

Secondary school visits to RHS Garden Wisley

BOOK NOW

Our RHS Gardens are the perfect places to inspire your students.
Book an RHS funded, guided workshop with us.

rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools



RHS Hilltop – The Home of Gardening Science

RHS Garden Wisley incorporates the UK's first dedicated horticultural scientific centre of excellence, protecting the future of plants, people and the planet. In our free, guided secondary school workshops, we aim to stimulate discussion of global issues, such as climate change and food security, in an informal garden setting.

We hope that a visit to RHS Wisley will improve students' climate literacy and help them to truly connect with nature. A visit also supports the goals outlined in the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. This new strategy expects students will 'develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the importance of nature, sustainability and the causes and impact of climate change and to translate this knowledge into positive action and solutions'.

Our aim is to support these objectives by working with you and your students on a frequent basis.



RHS Hilltop Learning Studios



RHS Hilltop has two fully accessible Learning Studios and a teaching garden, allowing us to increase the number of secondary students we can talk to about science and horticulture.

Our studios can hold up to 120 students per day for a guided workshop, although if you would like to organise a workshop for a larger group, this can usually be accommodated.

Secondary school guided workshops

With every guided workshop, students will plant a seed or a cutting to take away.



Plant reproduction and clone wars

KS3, KS4 science

Be an RHS Judge, a bee and a plant cloner all in one engaging workshop. Understand plant sexual and asexual reproduction by developing the practical skills required by commercial growers. Discover the benefits and challenges of plant reproduction for food security.

Learning areas: Cloning, dissection, industry



Plants keep us cool: carbon cycle

KS3, KS4 science

Plants are cool, especially to the air around them. Discover the cooling effect of leaf transpiration by using infra-red thermometers to investigate the relative temperatures of leaves and hard surfaces. Students will also learn how plants photosynthesise to capture carbon by journeying through the carbon cycle, highlighting the significance of plants' role in storing carbon and forming the basis for most world ecosystems.

Learning areas: Working scientifically, climate change, transpiration



Plants under attack

KS4 science

Solve the mystery of what's killing our plants in this inquiry-based workshop. Uncover the hidden world of pathogens and their impact on plants. Students' investigatory skills will be challenged as they learn to spot and identify diseases on garden plants and offer recommendations to remedy problems and help plants fight back. Students will consider the threat of plant disease to food security and appreciate the role plants have in the development of medicines that help humans fight disease.

Diseases in Roses – summer workshops

Diseases in Holly – winter workshops

Learning areas: Science careers, field studies, close observation



Beneath your feet: rocks and soils

KS3, KS4 science & geography

Soil is amazing! Discover the hidden depths of rocks and soil and appreciate how soil is vital to our existence – from the food we eat, to the air we breathe. Understand how soil is the first step in our food chain, through scientific exploration of rocks and degradation, soil and decomposition. Interact with the fantastic circle of life beneath our feet.

Learning areas: Soil composition, pH test, ecosystems



Biomes and plant adaptations

KS3, KS4 science & geography

Adventure awaits as you explore the world's biomes: from hot deserts to steamy rainforests, the frozen mountains to temperate woodland, all in our unique garden setting. Students will discover how plants have evolved to thrive in these different environments and be challenged to link plant structure to form and function. Travel through time and space to learn about the incredible adaptations plants have evolved over millennia.

Learning areas: Biotic and abiotic factors, natural selection, climate change



Inspirational nature

KS3, KS4 science & art

Find inspiration in our garden and allow your students to reflect and respond to the shapes, colours and textures of plants. With a focus on curiosity and imagination, we'll be inspired by nature's creations. Seed-carrying structures come in all shapes and sizes. Discover the relationship between form and function in nature and their vital role in the life cycle of a plant. Each student will create an organic sculpture from clay and plant seeds to take home.

Learning areas: Plant stories, observation, wellbeing

Horticultural workshops

Be an RHS gardener for the day!



Seasonal horticulture – autumn and winter

KS3 to KS5

A practical workshop to discover why plants are important and how we look after them during autumn and winter. Learn how to prepare soil, sow seeds and meet our Wisley worms.

Learning areas: Safety, growing food, seasonality



Seasonal horticulture – spring

KS3 to KS5

A practical workshop to discover why plants are important and how we look after them in spring. Learn how to support, protect and maintain healthy plants. Work as a team to build a structure suitable for growing beans and other climbing plants.

Learning areas: Teamwork, wildlife, seeds



Seasonal horticulture – summer

KS3 to KS5

A practical workshop to discover why plants are important and how we look after them in summer. Learn how to maintain healthy plants whilst embracing wildlife and sustainable growing techniques. Harvest and taste a little bit of produce from the garden.

Learning areas: Pollination, environment, sensory



Inspiration for your National Education Nature Park

KS3 to KS5 (All year round)

Discover positive, measurable actions and ideas for the National Education Nature Park programme in this exciting workshop for students. Through hands-on activities at an RHS Garden, students will develop a greater connection to nature. They will improve their knowledge and agency to support biodiversity, implement habitat improvements and create school green spaces that are more resilient to climate change. The workshop will inspire students to continue their Nature Park journey at school and will include planting something to take back to their school grounds.

Learning areas: Biodiversity, habitat creation, garden mapping

Special Educational Needs (SEN) workshops

All of our workshops can be adapted for SEN groups. Students especially enjoy the practical and vocational aspects of our workshops.



Home education workshops

Throughout the year, we provide guided workshops for home educated families or home education groups. Pre-book a day of discovery and take part in a workshop with our Education Officers.

We have reserved a selection of term-time days for home education families and groups to explore our inspiring gardens. On these days, there will be a 90-minute art or science workshop being run from 10.30am.

Current dates for home education workshops can be found by visiting rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley/whats-on

Our FAQs can be found here
[RHS Garden Wisley /Home Education FAQ's](#)

Self-guided visits

Schools are welcome to book a self-guided visit to the garden instead of taking part in a workshop. Self-guided visits are free but the RHS expects that students are supervised at all times by accompanying adults. Lunch can be eaten in most areas of the garden.

Several areas of the garden lend themselves to science teaching. The Learning Garden is an ideal place to engage with issues such as food production and sustainability. Other areas can be used for small-scale ecological studies. The Trials Field is an excellent location for studying variation between and within plant species.

In addition to our work with science and environment groups, we regularly welcome students of art, design and photography to RHS Wisley. Many art students take inspiration from our wide selection of stunning landscapes.

Booking at least 10 days in advance is essential for both guided and self-guided visits.



Essential information

Admission

The RHS is the UK's leading gardening charity. All educational visits (guided and self-guided) are funded by the RHS (free), however, these must be booked in advance. If you feel able to give a donation to the RHS to help support our educational work this would be much appreciated. We ask you to consider £3 per student for your visit.

Pre-visits

We strongly advise teachers to come to the garden for a pre-visit to ensure they are familiar with the garden and to assist in making a risk assessment. Teachers can visit independently, at their own convenience. All pre-visits must be booked in advance via the school visit booking form.

On the day

Coaches are able to park and drop off passengers in the coach parking area; it is then a short walk to the entrance. If you have booked a guided visit to the garden, an Education Officer will meet you at the front entrance to bring you into the garden. The garden opens at 10am on weekdays all year round. If you have booked a self-guided visit, please make your arrival known to our front entrance staff and they will allow you entry to the garden.

Guided workshops

Each workshop lasts 90 minutes, giving you time to explore the garden fully for the rest of the day.



Minimum /maximum numbers

Guided workshops require a minimum of 15 students to attend, SEN workshops require a minimum of 4 students and self-guided visits can be booked for any number of students.

Adult supervision

The adult to student ratio for KS3 and above is 1:15 and must include a minimum of two adults for each group of up to 35 students. Adults must accompany their groups at all times for health and safety reasons. Please see the information contained in the documents sent with your booking. Additional information can be found at rhs.org.uk

First aid

There is first aid cover in the garden in case of an emergency. RHS staff will only carry out first aid under the direction and authority of an accompanying school staff member.

Allergies

Please inform Education Officers about any allergies (children and accompanying adults) before you visit the garden.

Risk assessments and health and safety

Supporting information to help you write your visit risk assessment will be sent to you with your booking form. This includes our leaflet 'Planning your school visit' which contains guidance and responsibilities for leaders.

Please speak to us about any special needs or access requirements that you may have. Our gardens and the RHS Hilltop Learning Studios are accessible for wheelchair use. Come rain or shine, all our programmes include outdoor experiences in the garden. Please ensure that your students and adults are dressed appropriately for the weather, with suitable footwear, regardless of the season!



How to book your free school visit

The fastest way to book a **guided** or **self-guided** visit is to complete and submit the **School Visit Enquiry form** on our website at [School visits to RHS Garden Wisley / RHS](#)

We will send you a reserved visit date and a booking form to complete, together with health and safety information for completing a risk assessment.

Your booking will be confirmed once we receive your completed booking form.

Alternatively, please email schoolswisley@rhs.org.uk or call us on **01483 212432** if you have specific requirements you would like to discuss.

Further information for planning your visit can be found by visiting our schools page: rhs.org.uk/education-learning

How to get here



RHS Garden Wisley lies between Cobham and Ripley in Surrey, off the main London to Portsmouth road (A3) south of Junction 10 of the M25. Follow the brown tourist flower signs on the A3 and M25 to the RHS Garden.

A dedicated bridge leading into RHS Garden Wisley is now open. If travelling by car, visitors who would normally access RHS Wisley from the A3 (onto Wisley Lane) will now use **Ockham Park roundabout** and follow new signage taking them onto the new bridge and over the A3 to the existing RHS Wisley entrance.

Please see our website for more details –
[How to Get to RHS Wisley](#)

Contact details

RHS Wisley Schools Team

01483 212432 or schoolswisley@rhs.org.uk

For an alternative format of this brochure, please call **01483 212432** or email schoolswisley@rhs.org.uk