

# Why we do what we do

## HORTICULTURE

**Gardening is often thought of as a hobby for the older generation, but gardening can be enjoyed by anyone and has many health benefits for people of all ages.**

### **1. Improves Mood and Reduces Stress**

Spending time outdoors is vital for improving or maintaining positive mental health. Research has shown that by undertaking simple gardening activities, people can reduce their stress levels, and improve their mood and self-esteem.

### **2. Gardening is a Form of Exercise**

Studies have found that the average child only spends 16 minutes per day outside, and less than 25% of children meet the recommended daily level of physical activity. Digging and working in the garden promotes increased levels of exercise, and helps children use their imagination and creativity.

### **3. Get Closer to Nature**

Students will love planting flowers which attract bees and butterflies into the garden space. Planting sunflowers, lavender, buddleia and roses will attract pollinators into your garden.

### **4. Encourages Healthy Eating**

You don't just have to plant flowers in your garden, why not try planting fruit or vegetables instead! By planting seeds or plants, we can teach your child how food is grown and the lifecycle of a plant. We have recently planted some strawberry plants in the garden and the students loved helping us water the plants.

### **5. Encourages Sensory Development**

Gardening will stimulate all five senses, students feel different textures in the soil, seeds and plants, and they will be able to smell the flowers, hear the bees and birds, see the different colours of the plants and taste any vegetables, herbs or fruits we grow together.

### **6. Allows You to Spend Quality Time Together**

Life can be very hectic sometimes, with work, the school run and the never ending to do list to get through at home. Gardening allows you to take a step back and enjoy some mindful activity away from distractions; the perfect way to connect with your child and enjoy the simple things in life.

### **7. It's Fun**

With the cost-of-living crisis being all too real for many families, gardening is an inexpensive way of having fun. You don't need expensive tools or plants to make a beautiful garden, just some pots, soil and some seeds, which in time, can blossom into a welcoming outdoor space and provide hours of fun along the way.