

# Hunslet Carr's Staff Allotment Handbook



Hunslet Carr Primary School  
Leeds

## School Allotment Handbook

*A Friendly Guide for Primary School Staff*

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### Welcome to the School Allotment

Our school allotment is a shared learning space where children can explore nature, develop responsibility, and enjoy hands-on learning. This handbook is designed to help staff feel confident using the allotment—no gardening experience required!

The allotment is:

- A **learning resource**, not a perfect garden
  - A place for **curiosity, teamwork, and discovery**
  - A space where **mistakes are part of learning**
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### Why Use the Allotment?

The allotment supports:

- Science (plants, habitats, seasons)
- Maths (measuring, counting, data)
- □ English (instructions, recounts, vocabulary)
- Art (sketching, colour, texture)
- Wellbeing (mindfulness, teamwork, confidence)

Even short visits make a difference!

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### Getting Started (The Basics)

#### You Don't Need to Be a Gardener

- Curiosity is enough
- Children learn **with** you, not from an expert



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- Use the handbook, labels, and children's ideas

## What to Wear

- Sensible shoes (wellies recommended)
  - Old clothes or aprons
  - Gloves if preferred (child and adult sizes available)
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## Allotment Rules (Child-Friendly)

Please share these with pupils before visiting:

1. Walk carefully – no running
  2. Be kind to plants, insects, and each other
  3. Tools are for gardening only
  4. Listen to adults at all times
  5. Wash hands after the session
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## Tools & Equipment

### Where to Find Things

- Tools are stored in the **allotment shed**
- Labels show where items belong
- Please return tools after use

### Safe Tool Use

- Carry tools pointing down
  - One tool per child
  - Adult supervision at all times
  - Report damaged tools
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## What Can Classes Do at the Allotment?

### Quick Activities (10–20 minutes)

- Water plants



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- Weed a small area
- Observe insects
- Measure plant growth
- Sketch plants

## **Longer Activities**

- Plant seeds or bulbs
- Harvest crops
- Create labels or signs
- Build habitats (bug hotels, scarecrows)

You don't have to do everything in one visit—little and often works best.

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## **Planting & Growing (Simple Guide)**

### **Easy Crops for School Growing**

- Radishes
- Lettuce
- Peas
- Potatoes
- Sunflowers
- Strawberries

### **General Tips**

- Water gently
  - Label what you plant
  - Expect some plants not to grow—this is normal!
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## **Harvesting with Children**

- Harvest only what is ready
  - Use scissors for cutting where needed
  - Wash produce before eating
  - Celebrate the harvest—even small amounts!
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## Seasonal Overview

### Spring

- Plant seeds and bulbs
- Observe growth

### Summer

- Water regularly
- Harvest crops

### Autumn

- Collect seeds
- Clear beds
- Plant bulbs

### Winter

- Tidy up
  - Plan for spring
  - Nature observations
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## Inclusion & Wellbeing

The allotment is for everyone:

- Tasks can be adapted (observing, watering, drawing)
  - Calm space for regulation
  - Opportunities for teamwork and leadership
  - Celebrate effort, not perfection
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## If Things Go Wrong...

- Plants die → learning opportunity
- Weeds grow → normal and manageable
- Weather changes plans → adapt or return later

There is no failure in the allotment—only learning.

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## Who to Ask for Help

- Allotment lead: Mrs Hedley
- Site manager: Miss Hezlewood
- Office support for first aid or supplies

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## Final Thoughts

You don't need green fingers—just time, curiosity, and a willingness to explore alongside your class. Every visit helps children connect with nature and each other.

Thank you for supporting our school allotment

## Risk Assessment & Health and Safety Guidance

The school allotment is a low-risk environment when sensible precautions are followed. Activities are planned to support safe exploration and learning. All staff are expected to apply normal school health and safety procedures.

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### General Risk Management

- A **dynamic risk assessment** should be carried out by staff before each visit
  - Activities should be **age-appropriate and clearly explained** to pupils
  - Adult supervision must be maintained at all times
  - Staff should stop activities if conditions become unsafe (e.g. extreme weather)
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### Identified Risks and Control Measures

#### Slips, Trips and Falls

**Risks:**

- Uneven ground
- Muddy paths
- Loose tools or hoses

**Control Measures:**

- Pupils to walk at all times
- Suitable footwear (e.g. trainers or wellies)
- Tools stored safely when not in use
- Staff to check the area before use

#### Use of Tools

**Risks:**

- Cuts or minor injuries
- Misuse of equipment

**Control Measures:**

- Tools are age-appropriate and checked regularly
- Clear instructions given before use
- One tool per child
- Tools carried with points facing down
- Adult supervision at all times
- Damaged tools reported immediately

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#### Plants, Soil and Allergies

**Risks:**

- Skin irritation
- Allergic reactions
- Ingestion of plants or soil

**Control Measures:**



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- Children instructed not to touch faces or mouths during sessions
- No tasting of plants unless supervised and authorised
- Gloves available if required
- Hands washed thoroughly after sessions
- Known allergies checked in advance

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## **Insects and Wildlife**

### **Risks:**

- Stings or bites
- Fear or distress

### **Control Measures:**

- Children taught to observe, not disturb
- Calm behaviour encouraged
- Staff aware of pupils with known insect allergies
- First aid procedures followed if required

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## **Weather Conditions**

### **Risks:**

- Sunburn or dehydration
- Cold or wet conditions

### **Control Measures:**

- Sun hats and sunscreen encouraged in warm weather
- Regular water breaks
- Sessions adapted or cancelled during extreme weather
- Appropriate clothing worn

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## **Boundaries and Safeguarding**

### **Risks:**

- Pupils leaving the designated area
- Reduced visibility due to planting structures

### **Control Measures:**



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- Clear boundaries explained to pupils
  - Headcounts before, during, and after sessions
  - Adults positioned strategically
  - School safeguarding procedures followed at all times
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## Hygiene and Handwashing

- Hands must be washed after every allotment visit
  - Any cuts or grazes should be covered before sessions
  - First aid kit accessible at all times
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## Emergency Procedures

- Follow normal school emergency and first aid procedures
  - Inform the office of any incidents as soon as possible
  - Record accidents according to school policy
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## Staff Responsibilities

- Supervise and model safe behaviour
  - Carry out a visual check of the area before use
  - Report hazards, damage, or concerns
  - Encourage children to take responsibility for safety
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## Final Reassurance

The allotment is intended to be a **safe, supportive learning environment**. With routine supervision and common-sense precautions, risks are minimal and manageable. The benefits to children's learning, wellbeing, and engagement are significant.