19 September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

**Gardening for Life Long Learning**

As you may have seen if you have visited the School in recent months, we have been redeveloping our School garden here at Rickmansworth School. The site team have done a fantastic job of building some raised beds for growing vegetables and landscaping a stunning new ‘Peace Garden’ which we hope to develop to be a quiet contemplation space for everyone to use.

The purpose of the space is to engage our students with gardening: allowing them to gain an appreciation of where their food comes from, to learn some basic skills that they will use throughout their lives and to expose them to the well-being benefits of gardening that are well documented.

To this point we have had a wonderful group of volunteer students that attend a weekly club, but we would like more students to be able to take some ownership of our redeveloped space. We have decided to include some basic gardening skills into the Life Long Learning programme for Years 7 and 8. We will be running a series of sessions with each form and as a result need to increase our number of tools, to accommodate these larger groups.

If you have any hand tools (trowels and hand forks particularly), watering cans or plants that you are willing to donate to the School they would be greatly appreciated. As we have embarked on this with sustainability in mind, we would rather use donated tools instead of brand new ones where possible. We may be able to recondition some pieces if necessary.

Students should give in any donations to Student Reception on entry into School when they first arrive. The Main Reception will be able to accept donations from parents. I am usually in the garden at lunchtimes if students have any questions.

If you do have anything spare that you think we could make use of please feel free to contact me by email ([swhitmore@rickmansworth.herts.sch.uk](mailto:swhitmore@rickmansworth.herts.sch.uk)). Later in the year we also would like to invite local people to get involved with gardening at Rickmansworth. If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering, please do contact me also.
The students in our ‘Horticultural Society’ have already grown a great number of different plants, both edible and ornamental, and learned a great deal along the way. They are keen to be able to sell our excess plants at future parent evenings and open days, to help them to buy more seeds to grow. Please look out for them and buy some plants if you would like!

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Whitmore
Rickmansworth School Horticultural Society Co-ordinator