Jamie Oliver’s visit to the then Kidbrooke School in 2004 sparked an interest in food education. An ex-student and now Green Scene Co-ordinator suggested utilising the school’s disused greenhouse to start a Gardening Club. Seven years later the Gardening Club is still meeting every Monday and the school now has chickens and bees and has joined the Soil Association’s London Farm Academy programme.

Who Does The Gardening?
A team of 14 enthusiastic gardeners make up the weekly after school club. Another 28 students are in the chicken team and 12 more make up the bee team. The school now has 6 staff members trained in bee keeping.

Eating & Cooking
The students take home produce every week. Surplus is sold to staff at the school’s annual sale. They also supply herbs to the Food Tech Department.

National Curriculum
There is a strong link with the Science Department and the Farm Academy programme will broaden the curriculum reach.

Funding
Funds are raised through egg sales, plant sales, a grant from Capital Growth and the school budget.

Top Tip
Plant your seed only as deep as the length of the seed. If it’s too deep it will rot.

Successes
Many of the students have no access to a garden at home so this offers them a wonderful outdoor experience. They have complete ownership of the project and put together the growing plan each year. The School’s Technician helps with holiday watering.

Challenges
The vegetable garden was moved to accommodate the chickens and bees which was hard work for the students. Students are now tackling an outbreak of red spider mite.

Whatever next
Gardening club every day! A Farmer’s Market is planned for October.

What we Grow
- Chillies
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- Sweetcorn
- Carrots
- Red onions
- Spring onions
- Lettuces
- Horseradish