

School Garden

Best Practice Examples

This brochure has been created as part of the Erasmus+ project *School Garden goes Europe* by partners from Germany, Austria and Hungary.

It presents school and university gardens of different kinds and countries around Europe as best practice examples for garden-based learning and teaching.

Visit the project website for further informations:

<https://www.bag-schulgarten.de/erasmus/project-school-garden-goes-europe>



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Table of contents

Pages

Germany

Gartenarbeitsschule Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg	4
GLEKS - Grüne Lernlandschaften Eugen-Kaiser-Schule	5
Private Montessorischule Soden	6
Pädagogische Hochschule Karlsruhe	7
Freie Waldorfschule Heidelberg - Arche Hof	8

Austria

BAfEP Linz (Bildungsanstalt für Elementarpädagogik)	10
HLWest Innsbruck	11
VS Bezau	12
Lehr- und Lerngarten der Universität Innsbruck	13
Die GartenTulln	14

Hungary

Apáczai Faculty, Széchenyi István University	16
Gregor József Általános Iskola	17
Eötvös Loránd Általános Iskola és AMI	18
Debreceni Gönczy Pál Általános Iskola	19
Szent István Körúti EGYMI	20

Belgium

GO! Methodeschool Ondersteboven	22
Biotechnicum Bocholt	23
GO! Freinetschool De Mijlpaal	24
PBS Voeren	25

Czech Republic

Chaloupky, centres for environmental education and social entrepreneurship	27
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

France

Ecole des trois Cailloux	29
Ecole primaire Antony Hanry	30
Goethe-Institut Nancy-Straßburg	31

Slovenia

Osnovna šola Ivana Cankarja Vrhnika	33
Osnovna šola Polzela	34
Osnovna šola Maksa Pleteršnika Pišece	35
Srednja trgovska šola Ljubljana	36
Vrtec »Otona Župančiča« Slovenska Bistrica, Enota Studenice	37

Serbia

Beszédes József Mezőgazdasági és Műszaki Iskolaközpont	39
--------------------------------------------------------------	----

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is one of the great challenges today. The goal is to open up educational opportunities to all people, which will enable them to acquire knowledge and values, behaviours and lifestyles that are necessary for a future worth living. **School Gardens** as authentic learning environments are promising settings to develop sustainable relevant competences. Garden-based learning activities provide students with necessary basic knowledge to understand ecological coherences which are the key to further understanding. A core aim of the project was the exchange of experiences and a sharing of best practice with the focus on teachers and students as future educators.

Prof. Dr. Dorothee Benkowitz
Pädagogische Hochschule Karlsruhe (D)

HS-Prof. Mag. Dr. habil. Stefan Jarau
Pädagogische Hochschule Vorarlberg (A)

Dr. Halbritter András Albert
Széchenyi István Egyetem Győr (HU)

Svenja Baumgartinger, Lena Bucher
Pädagogische Hochschule Weingarten (D)

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Best Practice Examples Germany





Gartenarbeitsschule Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg

Type of school: Vocational school with special educational tasks

Contact person: Urte Gladigau

Name of the school:
August-Sander-Schule

 **Homepage:**

<https://www.august-sander-schule.de/schulportrait/gartenarbeitsschule>

The Gartenarbeitsschule serves as a green learning place for daycare groups and school classes in environmental education, school garden work, and animal care.

Diverse teaching units are offered here for all school classes in the district. There is the possibility to create and maintain school class beds. Vocational school students from the August-Sander-Schule support the learning site.

It is affiliated with the vocational school, and the grounds are managed by approximately 60 students in vocational preparation and orientation.

There are 14 Gartenarbeitsschulen in Berlin.



Integration into lessons: The Gartenarbeitsschule offers activities, open programmes and projects year-round, to day care centres, mainstream schools and other facilities in the locality. School classes and kindergarten groups from the surrounding area can make use of these activities and dedicated garden areas. This allows many mainstream schools in densely populated urban areas to engage in gardening activities that they might not otherwise have access to. There is a curriculum integration in both vocational education and general education. The vocational school provides practical instruction in vocational preparatory courses for young people, including courses that focus on intellectual development, learning, social-emotional development and hearing.

Garden features:

Raised beds, sunken garden, crop rotation, animal enclosures, herb garden, insect beds, climate bed, farmhouse garden, vegetable beds, fodder cultivation.

Main focus:

Cultivation and processing of garden products, animal care, garden and landscaping, conservation work, cultural guidance.

Special projects:

Bees, bird nesting boxes and winter birds, turtle care, poultry (both for utility and ornamental purposes), sheep and goats, rodents.

Management:

2 teachers
3 gardeners
3 teachers for practical instruction
3 volunteers doing a Federal Voluntary Service (FÖJ)
2 MAE (Municipal Job Opportunities) employees and one teacher from the district.

Community collaboration:

District
Vocational school

Fidel Castro's spectacled caiman

For nearly 50 years, a spectacled caiman has lived in our school garden, surrounded by many stories and myths. It's possible that he, along with another (who passed away in 1979), was once gifted to an East Berlin traveling circus by Fidel Castro. After the circus (possibly this one?) was disbanded, two spectacled caimans and a small yellow duck were given to the school garden. Unfortunately, during a fire in the 1970s, the animals' documents were destroyed, so their original source remains uncertain. Since the early 1970s, these animals have lived in the school garden, and one of the caimans did not survive the snowstorm in 1979. Until recently, the surviving caiman was named Elvira, but a veterinary treatment made us rethink his gender: now he's called Elvis. He is an attraction and a small celebrity in our school garden.

"A green oasis in the middle of a sea of houses"



GLEKS - Grüne Lernlandschaften Eugen-Kaiser-Schule

Type of school:

Independent vocational school

Contact person: Laura Tuschen
Laura.tuschen@eks-hanau.de

Name of the school: Eugen-Kaiser-Schule Hanau

Homepage:

<http://www.eks-hanau.de/fuer-bewerberinnen-und-bewerber/berufsschule-duale-ausbildung/gaertner-in>

2010, the idea for the "GLEKS" project emerged from an uninviting schoolyard and an adjacent, unattractive 6,000 square meter area. Leased by the school authority, these areas have since been gradually transformed into both a green learning space and a recreational oasis. Many sub-projects have resulted in areas for relaxation, practice, play, culture, and gardening. The existing large trees have been integrated, providing shade throughout the park. The changing seasons and emerging project ideas provide the park with significant learning potential and an impressive dynamism.



Integration into lessons: EKS is an independent vocational school with approximately 1,800 learners in various full-time and part-time school forms. The fields of agriculture, construction technology, nutrition, color technology and interior design, nursing and health, and social services are offered. The initial impetus for the construction of GLEKS came from the "green department." Learners from full-time school forms, dual training programs for gardeners, students with a focus on "intellectual development," and students from the vocational school for garden and landscape construction plan, build, and maintain the areas while learning in and through the park. "Non-green" learners from the EKS, for example, design plant signs, participate in the construction of seating furniture or beekeeping, and serve guests with products from the bakehouse.



Eugen-Kaiser-Schule Hanau. Selbstständige berufliche Schule
Berufs- | Berufsfach- | Höhere Berufsfach- | Fach- und Fachoberschule



Garden features:

Sensory garden, farmhouse garden, green training greenhouse, research corner, school apiary, teaching site, bakehouse, Mediterranean container plant nursery.

Main focus:

Learning in the field of agriculture, living and experiencing sustainability, opening the school to the outside world.

Special projects:

Thousands of planted spring onions throughout the park, outdoor chessboard.

Management:

Teachers from the "green department" with their classes, as well as seasonal garden maintenance by companies within the school authority's budget.

Community collaboration:

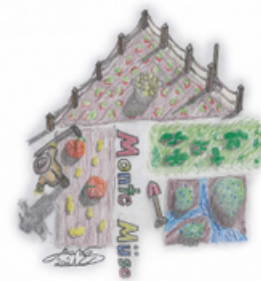
Members of the Friends and Supporters Circle of GLEKS e.V., training companies, Hanau Retirement Home.

A garden for all senses

The sensory garden was built for visitors from the opposite retirement home. Easy access, wide pathways, adapted seating furniture, and a planting scheme that enables basic sensory experiences all help to evoke memories and provide a special time for the visitors.

"One fundamental idea of this park is to never consider it finished!"





Private Montessorischule Soden

Type of school:

Primary and secondary school

Contact Person:

Heike Gutwerk
heike.gutwerk@montessorischule-aschaffenburg.de

Name of the school garden:

Monte Müse

Homepage:

<https://www.montessorischule-aschaffenburg.de/>

We are fortunate that our school building is a former sanatorium, which used to be self-sustaining and thus has a very large garden. Our secondary school (primarily 7th and 8th grade) manages fourteen large fields. We are supported by Acker e.V. The project has been funded for four years by AOK Aschaffenburg.



Integration into lessons:

We have a double period available each week during school hours for gardening activities, including our student company "Monte Müse." The students in the student company do a lot in managing the garden and do so in a responsible manner. The student company is divided into 5 groups. The "Project Planning" group plans what will be planted in the garden, among other tasks. Another group is responsible for harvesting and marketing. For parents, we offer a Monte Müse subscription bag that is given to the children weekly to take home, and we also have street sales. The "Cashier" group handles financial matters. The "Communication" group maintains contact with our customers and regularly writes reports for our school's internal weekly memo. The "Marketing" group takes care of advertising, creates promotional materials, and has set up an Instagram page.

Garden features:

14 beds, 2 greenhouses, 1 shelter, fruit trees and bushes, meadow.

Main focus:

Cultivation and marketing by the student company Monte Müse.

Special projects:

Cultivation of ancient crops.

Management:

1 educator
School garden AG (Working Group)

Community cooperation:

Acker e.V.
AOK Aschaffenburg

Discovery of a slowworm

The absolute highlight for us so far was when, in the first year while preparing the beds, we discovered a slowworm. Subsequently, the students spent a long time studying the animal and its habits.



"Let's get outside!" - Quote from a student



Pädagogische Hochschule Karlsruhe



Type of school:

University of Education

Contact person:

Prof. Dr. Dorothee Benkowitz

Name of the school garden:

Ökologischer Lerngarten

Homepage:

<https://www.ph-karlsruhe.de/campus/oekologischer-lerngarten>

Since 1986, there has been a focus on garden-based learning in the curriculum of Biology students at the university go education in Karlsruhe. Consequently, there has been a university garden where students are qualified for the planning, care taking, and educational implementation of school gardens. Since 2009, at a new location with a new concept, designed together with students, the university garden has become a learning space for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and a hotspot for biodiversity. In 2017, the lecturers were awarded the university's teaching prize for this concept. In 2023 the garden was conferred the "Natur im Garten" distinction on ecological gardening.



Integration into lessons/seminars:

The Ecological Learning Garden is designed and used by teacher trainees and early childhood educators, as well as students of MA Biodiversity and Environmental Education. The focus is on competencies for implementing ESD in the school garden as a learning environment.

Currently, there are three parallel courses offered, with a focus on sustainable cultivation of plants including climate-friendly water management. In addition, there is a beekeeping course led by a volunteer beekeeper, a seminar on soil ecology, and habitat maintenance. For childhood educators, various seminars for science education and nature experiences are offered.

Garden features:

Raised beds, compost, wild shrubs with edible fruits, herb spiral, hedges, stone oven, vegetable beds, perennial borders, fruit trees, sensory garden, ornamental shrubs, orchard meadow, dry beds and biotopes, pond, stream, forest with early forest bloomers, nesting aids, honey bees, solar panels and rain water tanks.

Main focus:

Learning garden for Biology students and early educators as well as a model school garden for teachers and educators. Therefore, there are many garden elements and biotope implemented.

Special projects:

The English Department hosts an annual poetry reading event called "Poetry in the Garden".

Management:

3 lecturers
3 students
1 beekeeper (volunteer)
1 gardener at 50% capacity
1 technical assistant at 50% capacity

Community collaboration:

Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft Schulgarten Ba.-Wü. (LAGS), Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Schulgarten (BAGS), City of Karlsruhe (Gardening Office), Botanical Garden of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

Open Day

Every year, an "Open Day" is hosted. Representatives from the city, the regional government, ministries (MKJS, MLR), the state and federal working groups for school gardens, the university community, as well as teachers with their school classes, are invited to this event. The students prepare interesting actions for the children and adults.

"In the garden, we learn patience :)

First planning, then starting!

We learn respect for animals and plants - even for weeds!"





Freie Waldorfschule Heidelberg

Type of school:

Waldorf school

Contact Person:

info@waldorfschule-hd.de
06221-8201-0

Name of the schoolgarden:

Ökologischer Lerngarten

Homepage:

<https://www.waldorf-hd.de/arche-hof/ueber-unseren-arche-hof.html>

From the first grade onwards, we instill a lively understanding of nature in our students through practical work in beautiful and ecologically designed school grounds. A unique feature is our school farm with old, endangered livestock breeds. During school hours, the care of the animals is an integral part of the subject of horticulture and the daily life of the younger children. Traditional horticultural instruction includes vegetable cultivation, fruit harvesting including the processing of fruits and vegetables for our school kitchen.



Integration into lessons:

In the morning, students from grades one to three feed the animals (in rotating groups). Students from grades five to eight have horticulture lessons in: vegetable cultivation; fruit cultivation; compost management; baking in the bakehouse; seedlings. Students do projects on for example, the third agricultural revolution or apple juice production. Daily tasks include: cleaning the stables; moving the sheep to new pastures and all other seasonal chores. We have an afternoon course in animal care and "All About Horses" starting from grade two.

Garden features:

Class beds, student beds, cereal field, potato field, berry orchard, greenhouse, herb spiral.

Main focus:

Ark farm for the preservation of old and endangered livestock breeds, animal care and breeding, ecological agriculture, processing of agricultural products.

Special projects:

Crop farming unit of the 3rd grade, apple juice production, 5th-grade bee project.

Management:

Employed horticulture teacher, employed assistant, many volunteers.

Communiy collaboration:

Ark Farm Circle Mannheimer Hans-Müller-Wiedemann School (young people in need of spiritual care): offering regular internships at the Ark Farm Werkgemeinschaft Martinshof: "Inclusion project Ark Farm". Parents and children: caring for the animals at weekends and during holidays, for example, while camping in the school garden's school kitchen.

An Ark for Endangered Livestock Breeds

Since October 2008, our school has maintained an Ark farm recognized by the Society for the Preservation of Old and Endangered Livestock Breeds (GEH). On our school farm, which spans 3 hectares of land, we keep sheep, chickens, geese, runner ducks, and two horses. There are also beehives on the premises. The Ark farm is integrated into the school's educational concept and is supervised by gardening teachers, along with the students, the inclusion project "Martinshof," and many helping hands from parents and the Friends' Circle.

"The compost may stink, but it's still fun here!" - a 5th grader





Best Practice
Example
Austria



BAfEP Linz (Bildungsanstalt für Elementarpädagogik)

Type of school:

Elementary education institution

Contact person: Claudia Troia
claudia.troia@bafep-linz.at

Name of the school: "grüne Oase"
mitten in der Stadt



Homepage: <https://www.bafep-linz.at/naturerleben.html>

"This school garden has changed the atmosphere of our school. When I come to school in the morning through the school garden, I am immediately more motivated to live my daily life." (G.E.)

Integration into lessons:

(Botany / Ecology): Creating precursor crops, observing nature, and documentation.

Science: Garden maintenance throughout the year; approximately six students work in the garden on a weekly basis and learn a lot about organic gardening.

Nutrition Science: Harvesting and cooking fruits and vegetables; future early childhood educators learn about the importance of this topic for their work and acquire practical knowledge for working with children.

Teaching Methods: Applying organic gardening methods in kindergarten settings

Crafts: Designing elements and objects in the garden: signage, clay figures, seating arrangements, flower beds, etc.

From 2018 to 2022, 1400 square meters of monotonous space around the school building were transformed into a natural garden. Approximately 60 teachers and 600 students were involved in this process. Numerous workshops were held, when this transformation took place with active participation from the students and teachers. Parents and relatives of the students supported the project with various donations. Finally, the project was also funded by public resources. The green oasis in the middle of the city now hosts a wide variety of species.

Garden features:

Educational Garden: raised beds; berry hedge; rock garden; herb bed; potato tower.

Creation Garden: mini pond; flower bed; various plants mentioned in the holy scriptures; meditation retreat area; hedge with native shrubs; small wildflower meadow; various flower beds.

Rose Garden.

Cottage Garden: dry stone wall; seating arena and circle; spring fountain and barefoot path; bog bed; wild corner and deadwood fence; willow pavilion; compost heap.

Main focus:

Engagement in the training of multipliers with the aim that future kindergarten educators will apply their knowledge of organic gardening in kindergartens and help children reconnect with nature.

Management:

Professional supervision and workshops provided by the Climate Alliance.

Pulling together as one

The extraordinary thing about this school garden is its history, marked by the involvement of numerous individuals within and outside the school community. It serves as a testament that change is possible when many people come together and work toward a common goal.



HLWest Innsbruck

School type: Higher Secondary School for Economic Professions.(HLW)

Contact person: Simon Hofer
s.hofer@hlwest.at

Name of the school garden:
Gemeinschaftsgarten - HLWest

Homepage: www.hlwest.at

<https://www.instagram.com/hlwest>



In the 2020/21 school year, the project "Community Garden - HLWest" was launched at HLWest Innsbruck. Our goal is to redesign a garden area at the school site. So far, in our garden, a large vegetable bed, a herb bed, and a raised bed have been built. Shrubs and trees have also been planted. Our community garden is being created in collaboration with neighbors of the school. We are trying to follow the "open schooling" approach and open the school to individuals who are not part of the school community. The Department of Subject-Specific Education (Unit of Mathematics and Science Education) at the University of Innsbruck has significantly contributed to the realization of this project within the framework of the MOST project. This project was funded by the EU Horizon 2020.

"The supporters all write back really nicely on WhatsApp." - Student

Integration into lessons

Every year, a class takes on the organization of the garden. The students have two project hours each week for garden work. Together, the class comes up with specific tasks for each student. We also have tasks apart from gardening. For instance, some students try to promote the school garden on social media, communicate with the neighbors, or seek new sponsors. Two students, for example, made products like chili oil from our cultivated chilies and successfully sold them in cooperation with the business subjects. The grown vegetables and herbs are used in cooking classes. Several dishes have already been prepared in our company kitchen using only self-grown produce.

Garden features:

Vegetable bed, herb bed, raised bed, fruit trees.

Main focus:

Cultivation of vegetables and herbs for our school kitchens, production of products.

Special projects:

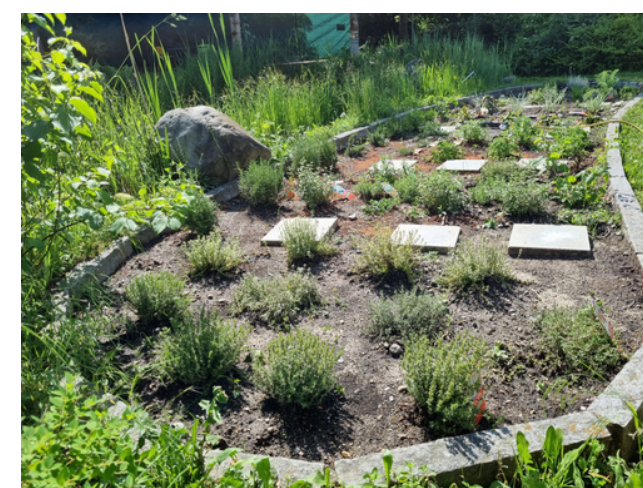
Management of the garden as a community garden.

Management:

Community garden with people from the neighborhood.

Community collaboration:

Neighbors, sponsors, University of Innsbruck (MOST project).



Open Schooling

Design as a community garden: We follow the "open schooling" approach and try to open the school to the neighborhood through our garden. Hobby gardeners work together with our students to design the school garden.



VS Bezau

Type of school : Primary school

Contact person:

Isabella Moosbrugger
isabella.moosbrugger@tmo.at
Tel: 0664 4391757

Name of the schoolgarden:

Bahnhofsgarten Bezau

 **Homepage:**

www.vs-bezau.vobs.at



In collaboration with the Gartenfreunde Bezau, the idea emerged to develop an annual project for each 3rd-grade class. With the tremendous support of Isabella Moosbrugger, the beds are prepared and planted together every spring. Afterwards, it is essential to care for the beds, and the children learn a lot about vegetable cultivation, beneficial insects, pests, and experience the cycle of nature with all their senses. Even in the summer, the garden is visited and tended to by some children every week. In the autumn, in the 4th grade, the gardening year concludes with the harvest, the utilization of various herbs and vegetables, and a festive celebration.

Integration into lessons:

School garden is integrated into the science curriculum thus: getting to know different types of vegetables and herbs; learning how a garden can be used as a living and recreational space; understanding and experiencing the process of planting and what is beneficial or harmful in the garden; exploring natural methods of pest control; raising awareness about food production without transportation; learning how to preserve and store food in various ways; celebrating the harvest!

Garden elements:

Fruits
Garden shed.

Main emphasis:

Cultivation: Various vegetable varieties, tea plants, herbs, fruits.
Processing into: Herbal salts or blends, vinegars, sauerkraut, seed mixtures, tea blends.

Special projects:

Various flowering perennials, popcorn project, potato project with Thanksgiving.

Management:

Garden educator: Isabella Moosbrugger.

Community collaboration:

With Lebenshilfe directly in the garden.
Kindergarten Bezau,
Gartenfreunde (Gardeners' club)

The children visit the garden every week from April to the end of October, ensuring that the garden is continuously maintained and yields a bountiful harvest. Garden activities range from soil preparation to sowing, planting, harvesting, and processing vegetables, flowers, and herbs.



"Oh, it's such a shame that I've only just realized how much I enjoy gardening!" - Student



Lehr- und Lerngarten der Universität Innsbruck

Type of school:

University Innsbruck, Faculty of Teacher education

Contact Person :

Elisabeth Carli
elisabeth.carli@uibk.ac.at

Name of the school garden:

Lehr- und Lerngarten der Universität Innsbruck

Homepage:

<https://www.uibk.ac.at/de/ifd/mse/schulgarten>

The more green areas around us suffer urbanization, the more appreciation for our leafy oasis increases. Our students' school garden is located next to the Technology Campus on the outskirts of Innsbruck. This garden comes alive due to our student teachers' ideas, visions and hands on activities they develop for their future garden teaching. The garden combines vertical gardening elements with conventional raised vegetable beds and a mushroom garden. Learners experience nature on forest trails and gain specific knowledge about plant anatomy or a better understanding of material cycles. All of this occurs within a framework of sustainable development.



Integration into curriculum:

In courses like "teaching and learning in School gardens", future teachers learn to use gardens as a multifunctional place of teaching and learning in which they combine theoretical and practical aspects of learning. The courses cover various topics within a framework of education for sustainable development (ESD) and interdisciplinary work. The student teachers develop a learning programme, which brings different teaching subjects into our garden through interdisciplinary work. Therefore our garden provides a multitude of opportunities for this interdisciplinary approach (e.g. creating thematic vegetable beds, building beds in different geometric forms, experimenting with different methods of vegetative reproduction to reduce food waste). In addition, we educate students from other faculties in how to design participatory projects that deal with questions such as 'What are the local and global challenges now and in the future?' or 'How can sustainable and safe food be provided in urban areas?'

Garden features:

raised beds, vertical gardening features, green roof, Benjes' hedge, mushroom garden, meadow of wild flowers, covered beds for winter salads, glass roofed bed for tomatoes, fireplace, herbs.

Main focus:

Space saving urban gardening features, ecological gardening taking into consideration biodiversity and sustainable aspects, interdisciplinary approaches in garden learning.

Special projects:

aquaponic system.

Management:

One hired person.

Community collaboration:

Nearby schools and a wide range of national and international project partners.



A place of teaching and research

Embedded in an overgrown area we use our garden jointly with the department of biology as a place of teaching and research. As such, we have access to various ecological niches and the proximity to the specialist sciences often opens up fruitful cooperation. Architecture students were able to apply their theoretical knowledge about sustainable architecture by designing and building a terrace and a cozy shed for our garden.

"For me, this garden is a very special meeting place. It is a place where pupils, future teachers, teachers, scientists, and other citizens meet; and also a place where subject-specific and interdisciplinary learning takes place. Theoretical knowledge and practical action, nature and culture, models and illustrative objects come together in one place. Thereby, this garden enables versatile and particularly memorable experiences." - Dr. Johanna Taglieber [teacher]



DIE GARTEN TULLN - the 'Natur im Garten' experience

Type of school:

Model School Garden by 'Natur im Garten'

Contact person:

„Natur im Garten“ GmbH
post@naturimgarten.at
+43 274374333

Name of the school garden:

Model-School Garden by 'Natur im Garten'”

Homepage:

<http://naturimgarten.at>
<http://diegartentulln.at>

The roughly 4000 sq.m Model-School Garden is one of the 70+ show gardens exhibited at Europe's first Ecological Garden Show 'DIE GARTEN TULLN', situated in Tulln an der Donau /Lower Austria. You can visit during opening season between April and October. With this garden we aim to promote green spaces of schools for teaching, learning, creativity, free play and building social skills.



Integration into lessons:

'Natur im Garten' conducts vocational training for teachers and students in the Model-School Garden to illustrate the use of close-to-nature gardens and green spaces for hands-on learning throughout all subjects. Schools and kindergartens can book workshops on various garden topics conducted by trained nature mediators.

Garden features:

Outdoor classroom, DIY outdoor blackboard, Polytunnel, DIY kitchen sink, raised beds, compost, wurm box, low maintenance shrub and herb beds focused on insect friendly blossoms, hedges, wild corners, garden hut, rain barrels, hammocks, insect hotels.

Main focus:

Demonstration of School Garden design and usage throughout different subjects. Suitable plants choices.

Special projects:

Climate protection and adaptation solutions (alternatives to sealing the ground, mulching, structuring of shrub beds, water saving, avoiding peat etc.); certified model nature school garden.

Management:

'Natur im Garten' employees and gardeners working at DIE GARTEN TULLN.

Community collaborations:

Hochschule für Agrar- und Umweltpädagogik, Vienna; Lower Austria schools and kindergartens.

The Model School-Garden presents solutions for big and small budgets but first of all inspires to dream big when it comes to your school grounds. Make sure that it's an ever growing project and children get to have a say in recreating it. Low-maintenance solutions and plant arrangements that promote the animal world and help us adapt to our future climate are key.



'A School Garden is never finished.'





Best Practice Examples Hungary





Apáczai Faculty, Széchenyi István University

Type of school:

University (with teacher training and praxis primary school)

Contact person:

András Albert Halbritter, dr.
halbritter.andras@sze.hu,
+36 30 4094892

Name of the school garden:

Apáczai Garden

Homepage:

<http://facebook.com/apaczaikert>

The faculty and garden are named after Apáczai Csere János (1625-1659) a Hungarian pedagogue, philosopher, theologian, writer of the first Hungarian encyclopaedia. The original faculty (in 1884 as a teacher training institute) had a large school garden and integrated it into the teacher-training programme until the 1970's. In 2013, the school garden was reintroduced into the teacher training programme, the only one in Hungary at that time, to integrate gardening into teacher training. The school garden is constantly developing, both student teachers and pupils use it in various projects. Many ex-student teachers now work in school gardens.



Integration into lessons:

School garden is integrated in: a methods course for teaching science; a voluntary full semester school garden course (in Hungarian or English); Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) projects. The practice school pupils use it in weekly voluntary afternoon courses, sometimes in 'the world around us' or design and technology lessons.

Garden features:

Politunnel, vines, memorial fruit trees, vegetable and herb beds, vermicomposter and bokashi, fairy tale trail, Apáczai folk herb garden (with herbs used in Apáca village and/or described in Apáczai's encyclopaedia), raised bed for wheel chair users, outdoor classroom and kitchen cabinet made of pallets and logs, fire pit, sundial, weather station, rainwater harvester, drip irrigation.

Main focus:

Demonstration of various low-cost, do-it-yourself features with a low environmental footprint.

Special projects:

School garden research; the first international School Garden Summer School in 2022 (School Garden goes Europe Erasmus+ strategic partnership project). Best practice example of nature-based solutions in the Urban Nature Atlas (<http://una.city>).

Management:

School garden leader, students, sometimes colleagues and volunteers in the summer.

Community collaborations:

Local gardeners' club, Hungarian Foundation for School Gardens, local school gardens.

The Apáczai-garden is a mentor and model garden, as are all teacher training school gardens. Thus, it seeks sustainable, cheap, do-it-yourself features to demonstrate accessible and authentic garden-based learning. It is catching: some partners have started a school garden, e.g. the praxis school of the university!

*I can get rid of the stress, I can talk. Here I feel as if I am in a family, it is like a home',
- a teenager with divorced parents.*



Debreceni Gönczy Pál Általános Iskola Pál Gönczy Primary School of Debrecen

Type of school:

Primary school

Contact person:

Hegymegi Péter director,
Fodorné Magyar Ágnes garden leader
iskoladebrecen@gonczy.edu.hu

Name of the school garden:

Főnix Kert (Phoenix Garden)

Homepage:

<http://gonczy.hu>

The school is named after Gönczy Pál (1817-1892) teacher, ministry advisor, who has worked in the preparation of the elementary school law of 1868, several orders and curricula, thus supporting the bloom of school gardens in the 19th century. The school is in a rural suburb of Debrecen, using its school gardens in several innovation and talent management programmes, especially for STEAM education. Teachers are involved in school garden vocational teacher trainings, national curricula advisory, textbook writing, method development (e.g. storytelling method for school gardens) and mentoring activities, acknowledged by the For School Gardens Award, Hungary's Nicest School Garden Award, etc.



Integration into lessons:

The garden is focused on the teaching of Technics and planning (=design and technics), supporting science competence development, generally STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Maths) competences. Used for ecoschool and leisure community activities, thematic days or weeks (for phenomenon-based learning). For these we have an outdoor classroom and outdoor kitchen, workshops. All programs support activity-, cooperation-, experience- and phenomenon-based learning.

Garden features:

Kitchen garden, raised beds, herb garden, arable land crops, orchard, vineyard, animals in the garden, bee meadow, feeders, drinkers, nesting aids, sundial, weather station, composter, reinwater harvester, outdoor classroom and kitchen.

Main focus:

Getting to know the environment, the living world, understanding natural processes through practical activities. Attitude shaping for health and environment consciousness related decisions.

Special projects:

mentor school garden in the Hungarian School Garden Development Programme, Garden Fraternity Programme, fruit cultivar saving project, 'Magic Farm' (a year in a farm), 'Local history', 'Let's make business' programs, ecoschool.

Management:

Technics and craft working group, assistant and gardener with 300 students, supported by the maintainer and foundations.

Community collaborations:

Hungarian School Garden Network, Józsa Gardeners' Club, Ecoschool Network, Delikát Garden Fraternity Programme.

The school garden is treated as an education space and tool in the planning of our pedagogical work. As a mentor garden it is a task to share our practice examples, helping schools willing to start garden-based learning.

'Our school garden activities are successful, if students are able and willing to act for themselves, for others, for the location, where they live. Knowing, that it counts in the progress for our environment'



Eötvös Loránd Általános Iskola és AMI Loránd Eötvös Primary and Primary Art School of Lakitelek

Type of school:

primary school and art school

Contact person:

Szelesné Kása Ilona
szelesnekasailona@gmail.com

Name of the school garden:

ColoredGarden (SzínesKert)

Homepage:

<https://www.facebook.com/szineskertlakitelek>

We are researching a special approach to arts and student enterprise: a sustainable garden maintained by children.



Integration into lessons:

While the weather is still good, we hold the following subjects/courses in the outdoor classroom or school garden: visual art and craft subjects; ColoredGarden afternoon courses; student enterprise afternoon courses. Teaching principles include: direct demonstration, learning by doing, strengthening social connections, therapy for body and soul.

Garden features:

outdoor classroom, fire pit, composter, vermicomposter, rainwater harvesting gate signs, raised beds, dye plants, bird and insect drinker, insect hotel, bird nesting box and feeder, rain garden, garden tool house with organizer, permaculture.

Main focus:

cultivating and using dye plants for art and craft activities, enhancing biodiversity, seed saving.

Special projects:

teacher training in dye plant activities, mentor school garden (Hungarian School Garden Development Programme), student enterprise for business skills.

Management:

teacher and classes/afternoon courses, own educational foundation.

Community collaborations:

parents, school parent group, ColoredGarden Foundation members, Hungarian Foundation for School Gardens.

This school garden, a mentor and model garden for others, shows that garden-based pedagogy is not limited to biology or science teachers. Activities that can occur here include: creative art and craft; folk art; dye plants tasks; product design and production as part of business skills programmes.

'We have dye plants and other plants which aren't classified as as dye plants but we still get dyes out of them'



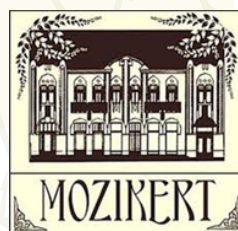
Gregor József Általános Iskola József Gregor Primary School

Type of school:
Primary school

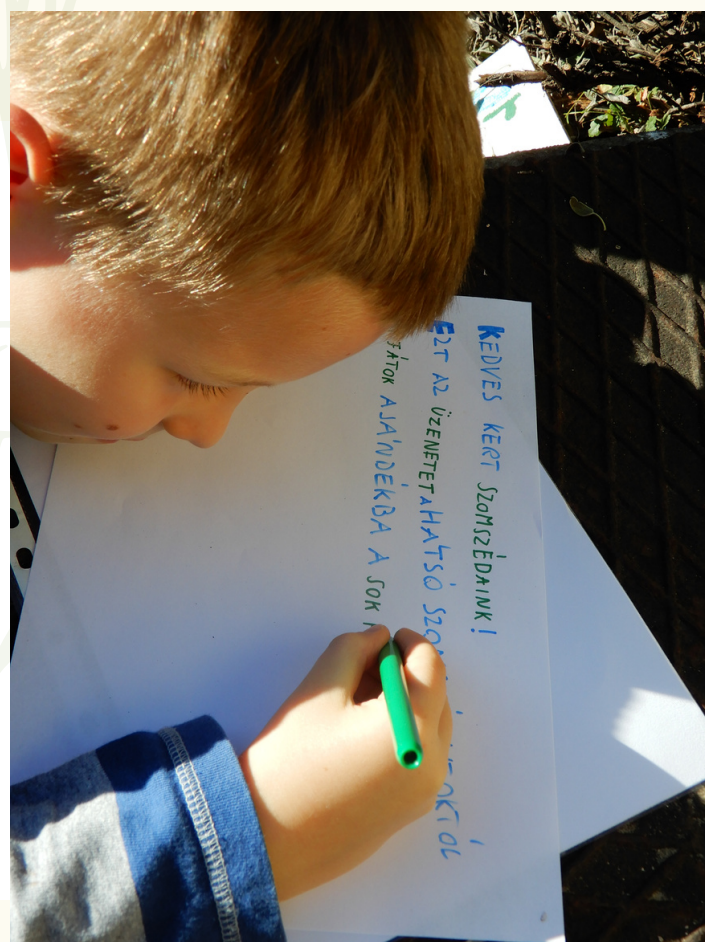
Contact person:
Pauliczky Nóra
paulnora3@gmail.com
+36 30/321-5653

Name of the school garden:
Mozikert/Cinema Garden

Homepage:
<http://gregorsuli.hu>



The garden was made in 2013, in the yard of a then abandoned cinema, as part of the reconstruction and revitalization, all done by the local community, the 'Citizens Circle'. It is a reference and motivating garden for visitors, especially parents, of the local culture center. Each part of the garden has a responsible group, the children mark out their beds themselves. Keeping good relation to neighbours, the garden gets their help, while neighbours get small presents and thanking letter.



Integration into lessons:

Under primary students use it regularly in the 'word around us' lessons and class teacher's hours. Upper primary students use it irregularly, in design and technics and physical education lessons.

Garden features:

Vegetable beds, orchard, flower and herb beds, pond, composter, cold frames, 'message trees', 'silent seat', pebble tower builder, plant asylum, garden store, rainwater harvester, dye plants, insect hotel and lizard home.

Main focus:

Simple solutions, which can be made at home as well. Fun, playfulness.

Special projects:

Workshops for teacher students, (green care, atypical child trainings), garden store, where we sell proliferated plants, saved seeds, ornamental pumpkins, herbs.

Management:

Coordinating volunteer from the Hungarian Foundation for School Gardens. 3-4 under primary classes, whose teacher is ready for school gardening. Summer maintenance is made in weekly shifts by classes under parental organisation.

Community collaborations:

local cultural center and gardeners' club, parents.

Our garden is a perfect example of a school garden initiated by the community, in a community center's yard. Here we work, observe, play, gossip, talk while working. Meanwhile we look, why there are more insects here than there, why this pumpkin has been frozen and why not the other, why has the rocket salad grown here and not there. In a piece of real, natural world.



Szent István Körúti Egységes Gyógypedagógiai Módszertani Intézmény, Óvoda, Általános Iskola, Szakiskola és Készségfejlesztő Iskola

Type of school:

special needs kindergarten, primary and vocational school.

Contact person:

Vigh Tamás
+36 20 7774916
vightomi@freemail.hu

Name of the school garden:

Kacifántos Titokzatos Életkert
(more or less:
Arabesque Secret Life Garden)

Homepage:

<http://szentistvankorut-altisk.hu/>

The school garden covers appr. 600 sq. m and designed for experiential cognition of the environment, developing practical skills, playful learning, with developing toys, thematic sites. According to the school type, mobility and sensory plays and activities are in focus. Students also contribute to the municipality: designing a garden in another kindergarten, planting and caring public trees, collecting waste, saving hedgehogs from streets, initiating and leading municipality students' parliament.



Integration into lessons:

In garden helper and kitchen helper vocational education training and many lessons and activities of kindergarten and primary students (with autism, mental, mobility, behavior disorders and often social problems) on a daily basis. Used in environmental, health education, attitude shaping for mobility and outdoors.

Garden features:

Raised beds, sheated mulch (permaculture) beds, orchard, herb garden, developing garden toys, bee hotel, sensory path, pallet garden furniture, poultry, pigs, lambs, hedgehog castle made of deadwood.

Main focus:

organic gardening, responsible animal keeping, shelter for animals, playful learning, connecting all school activities to the garden.

Special projects:

Ecoschool, Delikát Garden Fraternity Programme, Hungarian School Garden Development Programme, tree planting and caring around the school, writing a teachers manual for special needs garden-based learning.

Management:

school garden leader, students, sometimes colleagues and volunteers in the summer.

Community collaborations:

Hungarian Foundation for School Gardens, local kindergartens, zoo, beekeepers, farmers; neighbours feeding the animals.

The Apáczai-garden is a mentor and model garden, as are all teacher training school gardens. Thus, it seeks sustainable, cheap, do-it-yourself features to demonstrate accessible and authentic garden-based learning. It is catching: some partners have started a school garden, e.g. the praxis school of the university!

*I can get rid of the stress, I can talk. Here I feel as if I am in a family, it is like a home',
- a teenager with divorced parents.*





Best Practice Examples Belgium



GO! Methodeschool Ondersteboven

Type of school:

preschool/kindergarten
elementary

Contact Person:

Elly Huysmans
directie@ondersteboven.eu
0032 11 34 28 90

Homepage:

<https://www.methodeschoolleopoldsburg.com/>

We broke up a lot of tiles to make a large part of our school ground greener. Among other things, we now have a play forest, a pond and a large outdoor classroom. We chose a natural layout with many native species and got a lot of help from parents. In 2022, in cooperation with the Provinciaal Natuurcentrum and MOS (EcoSchools) supervisors, we did a bioblitz together with the pupils: we looked for as many animal and plant species as possible in half an hour time during the outdoor classroom day.

<https://www.tvl.be/nieuws/buitenlesdag-137915>



Integration into lessons:

We do all these activities in our green school ground: vegetable gardening lessons and (daily) maintenance of the garden, we use the mud kitchen for maths (counting, comparing quantities); we use the ropes course during gymnastics lessons; in our pond we do water research. The outdoor classroom is constructed in such a way that the outside tiles are exactly 60 tiles with a staircase every 15 minutes (living clock). We have an animal and plants safari where the pupils can look up the animals and plants on our school ground using step-by-step plans and introduce them to each other.

Garden features:

Fruit trees, berry bushes, walnut trees, vegetables, a willow hut, branches wall, a pond.

Main focus:

Growing and processing vegetables, taking care of nature, maximum fun for every child, expanding the classroom.

Special projects:

Repeat the bioblitz to see if the animal kingdom is enlarged.

Management:

Teacher and class, parents, the maintenance staff.

Community collaboration:

Every year, "TuinHier" comes to school to work with our children to sow various vegetables and herbs. We then place these in our vegetable gardens. And with these ingredients, we do cooking classes. Mos and the architect.



Living clock

We reused the broken tiles to make an outdoor classroom in the shape of a big clock so that students can practice reading the clock outside. The outdoor classroom will also be used for lessons, reading moments, performances, meetings.



Biotechnicum Bocholt

Type of school:

Middle (12 to 19-year-olds), focus on animal and agricultural sciences, biotechnical sciences, environmental engineering

Contact Person:

Geert Heynickx,
geert.heynickx@biotechnicum.be
0032 89 46 14 90

Carla Drees,
Carla.drees@biotechnicum.be
0032 89 46 14 90

Carmen Maeyaert,
carmen.maeyaert@biotechnicum.be
0032 89 46 14 90

Name of the school garden:

Atalanta

Homepage:

<https://www.biotechnicum.be>

The playground redesign plan has gradually been implemented since 2012 and with each passing year, each phase has slowly taken shape. The new school ground provides room for sports & games, being together, relaxing, sorting, water features and info. Pupils were involved in the realization of the project and participate actively today, even for maintenance. This realization is a great success. The last phase included the 'Atalanta' project with the support of the Provinciaal Natuurcentrum. This project focuses on creating more biodiversity and adapting the environment for the Atalanta butterfly.



Integration into lessons:

This is how we use our green playground. We implement inquiry-based learning (plants, water, micro-organisms, fruits, insects...) for both primary school pupils next door and our own pupils. We placed QR codes with an underlying link to a website where new information about local biodiversity is regularly shared (adapted to primary school age on the one hand and our own school on the other). We combine art and nature. Students from the garden and both the green space management and natural and vegetable sciences, are responsible for the maintenance within their curriculum. We use our platform to investigate life in our pond, soil investigation etc. We identify plants with the app obsidentify. We cooperate with the university of Antwerp for a citizen science project for soil moisture.

Garden features:

Game boards, sound column, weather station, wall of branches, pollard willows, insect hotel, slate fruit, mixed hedge, wildflower beds, berries.

Main focus:

Increase biodiversity and discover its importance, learn to mow with a brush cutter, growing and processing wild fruit and old cultivars.

Special projects:

The evolution of succession to climax.

Management:

teacher and class.

Community collaboration:

With the support of "Greenyard", a beautiful bee and insect hotel has been installed so that we can also give these pollinators a place in our green playground. We received financial support from the Province and technical support of Provinciaal Natuurcentrum. We thank PVL for providing the land.



Green playground for every age

On the border of our domain we constructed a gate so that our primary school neighbours can also use our green playground for research and education.



"A green environment helps pupils to feel more at ease and stimulates creativity"

GO! Freinetschool De Mijlpaal

Type of school:

preschool/kindergarten elementary

Contact Person:

Francis Nagels,
francis.nagels@mijlpaal.org
0032 12 24 20 40

Anne Buchacker-Winter,
info@levenenruimte.eu
0032 12 39 56 98

Homepage:

<https://freinetschooldemijlpaal.be/>

The school garden is one of the finest and oldest in Limburg province, Belgium and covers all the school grounds in a natural way. Special features are the ingeniously constructed play hill, realized with grants from the Provinciaal Natuurcentrum, the amphitheatre consisting of vegetated sitting steps and a pond that are also used for educational purposes. A vegetable garden is also present. This project came about through extensive participation with pupils and many parents including Anne Buchacker-Winter who is also a school green designer.



"You cannot force a child to respect nature, you can, however, put the child in the right 'environment'."

Integration into lessons:

We deliberately focus on nature education and nature management. Here, we use the curriculum objectives as a guideline, but our school grounds also play a central role. Pupils actively help to manage the various 'small biotopes' on our school grounds and conduct research.

A vegetable garden is provided for each class so that children can actually experience how plants germinate and grow and learn to perform simple care operations. The cultivated vegetables and herbs are made into something tasty like soup, mint tea, lemonade with lemon balm, etc.

Another practical example is the safari box used from the oldest preschoolers onwards. Here, pupils work in pairs to look for an animal or plant on the domain and look up more information on this organism.

Main focus:

Growing and processing vegetables, experience how plants germinate and grow

Special projects:

Installing a sheep pasture near the hay meadows and in November 2023, Planting flower bulbs with grandparents.

Management:

Teacher, class and parents. If necessary, a garden contractor will come.

Community collaboration:

Educational nature management with NGO Natuurpunt.



Play hill

The play hill in the form of a pile wall on a foundation of crushed stone, resistant to play erosion and easy to dismantle for redevelopment.



PBS Voeren

School type:

Preschool/kindergarten, elementary

Contact Person:

René Reggers
rene.reggers@limburg.be
0032 473 70 15 06

Stephanie Jacobs
stephanie.jacobs@limburg.be
0032 483 38 95 45

Homepage:

<https://www.pbsvoeren.be/>

Our school has a lot of outdoor space that we now use for education and sports and play activities. We consciously chose a green and more diverse school ground because we noticed that the too limited play areas caused undesirable behaviour (bullying among the children). Thanks to the extensive environmental advice based on biodiversity (ecological corridors) of the Provinciaal Natuurcentrum, we saw opportunities to create a habitat for the rare European stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*). Together with the pupils, our designer Frederik Santermans of the Regionaal Landschap Haspengouw en Voeren provided a breeding pile for this large beetle.

"Our playground, a place where children can play and romp to their heart's content, enjoy the things nature gives us but also unwind under a tree or in the grass."

Integration into lessons:

We organize the following learning activities on our green school ground: exploration of the school environment (looking for bees on the playing field); observing the weather; planting vegetables (beans and radishes) and herbs with pupils in the greenhouse and tulips in the garden; looking for and investigating insects; tree research; making an insect hotel for pollinators, investigating the parts of a plant and their function; investigating spore plants (fern and moss); doing mathematics with natural materials; observing flowers in spring; planting pumpkins in the garden and taking care of them and making pumpkin soup (from home-grown pumpkins); spotting birds and observing butterflies in nature; pupils measuring the height of trees using their own bodies; laying different angles with branches; learn nature vocabulary in French.

Garden features:

The existing fruit trees were supplemented until a clear grid formation was created as is typical of orchards in the region. We often use these apple and pear trees to make apple sauce.

Main focus:

Pumpkins are used to make soup. We watch and learn about the growth of spring flowers. We make nettle tea. We taste lettuce, radishes and other crops growing in the garden. We see how plants grow if we take good care of them.

Special projects:

Maintaining the insect hotels.

Management:

Teacher and class with help of parents, very particularly one mum who acts as a nature teacher. She, meanwhile, has a group of parents she can count on to work in the garden.

Community collaboration:

We have a handyman to keep the garden and greenhouse well maintained in summer.



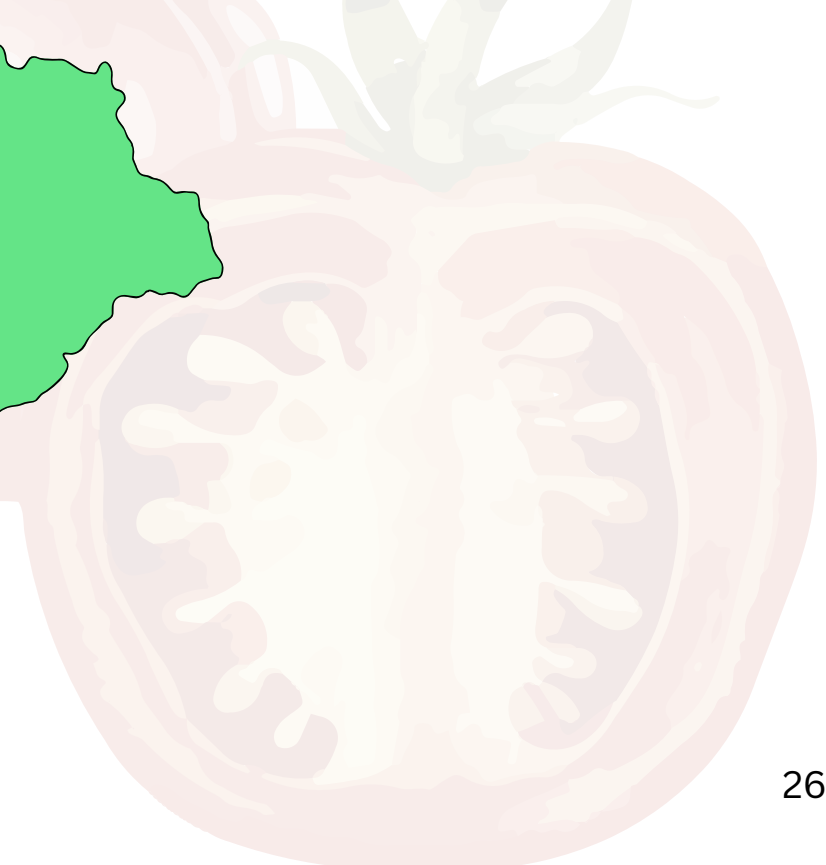
A home for the European stag beetle

Not only did we make a breeding pile for the European stag beetle, we also provided a leaflet with all kinds of info on this species for our pupils.





Best Practice Examples
Czech Republic



Chaloupky, centres for environmental education and social entrepreneurship

Type of school:

private non-profit school facility

Contact person:

Mgr. Jana Audy

Name of the school garden:

Baliny, Highlands region, Czechia

Homepage:

<https://www.chaloupky.cz>

We provide environmental education, summer camps, seminars for teachers, after school activities, workshops etc. and based on our staff's knowledge and practical experience write and edit manuals, books, exercise books on outdoor activities and gardening. We publish an online magazine 'School garden' and support the Czech school garden network. We also run a small farm where thematic educational programmes are provided.



Integration into lessons:

As an educational centre we host student groups on day-to-week programs or summer camps, or adults with mental disabilities. The children's programs are sustainability education programs, but in them we focus on methods to bring gardening into subjects' curricula.

Garden features:

Raised garden beds, ponds, dry walls, bees, fire place, outside classroom, therapeutic features.

Main focus:

Organic gardening, outdoor education, healing nature deficit disorder.

Special projects:

Therapeutic gardens, writing textbooks and manuals, school milkery, EU Interreg projects.

Management:

leader of the center, colleagues.

We try to show children, young people and adults the secrets of nature as well as its depth and fragility. We support such knowledge, skill and attitudes, which create respect and consideration towards nature as well as ecologically responsible behavior and a sustainable life.

I always look forward to coming back again the next school year'





Best Practice Exemples France



Ecole des trois Cailloux

Type of school:

Waldorf Kindergarten and Waldorf School (1st to 6th grade)

Contact person:

Charlène Vinot
(charlene.vinot@hotmail.fr)

Jordan Wencek
(jordan.wencek@hotmail.fr)

Name of the school garden:

Jardin en permaculture de l'école des Trois Cailloux.

Homepage:

<https://www.ecole-des-trois-cailloux.fr/>
[https://fr.ulule.com/vegetalisons-les-cours-d-ecoles-/](https://fr.ulule.com/vegetalisons-les-cours-d-ecoles/)

At the school, the outdoor space consists of three parts: the vegetated courtyard (edible hedge, shade area, grove and greenhouse...), the vegetable garden (pond, herb spiral and field hedge...), and the orchard (nectar-producing hedge and beehive...). The overall greening project has been built on the principles of permaculture, with the goal of creating an optimized educational environment rich in nature and diversity. Twenty modular blocks have been designed to be replicable elsewhere!

"Taking care of the Earth, taking care of the human, and sharing plentitude."

Integration into lessons:

The children have gardening classes, and the garden serves as a support for subjects such as natural sciences (botany, entomology...), as well as in French, mathematics, and languages! Writing the names of plants in French or German, calculating areas, measuring to build nesting boxes... Beyond being an educational support for teachers, the greening project also allows the creation of a space for interaction between children and nature, without directed activities, during recess or various events."

Garden features:

Permaculture, edible hedge, field hedge, herb spiral, pond, greenhouse, orchard, chicken coop.

Main focus:

Nature and permaculture in the heart of the school.

Special projects:

A booklet 'Vegetating Schoolyards with Permaculture' has been created to share our experience and the results of our research with any other community or individual. The 20 modules are described in detail in words and images.

Available here:
<https://www.daubentonetrocambol.e.fr/>

Management:

The greening project was implemented by parents, educators, participatory projects. The garden and chicken coop is maintained by the students in gardening classes.

Community collaboration:

Partnership with local associations for hedge planting projects, nest box construction and hosting a beehive.



Long live the permaculture

Our school is intended to be a pilot project for greening based on permaculture principles. Every element, every action is carefully considered in synergy.



Ecole primaire Antony Harry

Type of school:

Elementary school, 6 classes, and 135 students with immersion education in the German language

Contact person:

Carole Venerucci, principal of Ecole Antony Harry
ce.0542140h@ac-nancy-metz.fr

Marie-Laure Pichon, Municipal representative, delegated for education
ml.pichon.lsc@gmail.com

Daniela Frank, Chairperson of the town partnership committee
Danielafrank58@orange.fr

Name of the school garden:
LAYÖKOJARDINIERS

 **Homepage:**
<https://www.lay-saint-christophe.fr/enfance-jeunesse/ecoles/>

Integration into lessons:

All the students, as part of their science classes, started seedlings. Two to four members of the German-French town partnership committee, as well as a municipal representative, supervise small groups of nine to twelve students each, in multiple shifts, so that everyone can enjoy gardening. Some of the garden work takes place in the German language, providing educational enrichment within the immersion project.

They also created artistic elements for the garden, such as painted wooden spoons with bilingual names of various fruits and vegetables, decorative signs, and painted glittering stones.



A 160 square meter wild plot of land owned by the municipality, adjacent to the concrete schoolyard in an L-shape, was transformed into a small oasis for the school within two years. Part of the plot was suitable for raised beds, as the soil there consisted mainly of clay. Where good soil was available, the students planted several fruit bushes, strawberry seedlings, two kiwi plants, two grapevines, various herbs, and sowed various types of vegetables and flowers. A homemade insect hotel, a compost bin, benches, and a table made from recycled pallets enrich the garden, and a 1000-liter water tank connected to a rain gutter on the school building provides the garden with the necessary water.

Garden features:

Raised beds, fruit, vegetable, and herb beds, an insect hotel, berry bushes, climbing plants, and two grapevines. An apple orchard is within walking distance on the outskirts of the village.

Main focus:

The harvest is partly enjoyed on-site, partly shared with students who process it at home, and a portion, especially storable items like potatoes, pumpkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage, is made into soup by the school cafeteria on St. Martin's Day. Children, parents, teachers and helpers are treated to a free tasting of vegetable soup during the lantern procession and the subsequent festivities.

Special projects:

The seeds were specially curated for school conditions and sourced from environmentally sound sources.

Management:

The municipality and the town partnership committee are important partners in the project. They established the garden for the school, primarily handle the procurement and financing of materials.

Community collaboration:

Farm, beekeepers, apple harvest with the "Croqueurs de pommes" association. Network of helpers: The German-French town partnership committee, neighbors, parents, municipal representatives support the project as needed

Helping Hands

The network of helpers is an essential element in organizing gardening activities with elementary school children who need guidance and assistance. The town partnership committee, comprised of retired educators, organizes and conducts the garden workshops with the mixed school classes. Teachers only partially accompany their students in the garden, as they engage the other group in different activities. In the garden, reading activities take place with the whole class, practical math exercises are conducted, and sometimes relaxation exercises are also practised.

*'A garden is a friend
you can visit at any time.'*



Goethe-Institut Nancy-Straßburg

Type of School:

German Cultural Institute

Contact person:

Eva Antoine, eva.antoine@goethe.de

Name of the schoolgarden:

Permakulturlehrpfad – Kooperation
Goethe-Institut Nancy und
GemüseheldInnen Frankfurt am Main



Homepage:

https://www.goethe.de/ins/fr/de/ver.cfm?event_id=24211064



In May 2022, the school garden at the Goethe-Institut in Nancy, which until then consisted of three beautiful raised beds, was transformed into a permaculture educational trail. Eight stations were created which now form an educational German-French educational trail in Nancy. This was achieved by collaboration between the 'GemüseheldInnen' from Frankfurt am Main and over 170 students and their teachers. The project was supported financially by the DFJW (Franco-German Youth Office) and the Région Grand Est.

Among other things, visitors can now find a mandala bed, a deadwood beetle cellar, a worm farm, and a medicinal herb bed.

Integration into lessons:

The Goethe-Institut Nancy regularly offers playful language and environmental learning activities for German-learning school classes of all ages. The classes come to the institute, take care of the trail, and learn many new German words, as well as knowledge about permaculture and the circularity of nature through various games, methods, and discovery rallies.

Moreover, several interactive elements connect the library and the garden, allowing visitors to explore the garden autonomously. Teachers working on topics related to nature, insects, nutrition, and medicinal plants have free access to the garden during school hours and are allowed to conduct off-site lessons here at any time. They also have access to magnifying glasses, gardening tools, nature-themed memory games, and other educational materials provided by the Goethe-Institut.

Garden features:

raised beds, mandala bed, beetle cellar, standing deadwood, medicinal herb bed, habitat tree, worm farm, stone pile, barefoot path, compost pile.

Main focus:

Promoting biodiversity, experiencing permaculture, playful outdoor learning.

Special projects:

Experiencing permaculture with school classes.

Management/ Organisation:

Goethe-Institut staff and school classes

Community collaboration:

With neighboring schools.

"aha - moments"

The worm farm and the medicinal herb bed are our favorites. The younger children experience 'light bulb' moments every time they see that worm castings make great soil and that flowers can be edible. The older ones are fascinated by the healing power of plants.



'Wow, I've never eaten such delicious salad! Can we please use your salad for the school cafeteria?'



Best Practice Examples Slovenia

ŠOLSKI EKOVRT
Inštitut za trajnostni razvoj



Osnovna šola Ivana Cankarja Vrhnika

Schooltype:

Primary school

Contactperson:

Sonja Rihar (sriha@11sola.si)

Homepage:

<https://www.osivanacankarja.si/>

Eleven years ago, the design for today's garden was created. The municipality provided land along the Ljubljana River. Funding from the European Agricultural Fund helped create a vibrant vegetable garden with raised beds, apiary, orchard, herb garden, insect hotel and an outdoor classroom. Nine years ago, we made a beautiful, modern school garden with eight rectangular-shaped high beds made of oak and acacia wood and concrete circular high beds. These beds constitute the center of our garden. The surfaces between the high beds are sprinkled with sand.



Integration into lessons:

The school garden is used both by students of the elective courses *modern agriculture, plants and man* and also the gardening club for practical work in the school garden. In home economics lessons sixth grade students use produce to prepare meals. Nature day is also partially carried out in the garden. In technical education, students learn how to build a compost bin and how to choose long lasting wood. A chemical analysis of the soil in the high beds is carried out and guidelines and instructions for effective fertilization are created based on the results. From grades one to four, subjects such as sports, Slovenian, music and visual arts are integrated into garden work. Students can also attend a gardening club.

Garden features:

Eight raised beds, apiary (beehives), orchard, herb garden, insect hotel, trees, composting facility and outdoor classroom.

Main focus:

Cultivation and processing of vegetables, herbs, arrangement of ornamental beds around the school.

Special projects:

The EU project 'School fruit scheme', 'Ecoschool - EcoVrtilnica', planting of tree species within the framework of the Erasmus project.

Management:

Within the school, three teachers (two class teachers and one subject teacher) coordinate the work in the garden.

Community collaboration:

In the summer, the garden is visited by the pupils of the "Želvica" Kindergarten, the janitor and, by agreement the cleaners.

From seed to fruit

Emphasis is on growing vegetables from own seedlings and seeds; monitoring the entire life cycle of plants and managing one's own seed collection. Sustainable gardening is important, that is maintaining high beds, composting waste, watering with rainwater, mulching.



"In every encounter with nature,
one gets much more than what
one asks for."



Osnovna šola Polzela

Type of school:

Primary school

Contact person:

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Petra Tevžič,
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Our organic school garden has been in use since the 2011/2012 school year. Every year we upgrade and carefully maintain it. It currently consists of a high bed, two fenced beds where we grow vegetables, a large herb bed, a Maltese cross-shaped bed with decorative plants, a large sensory path, a lavender plantation, ornamental shrubs, a linden tree and two apple trees. We also have an outdoor classroom and a tool shed, as well as many additional features such as insect hotels, bird feeders, various teaching aids and decorative elements.

ŠOLSKI EKOVRT
INŠTITUT ZA TRAJNOSTNI RAZVOJ



Integration into lessons:

In the school garden there is an outdoor classroom, which is used by all school classes. In previous years, individual classes were in charge of taking care of individual beds of the variety of vegetables in the flower bed. In this school year the care of the garden has been taken over by the pupils (most with special needs) participating in the interest activity 'Vrtičkarija' (Gardening club). In addition to the interest activity, the school garden is regularly included in lessons as part of activity days (science days) and in optional classes. At the same time, we encourage teachers to use it as a teaching aid as often as possible in lessons.

Garden features:

Raised garden beds, fenced vegetable beds, large herb bed, composter, large sensory path, lavender bed, trees, Maltese cross-shaped ornamental bed, insect hotels, bird feeders, outdoor classroom, teaching tools/aids.

Main focus:

Cultivation of vegetables, cultivation and use of herbs, cultivation of fruit trees, fruit processing, use of plants for various purposes.

Special projects:

Our main task is to grow traditional vegetables and herbs that are typical of our climate. We strive to combine garden care with experiential learning, the development of social skills and with various activities to enrich the garden.

Management:

In the 2022/23 school year, the school garden was managed by a group of students as part of the interest activity (Gardening club).

With the organic school garden, we want to offer students a different learning experience, develop social skills, connect them with and develop a sense of responsibility towards nature, and help them to develop a better understanding of the importance of self-supply of food.



'Working in the school garden is great for relaxing after a long day at school.' (student of T.T.)



Osnovna Šola Maksa Pleteršnika Pišce

Type of school:

Primary school

Contact person:

Sanja Štefanič, +38640437564
sanjastefanic@gmail.com,
Alenka Cizel, alenka.cizel@gmail.com

Name of the school garden

Šolski Zelenjavni Vrt
(School Vegetable Garden)

Homepage

<https://www.ospisece.si/>

Our vegetable garden is located next to the school building and school playground. We grow potatoes, peppers, onions, courgettes, lettuce, parsley and radish. Unfortunately, we do not have enough space to grow other vegetables. But we do have 3 raised beds and a place where we keep compost. The pupils do all the work in the garden during school year. Vegetables that grow in the garden are eaten for lunch at school. We do have some herbs as well but they are placed next to the walls behind the school. In the middle of the herbal garden is also a small hotel for insects and bees.



Integration into lessons:

The pupils learn about different plants, they observe how they grow, they take care of the harvest. Pupils use vegetables and herbs in cooking classes. In winter, we drink tea or make tea bags as a souvenir. Once we made lavender soap gifts. The pupils put seeds in the ground and clean the garden before winter comes. Preschool children are also active in the garden, planting and harvesting strawberries and chamomile.

Garden features:

On the ground we have beds with potatoes, peppers, onions and radish. We have also three raised beds with lettuce and parsley and a wooden box for compost.

Main focus:

Cultivation of vegetables, fruits and herbs with the aim of getting to know plants, tasting them and making sure we follow a healthy lifestyle. We would like to have our own water tank to collect rainwater for watering. We use our own compost for fertilizing, but also buy some fertilizers as well.

Special projects:

Our main task is to grow traditional vegetables and herbs that are typical for our climate. We strive to combine garden care with experiential learning, the development of social skills and with various activities to enrich the garden.

Management:

1 Mentor teacher, pupils.

Community collaboration:

Beekeeper, local community.

In the garden we hang out with friends, work and have fun at the same time. We would like to expand it and put in some benches where we could sit, talk or do homework.



'Spending time in the school garden is useful and fun!'



Srednja trgovska šola Ljubljana (STRŠ) - Secondary School of Commerce Ljubljana

Type of school:
secondary school

Contact person:
Maja Fabjan, maja.fabjan@sts-ljubljana.si

Name of the school garden:
Šolski ekovrt (Organic School Garden)

Homepage:
<https://www.sts-ljubljana.si>

The organic school garden was created on the large, flat roof of the school, starting with small troughs. Later a number of high beds were also added. We grow various vegetables and herbs and berries as well. Due to the enthusiasm of the students, we expanded the garden every year. We have also installed two beehives on the roof. After three years, we also started gardening on the ground next to the school building. We planted raspberries, created a large spiral herb bed, a shady bed with flowers and a lavender bed.



Integration into lessons:

Teachers include the garden in learning activities at their own discretion. We learn about different plants and their characteristics and uses, the history of plants and their names in different languages. We also use the garden as a teaching tool in groups:

- 'Gardener', where we learn about growing and arranging the garden,
- 'Zdravka', where we prepare products from the garden to use in school lunches, get to know new products or try them out for the first time,
- 'Beekeeping circle', where we learn about the life of bees and the production of honey. Honey is used for the daily free breakfasts for students and employees. Teas and herbs from the garden are packaged or processed into scented soaps, and lavender is used in scented pillows.

Garden features:

On the school roof: troughs, high vegetable and herb beds (large wooden boxes), small fruit trees and fruit bushes, water collection tanks, two beehives

On the ground: a large herb and flower spiral, a shade bed, fruit bushes, insect hotel, composting facilities.

Main focus:

We take care of biotic diversity, crop rotation, production of healthy crops, also growing the right plants together. We are aware of the importance of water, so we collect and use rainwater for watering. We use only our own compost for fertilizing.

Special projects:

- Raspberry bushes from the students' seedlings,
- holding an open door event, when we opened the garden to surrounding institutions,
- renovation of the garden with sponsored wood coatings, carried out by students.

Management:

Mentor teacher, students.

Community collaboration:

beekeeper, in addition, arrangements are being made with the neighboring high school for the joint implementation of a gardening club.

In the garden, we socialize, learn and grow together with our plants. It is our biggest school resource for sustainable learning. Cultivation of vegetables, fruits and herbs with the aim of getting to know plants, tasting them and taking care of a healthy lifestyle.



'We are in nature and we are part of nature!'



Vrtec »Otona Župančiča« Slovenska Bistrica, Enota Studenice »Oton Župančič« Kindergarten in Slovenska Bistrica, Unit Studenice

Type of school:
kindergarten

Contact person:
Klavdija Čoh,
klavdija.coh@gmail.com

Name of the school garden:
Učilnica v naravi Studenice – Nature
Schoolroom Studenice

Homepage:
<https://www.vrtec-slobistrica.si/enota/studenice>

Vrtec Studenice is a rural one-departmental kindergarten, which is attended by children from one to six years of age. In order to bring children closer to nature, we set up a nature classroom in the Studenice kindergarten. The classroom consists of raised beds with various vegetables, wooden musical instruments, a compost bin, a sensory path, vines, an insect hotel, a musical wall, wooden painting easels, herb beds, fruit bushes, fruit trees, a pond, a fireplace and an outdoor classroom in the form of a hayloft. This outdoor classroom is a small replica of the Slovenian 'kozolec' - a traditional wooden building typical of Slovenian architecture and the countryside.



Integration into lessons:

We are aware that caring for the environment, useful knowledge and natural science competences, which require an individual to have a responsible attitude towards nature, must be cultivated from early years. That's why, with the help of the nature classroom, we transferred all the activities from the kindergarten curriculum to outdoors. Children can develop all their senses in the garden, as the classroom itself offers elements from nature such as air, water, fire, earth. The activities mainly take place under the *kozolec*, which is a smaller version of the Slovenian *kozolec*. Here, we carry out evaluations, experiments, planning, drying of herbs and crops from herb and raised beds, hang out with friends, parents and grandparents...

Garden features:

Raised vegetable beds, wooden musical instruments, a compost bin, a sensory path, vines, an insect hotel, a musical wall, wooden painting easels, herb beds, fruit bushes, fruit trees, a pond, a fireplace and a hayloft as an outdoor classroom.

Main focus:

Growing from seed to crop, promoting biodiversity, caring for plants, respecting nature, growing of vegetables, using vegetable waste.

Special projects:

Ecology projects such as: Don't throw away clothes - save the planet, Nutrition – past and present, Healthy lifestyle, Eco-reading for eco-life, Biodiversity. It has the 'Organic School Garden' certificate (issued by Društvo Šolski ekovrtovi - Association Organic Gardens for Education (AOGE) in Slovenia).

Management:

Professional kindergarten workers, children, parents.

Community collaboration:

Local associations, other kindergarten units.

By learning in nature and with nature, children get to know nature in all its diversity, while also getting to know themselves, their bodies and their abilities. In this way, they will love and respect nature, and they will form healthy lifestyle habits themselves.





Best
Practice
Examples
Serbia

Beszédes József Mezőgazdasági és Műszaki Iskolaközpont Magyarokanizsa Пољопривредно - технички средњошколски центар "Беседеш Јожеф" Кањижа

Type of school:
Secondary school

Contact person:
Körösi Beáta
beatakorosi67@gmail.com

Name of the school garden:
Mini biokert

Homepage:
<http://ptscbesedes.edu.rs/hu>

Secondary school students and a teacher in this Hungarian minority school had a dream of an organic garden that keeps traditions of several hundred years, avoids artificial sprays, and thus relies on the natural resistance of companion planting, enhances soil fertility by compost amendment. The result is a natural and healthy vegetable garden.



Integration into lessons:

Secondary school integration allows flexible organisation, as the practical lessons are always planned in advance. The garden is used in practical lessons.

Garden features:
Traditional vegetable beds,
composter, herbs.

Main focus:
Education for the closeness of
nature and its admiring.

Special projects:
Seed saving of vegetable
cultivars, experiments with
natural composting process
enhancement.

Management:
Teachers and students.

A traditional garden avoiding plant
development enhancing modern technology
and chemicals.



'We did not believe in the idea of our teacher, as in the modern world artificial ingredients are used everywhere, but the dream has come true'

