

## WHAT IS A GARDEN SCHOOL?



Any school, regardless of its size, can be a Garden School. A Garden School is one that involves children in using the garden to enhance their learning and health and well-being. It also promotes a positive attitude towards the environment.

The essential criterion for a Garden School is that, regardless of size or layout, it is consciously used to address one or a number of different issues. These issues can range from simple curriculum links on growing, through to active harvesting and preparing of vegetables linked to healthy eating. Importantly, they can also raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues (like climate change) and sustainability. They can also develop links for community engagement and partnership.

These criteria are set out in the attached framework and your school can use it to decide where you are on the journey to becoming a Garden School. The framework is a self-assessment tool, but you can also apply for recognition as a Garden School by completing it and posting some of your successes on our website, stating what stage your Garden School is at.

There are many different types of gardens and many ways in which gardens can be used in learning and teaching. In the sections that follow, we set out some guidance on the opportunities gardens offer for learning and teaching, community engagement and health and wellbeing. Use this framework to decide what type of Garden School you are and use the on-line fora (OSF website/Facebook/Twitter) to share ideas or for inspiration to grow your garden, develop opportunities and involve more children, parents and community groups. You may find that you are at different stages on each of the criteria. For example, you may find that you have a pocket garden, but you grow four types of produce and share it with the old people's home next to the school. So, it is possible to be at different stages for different elements of your Garden School. We leave it to you to make an overall judgement and to make plans to move on to the next stage.

The Garden provides the context for a great deal of subject and interdisciplinary based learning such as science, language, health and well-being and expressive arts. Our Garden School educational materials provide guidance addressing these curriculum areas; providing ideas throughout the whole year.

## THE GARDEN SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

	Stage 1 Sprouting 	Stage 2 Seedling 	Stage 3 Budding 	Stage 4 Flowering 	Stage 5 Fruiting 
Plants	Up to 3 types	Up to 6 types including at least 2 vegetables	6 to 8 types at least half of which are fruit and veg	8 to 10 types	More than 10 types
School participation and Community engagement	Only one class involved	A number of classes involved	The whole school involved	Individuals and groups from outside the school work with the pupils in the garden.	Flowers and produce from the garden is shared with community groups outside the school e.g. old people's home, food banks
Health and well-being	Children are actively involved in the design of the garden and deciding what to grow.	Children can take responsibility for different parts of the garden.	Children can describe the plants and what benefits they provide.	Children can use tools properly and can discuss seasonal planting.	Children prepare and share healthy food grown from the garden.
	Children spend less than an hour per week in the garden.	Children spend 1-2 hours once a week in the garden.	Children spend a morning or afternoon once a week in the garden.	Children spend time in garden twice per week	Children spend some time in the garden more than twice per week.
The Garden Calendar and Curriculum	We have just started looking at one month of topics in the garden calendar and are working towards the next.	We have successfully completed the curriculum links, competences and skills for two months	We are now half way through the garden calendar and have undertaken many of the suggested activities.	We are three quarters of the way through the garden year and have completed the activities associated with these stages.	We have successfully worked through the garden year and covered all the materials in the guide and created our own activities.
Biodiversity and Climate Change. Use the lists provided at: <a href="http://oneseedforward.co.uk/garden-schools/garden-school-framework">http://oneseedforward.co.uk/garden-schools/garden-school-framework</a> to help move your garden to a biodiverse, climate friendly and sustainable garden.	We do/have one or two things on the lists.	We do/have 3-6 things on the lists.	We do/have around half of the things on the lists.	We do/have nearly all things on the lists.	We do/have all the things on the lists.