

Garden Newsletter

February - March 2024



President
Kennedy
School

Building Brighter Futures



Ofsted
Outstanding
Provider



The
Futures
Trust
BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES

Echo Eternal Curriculum Garden

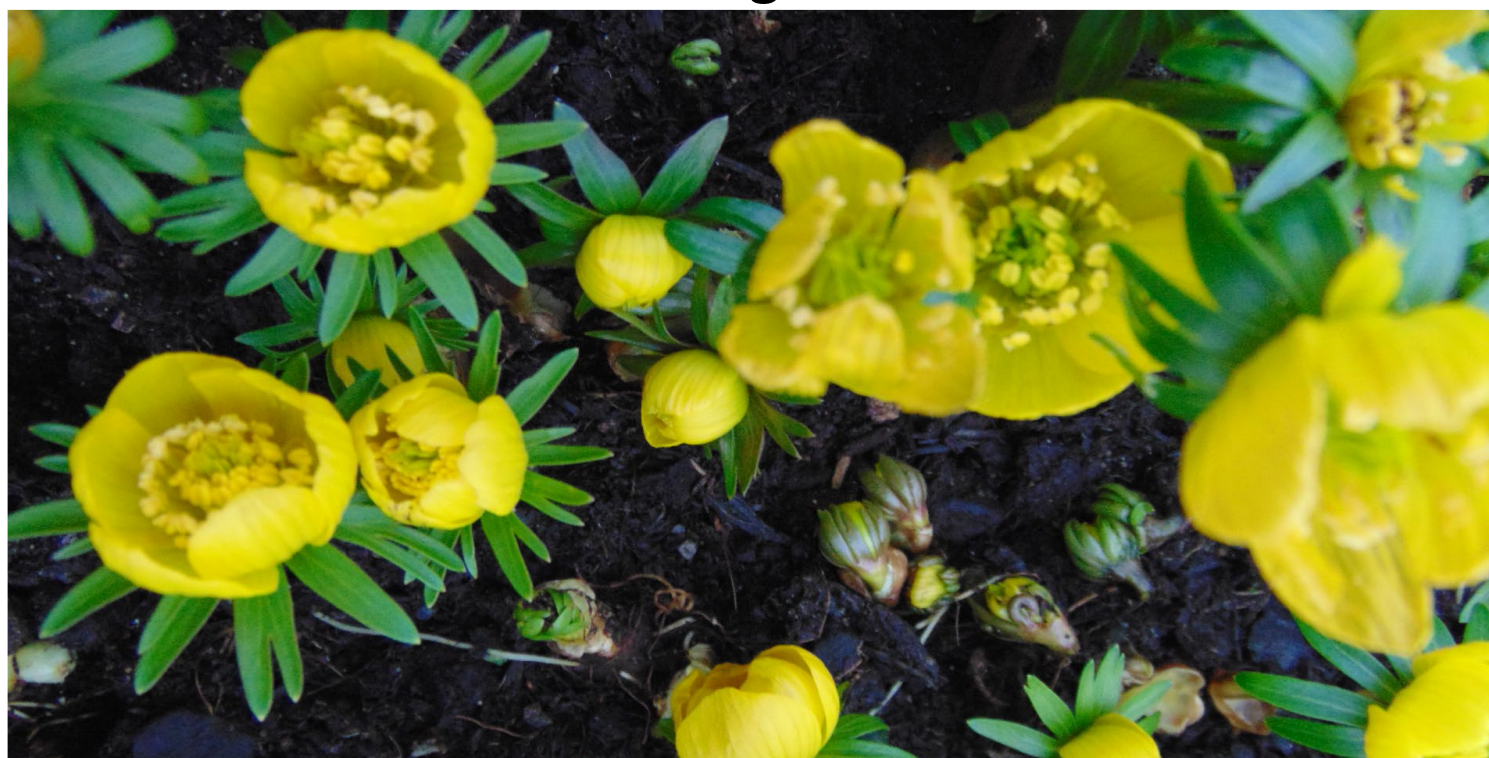
February has been wet!

There is no doubt that the month of February has been extremely wet!

Some of the garden areas are literally under water making any work in these areas well - nigh impossible. As well as the significant rainfall, we have also experienced relatively warm temperatures too. Indeed, it looks very much like the grass has continued to grow, certainly plenty of weeds need to be removed and composted! Only in the last few days of the month have we had a colder spell of weather – a few days of frost but no snow.

Read on to see how the Echo Eternal Curriculum Garden continues to grow.

Winter Aconites are stunning.....



Farmers and Growers are struggling.....

Listening to a couple of farmers in the last week of February who were both talking about the struggles they are going through with the current spell of very wet and mild conditions. One farmer was based in Kent and the other farmer was based in Lincolnshire – they both said that with the weather conditions, they were between six and eight weeks behind where they should be in terms of planting and seeding work. This will in turn create shortages and in the worst case scenarios – failed crops!.....

Pond area is completely flooded.....

With the nature and lie of the land where the garden is located, there is one particular area that is prone to flooding – this area is where our attempts to set up a pond is proving very difficult simply because this area floods! ...

With this in mind, we are looking at an alternative pond set – up.....

Below you can see the flooded pond area.....



Flooded areas.....

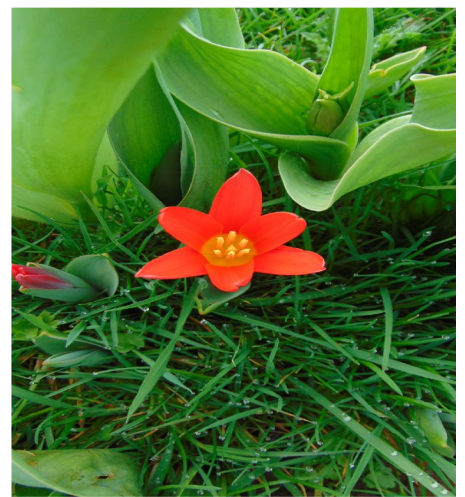
As we have stated, plus the photographic evidence, attempts to build a pond are proving very difficult, so we are going to build a raised bed pond – the timber is available, the pond liner and underlay are all ready.

All we need to do is to establish a suitable flat space within the garden....

Ridiculous amounts of water.....



Spring flowering bulbs look spectacular.....



Thank you Jo.....

We are very fortunate to have some very special people who support our school garden – not least, Jo Wilson at Littlehurst Nursery and Garden Centre based in Corley, not far from school – well worth a visit.....

Jo has donated lots of bags of spring flowering bulbs – daffodils and tulips which we have already planted up to give us some extra colour, although probably a bit later than bulbs that were planted back in the autumn.....

Below you can see some of these bulbs that have been donated.....



Allotment – Garden preparation is on – going.....

There is always plenty of work to do in terms of planning and preparing for the months ahead – we have been busy setting up our seed potatoes so that we can chit them to encourage the new growing shoots before we can plant them up once the threat of frost has gone.....

Here you can see some of our seed potatoes set up ready for chitting.....



**S
E
E
D**

**P
O
T
A
T
O
E
S**



There is plenty of rhubarb growing.....

We have plenty of rhubarb growing in different areas of the allotment, this is a crop that is tough and hardy and really easy to grow too.....

Once you have got your rhubarb plants established, what you can do is force the plant to produce tender stalks by using a rhubarb forcer, essentially what you are doing is reducing the light levels of the plant so that the plant produces thinner, stems as it goes in search of light.....

Also, these forced stems taste sweeter too.....

Here you can see the rhubarb forcer all set up.....

Now we need to wait a few weeks to produce some super sweet rhubarb.....



Rhubarb

Forcer.....



Rhubarb.....

The wonders of nature.....

It is always fascinating to see the new growth that plants and trees make as we enter into the spring months, none more so than when horse chestnut trees start to produce new growth.....

Below you can see the early stages as a small horse chestnut tree that we have growing in one of the garden areas, indeed, this tree must have grown by virtue of an animal burying a conker from a tree that is totally at the other end of the garden – seed dispersal, another fact of nature.....

Here you can see the early stages of growth from our horse chestnut tree...



**Seed
Dispersal.....**

**Horse
Chestnut**

Ornamental grass has been planted.....

We are continually adding to our garden space with an ornamental grass having just been planted – most if not all of our planting are perennials which means that once established, they will either continue to grow throughout the year or they will die back in the autumn – winter period as new growth emerges in the spring. The same can be said for all of the flower bulbs that have been planted – these flower bulbs should in time naturalise, effectively multiplying to produce more flowering bulbs.....

The ornamental grass that we have planted is called *Stipae Gigante*, the reason being for the name will be evident come the summer months.....

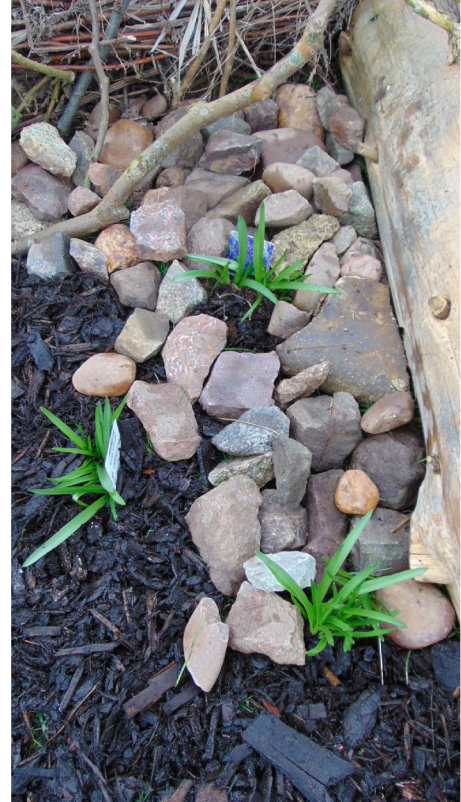


Stipae Gigante.....

Bluebells are another traditional plant.....

Another plant that once it establishes itself will provide a carpet of colour, we have planted lots of bluebells in a shaded area underneath the big oak tree in the Echo Eternal Curriculum Garden. These plants in time, again will naturalise giving plenty of colour for years to come.....

Below you can see where we have planted these bulbs.....



Bluebells, Red Poppies and Wildflowers have all been planted in this area.

Lots of colour to come....

Heathers provide some stunning colour.....



Lesser celandine will also naturalise.....



Muscari will spread too...

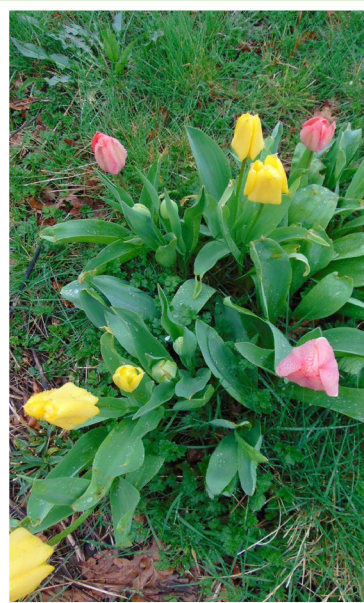


More spring flowering bulbs.....



Stunning Narcissus.....

Look at the detail in this flower.....



Fruit tree orchard is coming alive.....

Here you can see some of the fruit trees that have been planted as part of our fruit tree orchard – all funded by Smart Learner Driving School.....

Now we are into spring, you can see plenty of growth and some wonderful pink blossom which hopefully will be followed by some fruit.....



Apple

Blossom.....



SMART L LEARNER



02475 092 784



www.smartlearner.com



**4 Wheelwright Buildings
Hen Lane, Coventry CV6 4LB**



Sweet Damson trees are growing well too.....



Here you can see one of our sweet damson trees that is producing plenty of fresh green growth..... These trees are all part of our fruit tree orchard that will hopefully establish itself this spring and will provide plenty of fresh fruit for years to come.....

Also, just as important is that the more trees we plant, the more we can capture excess carbon in the atmosphere which helps the environment and improves the air quality for us all.....

Sweet Damson's..

Watch out for news of some more planting work that has taken place, again, funded by Smart Learner Driving School.....