

## Learning through Growing Projects in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Exploration of the outdoor environment and real experiences of growing things outdoors supports all of the six Areas of Learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. This chart is a quick reference guide to indicate some possible links to Early Learning Goals and Stepping Stones in each area.

### Personal, Social and Emotional

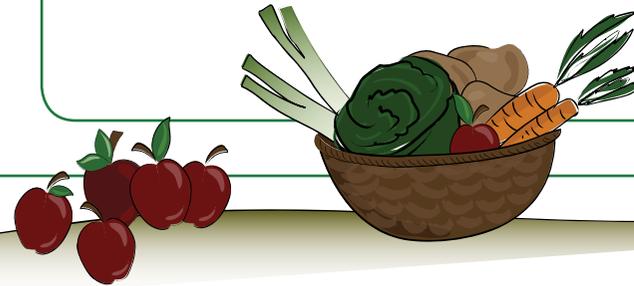
- 🌿 **Dispositions and motivation to learn**  
What can be more exciting than sowing, growing, harvesting?
- 🌿 **Self-confidence and relationships**  
Growing, harvesting, sharing and eating is rewarding, develops self-esteem and care and consideration for others
- 🌿 **Develop respect for others and a sense of community**  
Growing plants and using recipes from around the world can involve the whole community and celebrate many cultures
- 🌿 **Form relationships and work as part of a group**  
Watering, weeding and picking involve teamwork, and self-control
- 🌿 **Manage clothes and hygiene**  
Working outside involves practice in care of self – getting dressed, washing hands and wellies

### Communication, Language and Literacy

- 🌿 **Interact with others, speaking, listening and thinking**  
Growing things outdoors involves lots of conversation and planning. When and how do we sow, feed and harvest?
- 🌿 **Respond to stories and retell narratives**  
There are lots of stories, songs and rhymes about planting giant beans, harvesting pumpkins and pulling up that turnip
- 🌿 **Hear and say sounds**  
Being outdoors can make listening easier – or more challenging
- 🌿 **Extend vocabulary and read and write simple words**  
So many new things to see and learn to say and write and read - labels for the plants, tools and storage, shopping lists, recipes

### Problem solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

- 🌿 **Numbers and calculation**  
Counting your seed and produce, and sharing it out
- 🌿 **Use mathematical ideas to solve practical problems**  
This hose is too short to reach those beds - what can I do? I need more soil for this bed – how do I move it from there to here?
- 🌿 **Recognise and recreate simple patterns**  
How many petals does that flower have? Planting all in row – or in circles or all along the path?
- 🌿 **Use language to describe mathematical concepts – position, shape, size, weight**  
This carrot is short and pointy and grew in the ground but the marrow is long and grew on top of the soil. Those apples are round and above my head. Your watering can is heavier because it has more water in it



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### Knowledge and Understanding of the World

#### Explore and investigate objects and materials using all senses

Being with the elements of earth, air, water, the changing weather and seasons and growing your own food gives so much to investigate using touch, taste, and smell

#### Observe and find out features of living things and events

There is a lot to see and notice – how are the birds and insects supporting or harming the plants you are growing?

#### Ask questions about why and how things happen and how they work

Why do bees like flowers? What happens to the plants if the soil dries out or if there is a late frost?

#### Select tools and techniques, build and construct, use technology

Can we build something to collect water from the shed roof to water our plants? What can we use to transport soil/produce as needed?

#### Place, time and use of technology

What things grow well here? Where does our food come from? What about food that we cannot grow that we buy in shops? How did they grow and eat when grandma was little? How can we use technology (e.g. cameras) to record what we are doing over time?



### Physical Development

#### Movement and space

Growing things requires a range of large muscle and fine motor control: from digging the soil to picking out seedlings

#### Health and body awareness

Growing things helps children learn what can be safely eaten and what is poisonous. They can learn about the goodness and good taste of fresh produce just picked

#### Using equipment and materials

There are a lot of opportunities to use a range of tools and to handle different materials – from earth to plants and little creatures.

Growing things is an ideal way to learn to manage risks and use tools safely

### Creative Development

#### Responding to experiences and communicating ideas

Children outside will quickly respond to what they see hear, smell, touch and feel and bring this into their creative work and play

#### Developing imagination and imaginative play

Why not set up a garden centre for role play?

#### Exploring media and material

Paint, model, draw and stick what you have seen, tasted, touched and smelled in the vegetable patch. Use materials found outside for creative projects; explore the properties and textures of the elements of water, soil, sand, wood and stone