

Gardening: Considerations for Students with Complex Needs

Adaptations that can be made to suit students with complex needs



Create a **high table bed** for students in wheelchairs, this will allow for easier access to reach the plants.



When gardening with students with physical / mobility difficulties – using **bulbs or larger seeds such as broad beans, peas and sunflowers** allows for **greater** for accessibility and participation



Using milk cartons (empty, washed & cut in half) create **bird feeders** and place in an area that can be easily viewed.



Hang a **wind chime** outside in various parts of the garden or even on a window frame or sill, to allow for the students to listen to the variety of sounds it makes. This idea can be incorporated into an art activity where the student can make their own wind chimes. Some ideas can be found here: <https://blog.gardenloversclub.com/diy/wind-chimes/>



Make your own **sensory garden** – these types of gardens are often viewed as an idea for students with Autism, however there are many benefits for all students, particularly those with complex needs. These types of gardens can be as complex or simple as you like, once there is an element of Sight, Sound, Smell, Touch and Taste included, a sensory experience can be offered. There are a lot of helpful information available online to help: <https://www.experia-innovations.co.uk/blog/designing-sensory-gardens-autism/>
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/accessible/sensory-garden-ideas.htm>

For information on planting seeds and other garden activities to suit students with complex needs visit:

- http://www.growingschools.org.uk/Resources/Downloads/SEN_report2009-and10_final_1049.pdf
- <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/accessible/special-needs-gardening.htm>