

# EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM BEST SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD REPORTS 2011

## Index

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Page</b>
All Saints C of E Primary School, Sapcote	2
Blidworth Oaks Primary School, Blidworth	3
Boothville Primary School, Northampton	4
Bridgewater Primary School, Northampton	5
Caistor Yarborough School, Caistor	6
Coomb Briggs Primary School, Immingham	7
Deeping St James Community Primary School, Deeping St James	8
Great Coates Primary School, Grimsby	9
Little Hill Primary School, Wigston	10
Magnus Church of England School, Newark	11
Middleton Community Primary School, Middleton-by-Wirksworth	12
Milford Primary School, Cifton, Nottingham	13
Mountfields Lodge Primary School, Loughborough	14
Old Clee Primary School, Grimsby	15
Ridgeway Infants, Littleover, Derby	16
Ridgeway Primary School, Ridgeway	17
Spire Infant School, Chesterfield	18
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Cleethorpes	19
St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Chesterfield	20
Tansley Primary School, Tansley	21
The Peele Community College, Long Sutton	22

All Saints C of E Primary School  
Bassett Lane, Sapcote, Leicestershire

Dear All Saints C of E Primary School,

We enjoyed looking round your school garden on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and it was a pleasure to meet so many of you. With the help of Mrs Bakewell and Mr Watkins you have achieved a lot. We were pleased that most of you get involved in something during the year. Children in Reception have had a bug hunt and also grown sunflowers from seed that were planted out later at the front of school. Have you been able to save some of the seeds for next year?

You have grown a lot of different vegetables and fruit with Mr Watkins. We saw several different vegetables and some fruit on apple and plum trees. You are very lucky to have a cookery club, and use what you have grown to make delicious things like carrot cake and winter vegetable soup. Perhaps you could think about planting some raspberry, blackcurrant and gooseberry bushes as well, as the fruit would be good to use in your cookery club. We wonder if your onions won a prize in the Sharnford Show?

You must have been very pleased when the Probation Trust offered to help you with your garden, so that you have a greenhouse, quiet area and beds for your vegetables, fruit and herbs. It must have been a great treat to have a visit from Bishop Tim. We were told that he was very impressed with the area and planted a special shrub. It would be good if you had somebody to water in the holidays so that you could make more use of the greenhouse. Planting cherry tomato seed early in the year can give ripe fruit in July and then you could, perhaps, take the plants home as you do with your very colourful hanging baskets.

We are pleased that you compost and have a green cone. You told us you are now going to dig in your manure for your vegetables and then grow them in a different place each year. We hope you have an Environmental Club this year. Making a wormery and building an animal hotel must have been great fun. We saw these and your bird boxes. We hope the wild flower meadow will attract lots of insects this year. Do carry on recording all the wildlife you see.

It was interesting to see that all Year 2 had helped a potter to make some special tiles to make the mural we saw near the greenhouse. The people who did plant life cycles on plates and sunflower pictures to display in the hall would have enjoyed that too. Perhaps the garden could help with ideas for story writing and with the pictures of all the things that you do you might be able to help your teachers make displays by printing words for them on a computer.

Sapcote in Bloom must be very pleased to work with you. You have done a lot of work and we have awarded you 63 points, which is a Silver Award. Well done.

**Graham Lamb and Valerie Farrow**

Judges for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
13	10	12	14	14	63

[Blidworth Oaks Primary School](#)  
Haywood Avenue, Blidworth, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire

Dear Blidworth Oaks Primary School,

Thank you for showing me round your lovely gardens and outdoor areas on 5th July. You have made your school look beautiful with so many planters with colourful arrangements in almost every corner.

It was very unusual to see the vegetables you grow especially for your pets alongside the flowers. You have created a purposeful and green secluded area within your school, which is a happy place to work and play. I especially liked the "themed" displays in the corner of the courtyard including plants that showed your historical topics, and the Dragon with fiery breath and a green body, all created from plants after your drama day.

The many small areas where growing has been encouraged were surprising, and they help you to learn outdoors. The paintings, sculptures and your work about books were all very well done. You must enjoy doing your maths and science work outside too.

Perhaps you could think about making an area where you could grow more vegetables for yourselves involving all classes if possible. This would help you to learn gardening skills, and to know about different vegetables, how they grow from seed, and eventually are on your plate. Your score was low in this section. I'm sure you would enjoy preparing and tasting the vegetables you could grow: you seemed to enjoy the potato tasting. Maybe the cookery club could be involved.

Your new Wildlife Garden is lovely, and very well planned. I liked the bug hotel and composting. Next year you can begin to decide what you would like to see, and plant there, to encourage more wildlife. It should be interesting finding out. Your plans to develop and maintain the newly created areas after the completion of your building work are very good.

Thank you for making a very interesting portfolio of your work.

Well done, you should be proud of yourselves. You have achieved 70 marks, which is a Silver Award.

**Roz Taylor**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
15	17	12	8	18	70

[Boothville Primary School](#)  
Booth Lane North, Northampton

Dear Boothville Primary School,

On July 13<sup>th</sup> I had a very enjoyable time being shown around all the garden areas at your school by Mrs York. There was such a lot of interesting things for me to see. I was pleased that so many of you have a lot of opportunities to use the garden and have a garden club that you can go to. Year 3 had a Perspex side to one of their raised beds so they could see plant roots, which I thought was a clever idea and the Year 1 area had at least five different herbs and a lot of different vegetables that you must have enjoyed growing. You have a wild cherry and some raspberry canes. Think about having more fruit that you could perhaps eat in school.

I was pleased that you take the tomato plants that you had in the greenhouse home for the holiday but you could have them ready to pick in July if you sow cherry tomatoes early in the year. Instead of taking all the vegetables home it might be possible to cook some in school. A small electric steamer could prove useful. In the four blue raised beds it is important to rotate your plants so they grow in a different place each year. Well done for collecting Morrisons vouchers for the greenhouse and other items for the garden.

I like the idea of using your wildlife area to help with story writing and to make a, 'jungle trail,' in geography. Some of you have been measuring beans and experimenting in growing plants in different conditions. I expect this helped you to learn which conditions help plants to grow best. I thought the scarecrow you made on Eco day will certainly keep the birds away from your plants. I hope the nesting boxes you made will encourage birds to nest. I liked your bird table. Do you record the birds that you see? You are lucky to have lots of areas for insects and other creatures including log piles and a pond.

I liked seeing the Reception area with all its flowers and I would have liked to see all the daffodils in the spring. Reception children must find it great fun to see the bulbs flower that they all plant each October.

You have a lot of different trees around the grounds but it is a shame that your school can't have permission for you to plant some more small ones. Your wildflower area looked very colourful and you have a pretty perennial border.

You have done very well and scored 67 points, which is a Silver Award.

**Graham Lamb**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom

14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
14	16	15	11	11	67

[Bridgewater Primary School](#)  
Bridgewater Drive, Abington, Northampton

Dear Bridgewater Primary School,

Ms Biddle took me all round your gardens and wildlife area and I was very pleased to see all the different things that you do.

Years 1-6 children grow a lot of different vegetables and fruit and each year group has three small raised beds so that they can learn about the need for rotating crops. I saw a lot of different fruit and vegetables. It was good to know that you were able to give Karen the caterer some of your crops to use in your dinners. I really like Year 2's idea to grow some of their own corn that they will cut, mill and then cook. I think you are lucky to have a cookery club after school. How thoughtful to supply the dining room top table with flowers from the garden.

The Early Years children have their own area with three raised beds. You must have had great fun sowing seeds in shoes. I'm pleased you have been able to do some cookery and the teddy bears' picnic using your own potatoes sounds very exciting.

You have a good wildlife area with lots of insect homes and I found two young frogs under one log. The pond had several marginal plants and a number of interesting creatures but the dry weather had lowered the water level and there was a lot of blanket weed that needed removing. There were bird feeders and bird boxes and I saw that Year 4 had just spent a lot of time making wild life homes. I was pleased to see a hedge you had planted using hawthorn, holly, hornbeam and dog rose. You do some composting and collect some rain water, but you might consider getting more water butts.

It was good to see that your garden is used to help teach you a number of things in all your subjects. It was used in science for a bean experiment, maths to record information, in English to help with story writing and a lot of you use it for your art work. I liked the Tudor Knot Garden that a group studied. How clever to use cress for the box hedging.

I liked the large logs of Wellingtonia that the council have given to the school. They give a lot of interest and the smaller logs will be available when your, 'Forest School' starts this year.

You obviously do a lot of work in your school garden and you should be very pleased with your score of 71, which is a high Silver Award.

**Graham Lamb**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
14	16	15	13	13	71

Caistor Yarborough School  
Grimsby Road, Caistor, Lincolnshire

Dear Caistor Yarborough School,

Thank you for showing me your garden on 27 June 2011. The key strength of your garden is your vegetable growing – you had a good range of crops, which looked really healthy, both in the raised beds and the greenhouse. The use of the vegetables in the school kitchen, Food technology and the Y11 leavers' barbeque is also very good. Produce from the garden also includes eggs from your three chickens. The students I met were committed to looking after the garden in their lunch times, including times without any staff involvement.

The eight apple trees are a good addition to your garden although the trees do need an area clear of grass around them. This would also reduce the risk of damage when the grass is strimmed. Introducing some more soft fruit would be another good addition to your garden. You also have a good range of herbs, which you supply to the school kitchen.

It is appreciated that in a secondary school it is more difficult to link the curriculum to the garden. This is developing with sunflowers for art, in food technology and science. There also seems to be potential to link to business studies and the Young Enterprise scheme, with marketing and selling. You could also keep a photographic record of your garden and crops over the school year.

Your composting, use of rain butts off the greenhouse, wormery and organic gardening are important in the 'Sustaining the Environment' section although the score in this section could not be higher as you are not really focusing on the other wildlife aspects.

You are making good use of your garden area and your raised beds help to overcome the difficult soil conditions. You could perhaps also take on the other garden area I was shown, which mainly has shrubs and flowers and see if more students can be involved, particularly if new students could be encouraged to do this when they join the school in Y7.

I hope you will not be disappointed with a score of 57, which is a Bronze Award. You have a good vegetable garden and with more curriculum links and a focus on wildlife, as well as your plans for more soft fruit, you could aim for a silver award if you are representing Caistor next year. Well done on your gardening achievements this year.

Valerie Farrow

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
12	8	10	15	12	57

Coomb Briggs Primary School  
Roval Drive, Immingham, N E Lincolnshire

Dear Coomb Briggs Primary School,

I enjoyed visiting your school and meeting some of you on 27 June 2011. Your gardens, class beds and containers are well designed, colourful and you had some interesting themes. You clearly look after everything really well with your rotas for weeding, watering and dead heading. Involving everyone when you plant a new area is a good idea, as are your gardening and environmental days. It all contributes to a very good outdoor environment, which makes a valuable contribution to your school.

You are also caring for wildlife by filling bird feeders and making and providing nesting boxes. Your work with willow has marked out the path in the Woodland Trail and keeps areas undisturbed for wildlife. The long grass areas and log piles are also beneficial. The Y6 research to make a bug hotel and their plans to build it before they move on to their new schools will be a good legacy for the school.

Your allotment area is an interesting way to involve your families. I think it would be good if more of you could be involved in growing fruit and vegetables. Perhaps this will be possible if you extend your allotment and try your head teacher's idea of 'adopt a sack' (builders bag) giving more of you a chance to start growing vegetables in a small way. It is good that produce is used in cookery and I hope you will be able to grow more for the cookery club.

Your teachers make very good use of your gardens etc. with lots of ideas to support a range of curriculum subjects, which must make it interesting for you and give you more time outdoors. You are very fortunate to have a head teacher who is so committed to your having a high quality outdoor environment and Mr. Nick who helps you with your projects.

Congratulations of a score of 82 and a Silver Gilt Award. You have maintained a high standard over this year and you are right to feel proud of what you have achieved, including Level 5 of the RHS Benchmarking Scheme. Well done.

**Valerie Farrow**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
16	18	15	15	18	82

Deeping St. James Community Primary School  
Hereward Way, Deeping St James, Peterborough, Lincolnshire

Dear Deeping St. James Community Primary School,

I had a very enjoyable time on July 14<sup>th</sup> being shown around your school garden by Ms Hendry. The colourful bed planted and looked after by Year 2 made the entry to school very attractive.

The Early Years garden was an area packed full of interest. I liked the different plants you had put in with your parents at the garden party and all the different vegetables that you have grown. I saw your pumpkins and wonder if you have made your soup with them yet. I'm sure it will taste wonderful. The only disappointment was to find that I had visited when all the Early Years children had gone to Ferry Meadows.

You are lucky to have the Jimmy D's Out of School Club which sounds very enjoyable and Brownies are also allowed to make use of the garden. Ms. Hendry has a garden club and I'm sure this is also great fun. I'm told that your teachers use the garden to help with learning in a variety of different subjects. Counting, recording, weighing, measuring and estimating all help with your maths work. Writing stories and watching water boatman and leaves blowing helped in writing poetry. The quiet parts of the garden have been helpful when you are upset or angry. The developing wildlife garden with its fruit and vegetables I am sure will be a valuable place. The school has been given wood for an eight foot by six foot greenhouse frame and you will then make the greenhouse by threading 2ltr plastic bottles on bamboo canes. How very exciting this is going to be.

You have a very good wildlife area that contains a pond that is fed by water collected off the school roof. It needs to have a number of plants cut back and a wooden platform will help you to find the animals that are living there. I heard that you have some small trees planted in a temporary place that you will be able to plant properly during the winter. I am pleased that you have log piles and a meadow to attract different creatures. The compost you are making will help you put food back into the soil and adding water butts to catch water from the classroom shed roof will be another useful project next year.

I'm pleased you collect Morrisons vouchers as these could fund water butts and many other things for the garden. It was good to see the different vegetables you grow and are able to sell. It will be helpful when you have a school shop to sell your produce. The garden has five young apple trees but it might be a good idea to have some more fruit such as raspberries and blackcurrants, then you will have more fruit to use in a cookery class. I particularly liked to hear that many of you had been able to pick apples from a large tree and make apple pie. You have several different herbs in a bed that was thoughtfully done as a leaving gift by a recent Year 6 class.

Everything I saw at your school told me that you are all very lucky and do a lot of work. You have a very good garden and have been awarded 72 points which is a high Silver Award

**Graham Lamb**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
15	16	14	14	13	72

Great Coates Primary School  
Crusland Road, Grimsby, N E Lincolnshire

Dear Great Coates Primary School,

Thank you to all the children who were involved in showing me your many garden areas on my visit on 27 June 2011. I was impressed with your colourful planters, with the trellis backs, which surround your bench tables. These must make this a really nice area for you all. The gardening club has many enthusiastic members who look to have been very busy looking after your planters and raised beds.

Your main vegetable growing area had a good range of crops, as well as herbs and strawberries. You have managed to fit in a lot in the space, with raised beds, potatoes in bags, containers and tomatoes in hanging baskets. It is good that you can cook your crops at school and I hope lots of you enjoy tasting them.

Well done for all the work you have done to make sure your young trees have a large area free of weeds and grass around them. This is important and will help the trees establish and in time be beneficial to wildlife. You have plans for wildflowers near your tree area and this is another good project. Perhaps you could also think of other ways to help wildlife as you continue to develop your school grounds.

Next year if you are representing Grimsby again in the Best School Garden Award it will help the judges if you can keep a record of your gardening activities throughout the year – perhaps you could take the photographs and keep a diary.

Well done on your achievements this year and a score of 68, a Silver Award.

**Valerie Farrow**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
14	14	13	14	13	68

Little Hill Primary School  
Launceston Road, Wigston, Leicestershire

Dear Little Hill Primary School,

You are very lucky to have such knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers as Mrs Osbourne and Mrs Tedds. Mr Horn, your head teacher and parents understand and support your need for a school garden so with all the work that you do you have made a very good garden. We enjoyed being shown round by Margot, Jack and Thomas, who were very knowledgeable.

We were pleased to learn that every class has its own space in one of your three greenhouses and its own raised bed to grow a good variety of vegetables. You must like to keep the same bed for all the time you are at Little Hill. In the holidays teachers and a play scheme look after the garden and produce is frozen or taken to elderly people.

Your greenhouses are excellent with many good quality plants. We liked the pollination demonstration and that you encourage spiders to control pests. Water butts collect water from their roofs. Well done.

You have a nice new little orchard and it would be a good idea if you could now add some pears and plums to go with the six apple trees. You might also like to grow fruit such as raspberries, gooseberries and blackcurrants then you would have even more delicious things for the school kitchens or the after school cookery club. We were very surprised to see how many regular jobs the Plant Plotters do and still had time to make a Mini-Beast mansion. Your club must be very popular. Well done. It was good to see that you compost and thought it was a very good idea to have a green cone for each day of the week.

Your 'Wigloo' must be fun to use as a classroom and we like to know that the garden is used to help with a lot of lessons such as measuring, recording, story writing and science experiments. We loved your mural and scarecrows.

The pond area is very peaceful and we were told that there is a plan to have a platform to help you do some pond dipping. We saw bird boxes, a spider box, log piles, feeders for birds and some mole hills. The bluebells and snowdrops must make the area very pretty early in the year. We hope that next year a bird will use the box on the school building so that you can watch it with the web cam.

Your ground at the back of the school looks very interesting with its grass snakes and ant hills. It is a good idea to get the Woodland Trust to survey it for you before you decide what you would like to happen to it. We heard that you have many more plans for the future including improving the area where you come into school. Your teachers want to have some small plots especially for the Plant Plotters and to do cuttings of herbs that you can take from the very good raised herb bed. It would also be good to try to add some more colour with a wider range of flowers in borders, baskets or tubs.

You have all done very well and have earned 81 points, which we are pleased to say is a high Silver Gilt Award.

**Graham Lamb and Valerie Farrow**

Judges for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
16	15	17	18	15	81

Magnus Church of England School  
Earp Ave, Newark, Nottinghamshire

Dear Magnus C of E School,

Thank you for your welcome to your school on 5<sup>th</sup> July, and for taking such a long time to show me all your outdoor learning activities and gardening work at the allotment.

I was impressed with the wide range of practical activities that you do outdoors to a very high standard. The willow sculpture, it's seating and the surrounding flower beds were wonderful, and would be a perfect addition to any garden.

The front of the school, newly planted, looked lovely with plenty of colour and texture. The photographs of the other planting projects you have done were an excellent record of your work. Keep it up. Thank you for the portfolio record of your wide ranging activities.

The portfolio of work for GCSE was outstanding, and I hope the high achievement level grade it was awarded will encourage you all to continue this aspect of study further.

The contribution you make to the Community Allotments all year round, rain or shine, summer or winter, and where you learn to understand how to grow fresh produce is remarkable. The outdoor classroom at the allotment is simple, but ideal. You are very fortunate to have such excellent support of the Community Volunteers and your teacher Mrs Sturgeon, who are so enthusiastic and work so hard alongside you. It is very helpful that they can provide maintenance during the summer.

Well done for the production of the excellent quality vegetable boxes, which staff can buy. All your produce looked very good, and those that I tasted were delicious.

I was pleased to see that you are leaving specific areas for the benefit of wildlife and that you understand why this is important. Perhaps you could think about how you can attract more wildlife to both your school environment and the allotment. It would be tremendous if you could involve other students in the school in this particular aspect of your very well organised activities.

You have received a high score of 75 marks, which is a Silver Gilt Award. You should be very proud of this. Well done.

**Roz Taylor**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
17	18	12	15	16	78

Middleton Primary School  
Main Street, Middleton, Wirksworth, Derbyshire

Dear Middleton Primary School,

Thank you for showing us around your school gardens on 4<sup>th</sup> July. You have been working very hard. The flower garden with the interesting curved seating was lovely; it must be very peaceful to sit there. You must have given a lot of time to this garden, which has lots of colour and variety of planting. We also really liked the planters in the undercover area and on the walls, which show a lot of commitment to maintain, as they really make a difference to how the areas look and feel.

How exciting to have your own hens. You obviously look after them well and provide very good conditions for their care and welfare.

The green play area beyond the hens with the willow tunnel is a well maintained area to play in, but maybe you could think about encouraging some wild flowers and other plants to grow around the edges of the field to provide more homes for wildlife, as you obviously enjoy watching the birds come to your feeders and boxes on the edge of the woodland.

You have made very good progress with your allotment area, and it is very tidy and well cared for. The additional compost you will make will be very useful. You have grown a nice range of fruit and vegetables this season.

We particularly liked your ideas for using your produce, and the recipes were most interesting. Good luck with the potato curry next term (We wish we could try some!). Perhaps you could look at developing ways of cooking more of your produce in school.

Try to remember the names of the fruit and vegetables you grow. Well done for keeping a rota of "tasks to do" so that everyone shares the gardening work, and you all know what needs to be done next. You have made very good arrangements for families and volunteers who regularly help, and who will water and maintain the garden and allotment during the summer holidays.

You have achieved a very good score of 78, which is a Silver Gilt Award. Well done. You should be proud of this achievement.

## Roz Taylor and Valerie Farrow

Judges for East Midlands in Bloom

14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
15	16	15	15	17	78

Milford Primary School  
Dungannon Road, Clifton, Nottingham

Dear Milford Primary School,

Thank you for showing me round your lovely school and grounds on 6<sup>th</sup> July. You were all so enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

There was SO MUCH to see in all age groups, with every class doing regular gardening as well as the Garden Club. There was a very good variety of vegetables, flowers and herbs and fruit being grown, and I was very impressed that you all knew the names of all the plants, even the Nursery children!

The tubs, planters and beds of flowers all round the school were gorgeous, many grown from seed, and anyone would be pleased to have them in their garden – so colourful and so much variety. I'm not surprised that the neighbours phone the school to say how much they enjoy your work outdoors. The amount and variety of seeds and plants in the polytunnel was amazing, and you are lucky to have so many people to help you. Its great that so many children choose to garden when they have some free time at lunchtime and playtimes.

I saw lots of excellent work in the classrooms about your activities outside, writing, art, maths, science and many lovely photos and well presented and interesting displays in every area. Thank you for providing such a nice portfolio of work for the judges to look at: it would have been useful to include some examples of curriculum planning.

It was impressive to see so much preparing, using and tasting of the wide range of fruit and vegetables you have grown, so that you understand how food gets to your plate, and why it is so important to eat a range of fresh ingredients. All the ingredients I saw looked lovely, and those I tasted were delicious.

You are lucky to have so many established trees around the grounds. The special area for wildlife is interesting, and I can see why you have decided to develop it more. Maybe you could investigate which particular plants, trees and shrubs will develop biodiversity. With so many areas that you are preparing and using for growing it is a very good decision that you will be doing more composting in the future. The arrangements you have made for the care and maintenance of you gardens during the summer are very important.

The very new raised beds on the lower field are a very good way of experimenting and to "trial" new ideas. I'm sure your teachers will learn a lot too. Your whole school environment both inside and out is immaculate, and you should be very proud of it. You have achieved a very high score of 86, which is a Gold Award. Well done.

**Roz Taylor**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
18	20	12	18	18	86

Mountfields Primary School  
Epinal Way, Loughborough, Leicestershire

Dear Mountfields Primary School,

Thank you for showing me round your interesting school on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

You are situated in an extensive area of lovely established trees, and you are using this environment for outdoor learning in maths, writing, art, and science. I loved the wild areas, the pond and the hide, and the many areas to play imaginatively. Maybe some informal seating in the field areas for use at playtimes would be useful for socialising and for when curriculum work takes place outside. Could you consider creating a woodland path, which winds through the trees and other wild areas, and the placing of interpretative panels to support species observation and recognition?

The new woodland area with seating created for the younger children is excellent, and they will enjoy using it. I liked all the ideas you are using to attract wildlife there, and the creative woodland sculptures. I am sure the Wildlife Trust will be able to give you advice about how to develop the woodland & wild areas further for biodiversity, and you could explore "The Big Wildlife Garden" for ideas at [www.bwg.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.bwg.naturalengland.org.uk)

The creative use of plants, such as to make the dragon and the sheep, were lovely, and such fun. As you observed, the flowers attracted butterflies, so it maybe it would be a good idea to include some more flowers around the school: there are a number of areas and corners, which could benefit from some brightness and colour. The baskets at the entrance to the school are lovely, and perhaps next year you could think about planting them yourselves.

The Y3 children and the gardening club have worked hard with their patches of vegetables and plants. There are an interesting variety of vegetables. Perhaps you can think of some way of setting out the plots so that they look appealing: even vegetable gardens need to be attractive to the eye, and this should be considered when designing an area. What a shame that you are not able to prepare and taste what has been grown. East Midlands in Bloom will write to Leicestershire County Council on your behalf to emphasise how much you are missing when all other children in the East Midlands are enjoying this.

I really liked the greenhouse made of plastic bottles – quite an achievement to make it in school and very environmentally aware. In the future it would be nice to have a wider range of seeds and plants grown in it.

In a large school it can be difficult to involve all pupils in regular gardening activities: however, as there is plenty of space in your grounds you may want to consider making gardening part of your "sustainable curriculum" for a wider range of children.

Thank you for providing a portfolio of evidence. It would have been useful to include some photographs of children working outside and/or some examples of work. You obviously enjoy your outdoor learning, and have achieved a score of 59, which is a Bronze Award. Well done.

Roz Taylor

Judge, East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
9	16	15	8	11	59

Old Clee Primary School  
Colin Avenue, Grimsby, N E Lincolnshire

Dear Old Clee Primary School,

Thank you to the children who showed me around your really extensive garden areas and grounds on 28 June 2011. Mr. West explained that you have established areas and this year, enough space for each class to have four good sized beds, even though you are a really big school with nearly 600 pupils. You have planned and designed your beds and got them ready for planting by weeding, digging etc. You have lots of interesting ideas including planting a Union flag to mark the Royal Wedding, creating a bird feeding station and growing flowers and vegetables.

It can be a real problem with the number of weed seeds that germinate when you turn the soil over to create new beds, so you do need to keep weeding on a frequent and regular basis to get the weeds under control. I think your class beds have so much potential and it may help next year if as a school you set up a growing plan.

Perhaps each class could grow a different vegetable that needs a lot of space in one of its beds such as potatoes, pumpkins, courgettes, runner beans, and broccoli. In another bed you could grow some smaller crops of your choice although do remember about crop rotation. In another bed you might grow flowers – either direct sown annuals, or a mix of some perennials and start some annuals in modules. In the other bed you could relate this to a curriculum topic or design project. If you get as much as possible of the bed covered with plants this will make it harder for the weeds to keep growing. Using mulches is also helpful and if you want to divide a bed with paths avoid 'crazy' paving as this gives more spaces for weeds to grow, unless you put a weed membrane down first.

Your wildlife area is well established and you have some really big compost bins. You could look at ways of adding extra features to benefit wildlife. You are very lucky to have ducks come to one of your enclosed areas.

I saw some really good displays in school and also examples of your work related to the gardens. As your new gardens develop this will enable your teachers to make more links with the outdoors to support curriculum subjects.

Well done for the start you have made with your new beds. You have achieved a score of 58, which is a Bronze Award.

**Valerie Farrow**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom

14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
13	14	13	10	8	58

Ridgeway Infant School  
Uplands Avenue, Littleover, Derby

Dear Ridgeway Infant School,

You have been very lucky this year to have so many parents and teachers to help you in developing a school garden. We were told that some parents plan to go on helping and to have a garden club that you can go to. You could ask your teachers what they would like in the garden to help you with your lessons. It's possible to do lots of projects in a garden to help you with your work including writing, computer skills, maths, science and art. The science week you had must have been great fun and you will be able to see how your bog garden develops during the year when there is more rain. It was clever to use the wood from the old school fence to put around the wildlife area and you had been able to find a use for an old tyre to make a bed for some vegetables.

Some of you had been doing a lot of planting with your parents to make the school more colourful and one boy had planted lots of marigolds and another told us how he had been growing plants with his granddad. It was good to hear that you were learning the names of some plants.

It was good to see that you have some bird boxes and that you make compost to return food back to the soil that the plants need. You had logs that will be used by different creatures for their homes. You have planted some trees but we were concerned that the grass around them might stop them growing properly, most of the ones that had canes attached to them needed a protector on the top of the cane so that you won't get hurt.

Mrs Patel told us that you all like watering but it would be a good idea to have some water butts then you wouldn't have to use as much of the school's water. You have some very good vegetables and have already dug up and cooked your potatoes. We are sure you would have really enjoyed doing that. Perhaps this year you could grow some more fruit trees and bushes and then you would be able to enjoy lots of tasty fruit.

You have only just started to have a school garden and have already done a lot of work. You are very fortunate to have someone as interested as Mrs Patel. We have awarded you a certificate of achievement although you nearly scored enough points for a Bronze Award. Well Done.

**Graham Lamb and Valerie Farrow**

Judges for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

## Ridgeway Primary School,

Dear Ridgeway Primary School,

Thank you for showing us round your allotment on 4<sup>th</sup> July. It is wonderful how you have developed it from a wild and overgrown space.

You all obviously enjoy working in the area and the Garden Gang show super effort and enthusiasm. You have grown a nice range of fruit and vegetables and the plots are very tidy and well cared for. You are experts at weeding. You were able to explain everything you had done very clearly. We were very impressed with your knowledge of how to care for, renew and compost the plots, and rotate the crops. It is clearly very difficult for you to provide water, so very well done for your perseverance. You have enjoyed sampling your produce, but it would be really nice if you could do more preparation and cooking of the ingredients you have grown.

The “enterprise project” was very successful and raised an excellent amount of money. You are beginning to use the new green house well and have made a sensible decision to empty it before the summer. Your care and maintenance of your tools and organisation of the shed is outstanding. We liked the rules for behaviour and use of tools, so that everyone stays safe.

In the area where the daffodils grow you could plan for a succession of more flowers. The log pile and bug house are attracting insects for the birds, but if the bird boxes should be moved higher then there would be more possibility of birds choosing to use them. We think a hedgehog would be more likely to come to a dark corner where there is lots of cover with plenty of leaves.

The area under the fruit trees is attractive and calm, and a nice place to read and draw. The beach scene, and the story and rhyme panels in the plots were very well prepared, attractive and fun, and so were the small inventive sculptures on top of the posts. Some examples of your writing, art work, maths would be nice to see in your portfolio. It would make a good ICT project next year, to keep a diary of photos of your projects in the garden. Also in addition to your gardening activities the garden area could be used more with your teachers, relating it to work you do in the classroom, and developing more learning outside.

We were extremely pleased to meet The Community Volunteers who help you so wonderfully, and to know how much you all appreciate the work that they do with you. You have scored 69 points, a well-earned Silver Award of which you should be proud.

**Roz Taylor and Valerie Farrow**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
15	11	13	15	15	69

Spire Infant School  
Derby Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

Dear Spire Infant School,

Thank you very much for showing me round your school on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Every corner of your school grounds has been skilfully planned and developed. It is a very well maintained and a lovely place to work and play. You all read your descriptions of the different areas to me very well.

Care and attention to detail has been given to growing a wide range of fruit, vegetables, trees, flowers and herbs and the different areas are creatively arranged.

You have learned a lot of gardening skills, and I was very impressed to see in the greenhouse all the plants grown from seed, which have been transferred to the very neat beds and plots. All the wonderful compost you are making is helping everything to grow so well. The children who go to the five Gardening Clubs know a lot about plants and how to care for them. The Clubs offer many well organised outdoor experiences for children who wish to join. You all seem to enjoy tasting your produce, and understand the importance of eating fresh food. I enjoyed the potatoes that were harvested and cooked during my visit. How lovely to be able to go into the garden at playtimes to pick and eat fruit. The huge variety of herbs you have planted is exceptional.

A wide range of wildlife is catered for with different habitats and food sources. You are beginning to understand the importance of having a variety of areas for mini- beasts, birds, and planting the bee and butterfly borders was obviously a lot of fun. The mini-beast hotels provide the very best accommodation. The newly constructed pond is very attractive and thriving, and already providing a good environment for wildlife.

The "Woodland for Wildlife" area has been skilfully and imaginatively developed and managed to provide an extensive play area which you all told me you enjoy enormously. The "dead hedge" and the 'Remembering Garden', and the many native trees you have planted provide so many habitats.

Thank you for providing such an excellent portfolio of work, which shows the breadth of experiences and achievements throughout the year. It was interesting to see the displays of work which you have been doing using the outdoors at all seasons.

When your teachers are reviewing their yearly curriculum plan perhaps they could decide upon topics which will help you use all the garden areas even more, so that everyone can have even more opportunities to be involved in a full programme of outdoor learning in all subjects.

You have received a very high score of 95, which is a Gold Award. Congratulations on the award of the Best School Garden 2011.

**Roz Taylor**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
19	18	20	18	20	95

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
Philip Avenue, Cleethorpes, N E Lincolnshire

Dear St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School,

Thank you for showing me your gardens on my visit on 28 June 2011. Your vegetable growing is really excellent, with such an extensive range of very healthy plants, both in your raised beds and the greenhouse. You clearly know how to look after your crops and your successional sowing will keep up the supply of vegetables through the year. The colourful containers in the Peace Garden were also well looked after.

While you cannot use your crops for school lunches as they come to school ready prepared, the way you use your fruit and vegetables in cookery activities is really impressive. I am sure you all enjoyed the blackcurrant ice cream! The Breakfast Club must be very pleased to have strawberries from the garden. I think your plan to grow more soft fruit is a good one. Mrs. Moy explained to me that you help prepare fruit, which she then makes into jam to be sold to raise funds for the school.

I was also very interested to hear how you grow and sell plants and managed to raise £140 to sponsor a child's education in Haiti. Well done for combining such a worthwhile project with your gardening activities.

Alongside your growing activities you are gardening sustainably by composting and re-using materials, as well as looking after and observing wildlife. I hope you will try sowing wildflower seed again next year – perhaps you could try growing some in modules as well in case it is very dry again. When the plants are a reasonable size you can then plant them out.

Growing fruit and vegetables and the healthy eating projects have become really important at your school. You are doing this to a high standard. Well done. Your total score is 76, which is a Silver Gilt Award.

Valerie Farrow

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
16	14	14	18	14	76

St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
Cross Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

Dear St Mary's Catholic Primary School,

Thank you very much for showing me round your very purposeful and calm school and gardens on 7<sup>th</sup> July. All the outdoor areas, of your school, the gardens, grounds, vegetable areas, were extremely well kept, and you all obviously appreciate them.

There was a wide range of good quality vegetables in the plots. More regular involvement in the growing activities by more pupils would help you develop your knowledge of gardening skills such as identification and crop rotation, and how food gets "from plot to plate".

For a large school it can be difficult to involve all pupils in regular gardening activities: however, as there is space in your grounds you may want to consider making gardening activities part of your "sustainable" curriculum for a wider range of children. It would be nice for all children to be able to prepare and taste produce from your own plots. I liked the proposed plans to improve composting and possibly changing the site for the raised beds for vegetables.

The lovely blooms in your gardens attract many insects and butterflies as we observed, and now you could consider finding out the specific plants and conditions that would improve biodiversity. You did not achieve a high score in the wildlife section, and suggestions and ideas that were explained to me for attracting birds and developing a specific area for wildlife are very appropriate.

The Japanese Themed Garden is enchanting and constructed to a high standard. You obviously enjoy it immensely. Whilst it is lovely for children to have gardens created for them by adults, the criteria for East Midlands in Bloom requires a significant level of involvement by children in creating and managing the garden, although naturally you cannot be involved in much of the hard landscaping.

Thank you for the portfolio of work, and for showing me a variety of photographs on screen. Perhaps it would be possible to develop the use of displays around the school of gardening and outdoor work.

Plans outlined for future development are excellent, especially the use of the outdoors for science based discovery. Your plans for the care of the gardens in the holidays are very well arranged. You are very fortunate to have the wonderful support of your volunteer helper Mr Catt, who gives so much thought, enthusiasm and time to your gardening work.

You have achieved a high score of 76, which is a Silver Gilt Award. You should be proud of this achievement.

**Roz Taylor**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
16	15	12	14	19	76

Tansley Primary School  
Gold Hill, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire

Dear Tansley Primary School,

Thank you very much for showing us round your school on 4<sup>th</sup> July and for the very informative tour of your grounds. You have clearly been working very hard. The newly planted herbs improve that area very well and it will be interesting to see how they progress. You have a nice range of vegetables and fruit in your allotment areas. The plots are tidy and well kept. We were very pleased that you could identify all the fruit and vegetables you were growing, and the idea of labels is good, as is the rotation of what you grow. It is lovely to have badgers on the site, but it is a good idea to protect your plot with a fence as you have done. We were pleased to see the composting you do, but remember that sometimes soil can be too poor as well as too rich for the crop, as with your onions.

You have obviously enjoyed cooking and eating your produce, and the regular salad bar with your own produce is very good, as is the cookery club. The features for sitting and bird watching were well designed and very appropriate, and many children obviously enjoyed the willow tunnel very much as well. The interpretative panels, which you have designed and had made are excellent. They are good quality, clear, concise and informative and the best that we have seen in any school that we have visited.

We liked the random groups of wild plants and flowers, which you have left to grow around the edges of the grounds, which give it a natural feel. The planted area of wild flowers also seems to be doing well. We liked the hedgehog retreat and bug house. The water quality in the pond is good, and to help to maintain this you should consider introducing some oxygenating plants. Some marginal plants would also make it more attractive and also more inviting to a variety of wildlife and do ensure there is ample facility for amphibians and small mammals to climb out of the water. It was a pity that there was litter in several places near the pond area.

The fruit trees and the native trees are progressing, but do remember to leave a much larger area of clear ground around the trunk, as the trees need the maximum water they can get, and grass will also compete for nutrients. As your areas become more established maybe you will be able to link them with a connecting path or trail, or connecting planting.

We liked the bird feeder that had been made and the many ideas you showed us when you had used outdoor learning as part of the class work that you have been doing in a variety of topics. Well done. You must give a huge "thank you" to your caretaker who clearly works very hard to help you to create a good environment.

In the future perhaps you could consider extending your garden plants to include more colour and variety, maybe some pots or planters as a "welcome" at the front door or similar areas.

You have done very well, and your hard work has achieved a score of 81, a high Silver Gilt Award. You should be proud of this achievement.

**Roz Taylor and Valerie Farrow**

Judges for East Midlands in Bloom  
14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
16	18	16	16	15	81

Peele Community College  
Little London Road, Long Sutton, Lincolnshire

Dear Peele Community College,

I was pleased to be met by Jordan and taken around the garden by him with help from fellow students, Alex and Daniel. You are knowledgeable and clearly enjoy your BTEC course, which will gain for you and thirteen other students the equivalent of two GCSE's, a great achievement for a Year 9 group. You showed me a good range of crops and knew the names of most of them.

I noted that the garden is used to help the work of the science and art departments and food technology have used some of your produce. Design and technology had made a few bird boxes and a blackbird had used one of them. I was disappointed that you no longer have a garden club and hope that this will return soon so that more students can have the opportunity to take part in gardening activities. It would also help your entry to again include the playgroup garden, which appeared to be setting a high standard.

I was told that you had planted thirty whips of native trees but wasn't shown the log piles and insect houses that were mentioned in your report last year, although there were areas where small creatures could be found. You had water butts and do a lot of composting and your solar/wind powered weather station is a great asset.

The raised beds contained a large range of plants. I saw three beds with a good variety of vegetables and soft fruit. There was a sensory/insect garden bed and one with a small pond but this was becoming rather overgrown. A recent barbecue was able to make use of several herbs from the herb bed. I'm sure you enjoyed this.

You grow a good range of fruit and vegetables and I liked the small orchard. I'm sure the college staff and your parents appreciate being able to buy your produce.

Keeping everywhere tidy and weed free and growing more container flowers would add to the garden's attraction. Looking after them might present a problem during the holidays as you have to rely on the college maintenance staff, unless you were willing to take small planters and baskets home to look after them.

You have an excellent facility and it has gained 75 points, which is a Silver Gilt Award.

**Graham Lamb**

Judge for East Midlands in Bloom

14 September 2011

SECTION 1	SECTION 2	SECTION 3	SECTION 4	SECTION 5	TOTAL
14	15	15	16	15	75