



Collis Cuttings

30th April 2010

CSA Eco Group

Hello, welcome to Collis Cuttings the newsletter that updates you on the activities of the CSA Eco Group. The Eco Group is a sub group of the CSA which helps the school with environmental activities including:

Developing and maintaining the Nature Area and ensuring it is an exciting place for teachers and children to visit to spot plants and animals, try pond dipping or enjoy a story in the willow dome;

Maintaining the beds and the greenhouse so that they are ready for classes to enjoy gardening activities and produce some fruit, vegetables and herbs for use in the school kitchen as part of hot lunches;

Raising money to fund projects e.g. by growing and selling plants;

Supporting the school and its community to become more environmentally-friendly e.g. by considering issues such as energy consumption and waste and having eco-related stands and activities at school events;

Participating in community events such as "Teddington in Flower" and the Schools Environment Forum.

Next CSA Eco Group Meeting, Friday 7 May 1.45pm

We are actively seeking more help with all the activities we have planned for this term. As the weather is so good we have decided to risk holding a daytime meeting in the Nature Area on Friday 7 May from 1.45pm until pick-up time. If you would like to join us please just come along. If you can't make that day but would like to join contact Vicky Phillips on vmphillips@btinternet.com or 07976 318586 or talk to her in the playground.

Changes in the Nature Area

Thanks to Richmond Civic Trust, who gave us a grant of £1,410, we have been able to build a new decking area around the pond so more children can go pond dipping. Over the winter we also had many of the paths rebuilt and widened to make access easier and safer and the trees have been pruned. Now we need to find the time to paint the decking!

We have bought a huge new round recycled table for the seating area near the pond so when teachers take their classes out they have somewhere to sit down, write and draw. The table is made out of 4,200 plastic 4pt milk cartons!

We will open the Nature Area to parents and children after school on Thursday 13th May so that everyone can admire the improvements.

Ice Lolly sticks!!

Now the weather is warming up, we will all soon be enjoying an ice lolly or two. Lolly pop sticks make excellent plant labels; please can you keep your sticks and give them to the school office in a bag marked for the CSA. Thank you.

Gardening Activities

Following the success of last year's growing activities with Years 2, 3 & 4 we are doing it again and some of the classes have already been out to the greenhouse or sown seeds in their classrooms.

The teachers need parents to take the children out during the day for these activities, so if you would like to help, please let your class rep or teacher know. There is plenty of help and support available if you need it. Sue Croft is happy to talk to anyone who would like to know more about what is involved. Contact her on sue_croft@btinternet.com or 07950 313677 or talk to her in the playground. Here's a selection of what is going on:

- Year 1 have "veggie tanks" outside their class and are growing a selection of vegetables and having an inter class competition to see who can grow the tallest runner bean.
- Year 2 are growing some flowers, peas and sunflowers.
- Year 3 are growing tomatoes which they will monitor as part of their curriculum work and take home to enjoy with their families. Last year they grew some extra plants in the greenhouse and beds and we were able to supply Rachel in the school kitchen with homemade passatta for lunchtime pasta. This year we hope to repeat this and to also use some green tomatoes to produce exclusive Collis Chutney!
- Year 4 are studying the Second World War and have a 'dig for victory' bed outside their classrooms.
- Volunteers from years 5 & 6 will look after the Tudor knot garden in their courtyard. Year 6 are also looking after the Giant pumpkin. Last year's pumpkin was carved ready for a Halloween lunch display and Rachel made a fantastic pumpkin soup.
- Sue Croft and Peter Rogers from the Eco Group have been hard at work rescuing another old water tank from a skip, stripping off the pipe work and filling it with compost. The Green Team will plant it up with herbs for the kitchen staff to use in school lunches.

Plant Sales at Dad's Football on Saturday 15th May 10-1pm

Teddington in Flower: Sunday 13th June, 2-6pm

Our plant sale last Friday made £120 towards eco activities: thanks to everyone who came to buy. However that was only a warm-up event! On Saturday 15th May we will be holding an even bigger and better plant sale at the Dad's Football Tournament as it will be the perfect time for vegetable seedlings and more tender plants. Please come along and bring friends and family: entry is free. We would again really appreciate donations of plants (preferably labelled!) and gardening sundries such as nice pots and tools for sale. If anyone has any greenhouse space and could look after seedlings please contact Sue (see above).

On Sunday 13th June we will again be taking part in Teddington in Flower. For the fourth year running, we will be opening up the Nature Area to the public and selling plants and refreshments. More details nearer the time.

