THA Community 'Greenhouse'

At The Harefield Academy we have had a poly-tunnel and garden for many years but over the past couple of years it had been forgotten. During the covid-19 lockdown one of our teachers (who is an avid gardener) decided to get our school growing.

As the children of keyworkers are currently in school this provided us a great opportunity to pass some time and hopefully get a harvest which we can use. We started by using our muscles and digging the outdoor beds which had become overgrown. Furthermore, we also started to germinate some seeds in the classrooms (some of the seeds being older than us). We had successes and failures but armed with some newer seed we produced enough seedlings to help our garden to thrive.

Once our plants were strong enough they were moved into our poly-tunnel where we found some strawberries which required some love. We watered our plants, took the weeds out of the bed and cleared the rest of the tunnel, so we could start to transplant them. The radish and tomatoes were planted along with a couple of other seeds while the other plants sat in their pots and enjoyed to warmth and moisture. Our squash grew and grew (now larger than our forearms), our tomato plants have also been plentiful including varieties such as 'beef steak'.

We grew some apple trees as well as a couple of saplings acquired by the Mayor of London's scheme. The trees were initially outside but the Muntjac deer ate the leaves. Oh deer, oh deer!!! So we decided to bring the trees into the poly-tunnel so they could grow uninterrupted. We now have lots of plants (some from cuttings) which include: radish, cucamelons (we are interested to see the results), cucumber, squash, sunflowers, sweetcorn,

parsley, dill and some jasmine.

It has been fantastic to grow some plants which has encouraged some students to be green fingered at home and has brought a new interest into the food we eat. We look forward to harvesting our plants and using the fruit and vegetables to cook in our food and nutrition classes.