

Children's Chelsea 2020

FAQ for RHS Garden Wisley

Please read all of the information before applying to take part in the competition

Where is RHS Garden Wisley?

RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB

What is the competition about?

The Children's Chelsea Competition has replaced our annual Budding Gardeners Competition and is an opportunity for schools and children's community and uniform groups to showcase their love of gardening and imaginative ideas to RHS members and 20,000 visitors to RHS Garden Wisley during the summer half term (Sat 23 May – Sun 31 May).

Who can take part?

Schools and groups signed up to the RHS Campaign for School Gardening are eligible to apply. If you are not registered yet, it's easy and free. [Click here to register.](#)

Each group will need to be able to plant up their design on **Thursday 21 and/or Friday 22 May 2020** at RHS Garden Wisley. Gardens must be completed promptly at 12pm on Friday 22 May in order for judging to take place.

Gardens should be designed and created by the children, not just adults. If your students cannot attend the planting days and staff/volunteers are planting up the garden on their behalf, you should aim to assemble photos/drawings that show students putting elements of the garden together themselves, for us to display next to your garden.

How do groups enter?

Complete an application form and return it by email to learning@rhs.org.uk with 'Children's Chelsea' in the subject header. Application forms must be received by **5pm on Monday 23 March 2020**.

By sending an application form, you will secure your group a 1m x 1m raised bed in which to plant your garden. Raised beds will be set up at RHS Garden Wisley ready to be planted up by you on the designated planting days.

Further details on planting days, take down days and additional information will be sent via email during the lead up to the event.

The deadline for all application forms is **5pm on Monday 23 March 2020**.

Is there a theme to the competition?

This year, the theme of the competition is **Health and Wellbeing** as we have been inspired by plans for a Wellbeing Garden due to open at our [National Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning](#) at RHS Garden Wisley. This new garden will invite visitors to explore the many ways in which gardens and plants affect physical and emotional wellbeing, and the positive impact they may have on our healthTips for creating your garden:

- Consider what elements of the theme your garden should contain. Perhaps students could each design a plot from which the winning design can be selected.

- Think about how you can resource your garden free by asking family and friends for donations of cuttings or recycled items, or using plants/items from your own garden and grounds.
- Ensure that you have enough time to grow your plants to be ready for display.

What are the prize categories?

There are 4 categories:

- SEN (all ages)
- Nursery (under 5)
- Primary (age 5 -11)
- Secondary (age 11 -16)

Gardens will be judged and certificates awarded in a similar way to the Chelsea Flower Show. All gardens will receive either gold, silver-gilt, silver or bronze certificates. There will also be additional category winners:

- Best In Show (one award per age category)
- Best Construction
- Green Award (best use of recycling)
- Most Original Award
- Sponsor's Award
- Curator's Award
- People's Choice Award (*announced after half term*)

What are the benefits of taking part?

Aside from providing a fun activity for students and displaying your group's green credentials to over 20,000 RHS Garden visitors, benefits include:

- Free entry to RHS Garden Wisley for all those that take part in the competition (students and teachers or group leaders), valid for summer half term 2020 (23-31May). Parents, family members or other adults will be required to pay the normal entry fee.
- The chance to win some great prizes if your group is given an award by our judges.
- A certificate and gift for each group that takes part.

What is provided by the RHS?

A bottomless wooden raised bed is provided and will already be in position and pre-filled with compost ready for your group to plant up your garden on the designated planting days.

Raised beds are approximately 1m x 1m and 20cm deep but please note that not all of the raised beds are identical and some measurements do vary slightly so please allow for some leeway.

The back of the raised bed will be fitted with a 1m x 1m display panel on which you can show your development designs and photographs and tell us a little bit about how you arrived at your garden design. We will ask you for these details and photographs **in advance of the competition** so that we can print these display boards ready for when you arrive to start planting.

Extra compost and water will be available during the planting days.

When do we plant our garden?

There will be two planting days at Wisley on Thursday 21 May (**10am - 4pm**) and Friday 22 May (**10am – 12pm**) and you may attend one or both of these. Judging of the gardens will commence at 12pm on the Friday so gardens will need to be finished by this time. We realise it can be difficult for students and staff/volunteers to take too much time away from school, however, last year a few groups found that they ran out of time to complete their gardens on Friday. If possible, we would recommend that if your garden contains a lot of construction, you make use of the planting time on Thursday and return for the awards ceremony on Friday.

Prize giving will begin at 2pm on Friday 22 May and is expected to last approximately 45 minutes.

How many students can we bring?

This is entirely up to you, however, due to the high number of groups that take part, we would recommend limiting your groups to about 8-10 students. You may bring more but please ensure you have enough adults present to supervise them.

Where do we go on the planting day?

Full details and maps will be sent to you by email nearer the date.

How tall can our garden be?

Many groups choose to incorporate high structures in their design. We would recommend keeping height to no more than one metre if possible, although as long as the structure is completely secure, this is flexible. However, please bear in mind that there will be a 1m x 1m display panel at the back of the raised bed, which you will not want to obscure. Additionally, remember that your garden will need to stay standing for up to 11 days, during which time it will be mostly unattended and the weather could be temperamental.

How wide can our garden spread?

Only items within the raised bed will be judged and everything outside of the bed will not be counted. Raised beds are situated quite close together so please bear this in mind when planning your design.

When will the gardens be dismantled?

You will need to collect any plants or other content that you wish to keep from your garden, by 2pm on Monday 1 June 2020. Those gardens that are not collected will be dismantled by the RHS and composted/recycled. Unfortunately, we cannot allow you to remove your garden on any other date.

A few additional rules:

- Please do not paint the raised bed as they are reused each year. You may stick things to the bed, which can be removed later.
- It is very important that you do not include any sharp objects, live animals, nuts or foodstuff in your garden and garden canes **must** have toppers.
- If you wish to use photos of your students on your display board then photo permission forms signed by a parent/guardian must be completed and returned to us at the time of submitting your photos and garden details (**we will provide the form to you electronically**). We will also have a photographer on site during planting days so we may also ask for permission for photos to be used in the local press, on the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and RHS websites and on social media. Please ensure that prior to the event you are aware of which children have permission to be photographed and those that do not. If you do not wish for any children to be photographed while at the garden, please let us know in advance and we will arrange to take photos of your garden once your students have finished planting.

Any further questions?

Please email learning@rhs.org.uk and we will be happy to help.

Terms and Conditions

The judges' decision is final.

Please note that the raised bed remains the property of the RHS.

We acknowledge that some school half term dates may vary from those of this competition, but the dates listed are final.

Unfortunately, entries cannot be returned to school/group premises and will need to be collected. If you wish to collect the contents of your entry this can only be done on Monday 1 June 2020 between 10am and 2pm.