hi! I am Dr David Bourne, a trainee GP in Harrow. I have been working alongside some of the staff and parents, particularly Revd. Norris (Executive Headteacher), Mrs Clarke (Year 2 teacher and Science Leader) and Ian Fernandes (Chair of Governors) to get what we believe is an exciting and hugely beneficial project off the ground at St Jérôme School. Thanks to a generous donation by the school PTFA we have all the equipment and supplies we need to now get Project Fruitful up and running.

Through working with your families, I hope to show you and your children the benefits of growing plants, vegetables and fruit, as well as eating them! We want to be part of the global conversation that we need to take our responsibility for nature seriously but also to enjoy it as much as we possibly can. This project will add to your children's broader learning about the world and nature, their health and wellbeing as well as their understanding about seasons and the environment.

The name Project Fruitful comes from the school's belief that we are all created by God to be fruitful and to flourish in our lives – that is, to grow into mature people who are able to provide help, skills and resources to others and can enjoy life in all its fullness. It is a biblical picture of the goal of humanity, and we hope that as the children see for themselves how a seed with the right nurturing can grow to produce a crop, they will learn that in the right nurturing conditions their lives will do the same. At St Jérôme this is a desire for all the children and we hope you enjoy the process of growth in the safe and loving setting the school provides.

Our intention is to form a community involving myself, staff, parents and pupils so we collectively learn and grow our knowledge and understanding of where our food comes from, nutrition and healthy living.

Kick-off event – Saturday morning, 6th April 2019

We will be holding a kick-off event on the Saturday 6th of April where we will start with a bring-and-share picnic breakfast together and then get stuck in tending to the school's flower beds, preparing the soil and planting seeds.

Our pupils and their siblings are all invited to attend but the supervision of the children will of course remain the responsibility of the attending parent/carer. The morning will run from 8:30am to 11:30am and people can come for as little or as much of the morning their schedule permits.

The plan for the morning is as follows:

- 8.30-9:00am: Meet at the school gates for a bring-and-share breakfast.
- 9:00am: Farmer Tom from Harrow School to bring donated compost to the school
- 9:00-11:00am: Work on the main bed at the front of the school and bed immediately behind it, plant vegetables and begin the herb garden.
- 11:00-11.30am: Discussion with the children about our experiences and what we have learnt.

From the children who come we will be looking for volunteers to look after sowed tomato seeds and seedlings and basil seedlings. Ideally, we will be able to have children from each class represented. They will nurse the plant over the Easter holidays and bring them back to their classes where the whole class will look after them. We will have plenty of tomato seeds and compost so your job is to find a suitable container! Please bring a large yoghurt pot or margarine tub with you if you can.

Mr Towler is kindly preparing the 2 raised beds in the playground and this will then be the focus for the children, as it is especially safe and will be where they are observing the growth of the vegetables during their breaks.

If you plan to come along on the day please let us know by emailing office@stjeromebilingual.org

What we need from you

We hope you are as excited about this project as we are but remember - this project can't succeed without your help. We would love for parents and carers to get involved as much as possible – not only will this be good for you, it will encourage your children to really engage as well.

We would like your help to find:

- Two champion representatives from each class to help coordinate activities and support Mrs Clarke and Mr Towler
- Children (and their parents/carers) from each class who can volunteer and commit to spending 20 minutes after pick up time (3:15pm) to tend the flower beds, herbs and vegetables. Depending on the numbers of volunteers, we will split these children into groups who work on rotation every couple of weeks so everyone gets a chance to participate.



- Volunteers to look after potted plants and vegetables over the holidays and bring them back at the start of the school term

If you are able to help with any or all of the above please email the school at office@stjeromebilingual.org with the subject line: Project Fruitful.

Here are some ideas for the time ahead (if you have any additional suggestions – please let us know!).

Plan of Action – April -July

Reception

Look after salad and herbs in their area (your role will get even more exciting)

Years 1 and 2

A way of getting lots of children involved and facilitating leadership and friendship across years is the following model.

Two rear beds – divided into four areas to allow for crop rotation (teaching point)

Bed 1 - looked after by Year 1 Group A and Year 2 Group A

Bed 2 - looked after by Year 1 Group B and Year 2 Group B

We will need a list of interested children in each class.

Each week 4 children from each class are to look after their raised bed – 8 for bed 1 and 8 for bed 2

During designated after school session, children are put in pairs, so that the older child can help and encourage the younger child. Each pair focuses on a quarter of the bed.

Initial jobs: weeding, thinning and watering.

Our plans are flexible and will evolve as the project develops.