

# Primary school visits to RHS Garden Wisley

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The perfect place to inspire your students.  
Book an RHS funded, guided workshop with us.

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## Discover an inspiring RHS Garden where the imagination grows

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is committed to engaging children with the natural world of the garden and encouraging them to grow their skills and confidence.

Gardening and growing plants is great for our physical and mental wellbeing and can help protect the environment. Our aim is to enthuse young people to get growing, sow seeds and care for plants. In doing so, they can become advocates for the environment and help to build a happier, healthier, greener future. RHS Education and Learning offers a range of exciting workshops to suit all ages. Our workshops are run by enthusiastic, highly qualified teachers and are supported by experienced volunteers. The RHS offers both guided workshops with an Education Officer and self-guided visits. Guided workshops are 1.5 hours in length and can be chosen from the selection in this brochure. Our workshops are tailored to suit the age and needs of your group.

As well as schools, we welcome visits from science and gardening clubs, either for a guided Education Officer-led session or as a self-guided visit. The minimum number for a guided visit is 15 students or 4 for SEND students.

RHS Garden Wisley is one of the finest gardens in the world. Stretching out over 240 acres it is a place where you can access plants not seen elsewhere. The stunning collections include many species of fruit and vegetables, alpine and tropical plants, as well as a host of perennials, bulbs, herbaceous and woody specimens. Guided school visits are held throughout the garden and in the Clore Learning Centre which was funded by the Clore Duffield Foundation and opened in 2007 ([cloreduffield.org.uk](http://cloreduffield.org.uk)). Our Glasshouse hosts more than 5,000 cultivated plants in three different temperature zones; temperate, arid and tropical. The Clore Learning Centre is a flexible learning space with a Discovery Room and Growing lab for practical gardening sessions.

In our Teaching Garden, students can find plants adapted to a variety of habitats, see our vegetables growing and explore various aspects of practical horticulture. To ensure the safety of the children, the Teaching Garden is not open to the public when schools are using the Clore Learning Centre but is open to visitors and families at other times.

# Primary workshops

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The aim of our workshop programme is to stimulate and capture children's curiosity about nature and gardening through exciting hands-on experiences. Our core workshops cover a range of different subject areas and include strong curriculum links. The RHS is keen to ensure that the workshops are relevant to your children's studies in school and take full advantage of the garden and resources that we can offer at RHS Garden Wisley. Most importantly, we want them to be engaging and fun for your young learners. All of our workshops can be adapted for SEND students.

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## How plants grow: discovering plants (EYFS/Key Stage 1)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Seven Acres, Pinetum

In this interactive journey through the garden, we will begin to understand how plants grow and what they need to grow healthily. We will explore our unique collection of plants from the smallest shoots to the largest trees and identify the important parts that all plants share.



## How plants grow: exploring plants (Lower Key Stage 2)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Seven Acres, Pinetum

Get hands on with plants to understand their lifecycle: from seed, to shoot, to flower to fruit. We will investigate the fascinating ways that plants make and disperse seeds to reproduce. Explore the garden to discover plants in different stages of life and identify parts of flowering plants through nature's clues.



## How plants grow: investigating plants (Upper Key Stage 2)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Seven Acres, Pinetum

Think you know everything about plants? Think again! Students will explore the garden to investigate unusual adaptations of plants and group plants according to their characteristics. We will finish with some hands-on exploration of the mysterious ways in which plants can reproduce and even clone.





## Discovering soil (Key Stage 1)

### Visiting: Teaching garden, Oakwood

What makes soil super? Students will learn how vital soil is to the planet, to us and to all living things. Get muddy by discovering different types of soil, what it's made of and its physical properties. Is soil living or dead? Find out why soil is so important to plants.



## Exploring soil (Lower Key Stage 2)

### Visiting: Teaching garden, Oakwood

What makes soil special? By working scientifically, students will find out what soil is made from, how different rock types affect its properties and explore the perfect soil recipe. Learn how vital it is to all living things, including plants.



## Investigating soil (Upper Key Stage 2)

### Visiting: Teaching garden, Oakwood

What makes soil spectacular? Plants thrive in soil that suits their needs. Using scientific equipment and taking measurements students will investigate the soil in our garden to understand how it influences which plants grow here.



## Fantastic food (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: World Food garden, Orchard

Edibles are incredible! Explore our Vegetable garden to identify and discover edible plant parts and find out where your food comes from and how it is grown. Find out about how growing the food we eat can affect our planet.



## Planting for the planet (Upper Key Stage 2)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Rock garden, Wildlife garden (season dependent)

Why is it great to be green? In this interactive session students will be encouraged to think about our impact on the environment and why plants are so important to the planet and their lives. Through hands-on activities and experiments, we'll find out about the important work RHS scientists are doing right now to protect our future.



## Who lives in our garden? (Suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Arboretum

Plants need animals and animals need plants. Look high and low for the creatures in our garden and find out more about the important role they play for the plants and soil. Learn how to encourage biodiversity as you explore different garden habitats.





## Gardens are good for you (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Seven Acres, Rose Garden (in season)

Pupils will give their senses a workout with a variety of interactive activities supporting them to discover, describe and connect with the world around them and appreciate gardens as an inspiring space. This session will promote wellbeing by connecting with nature.



## Inspirational nature (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Arboretum, Pinetum, Rose Garden (in season)

Find inspiration in our unique garden and allow your students to reflect and respond to the constantly changing shapes, colours and textures through the seasons. Discover and use natural materials with a range of hands-on activities to begin your next art project.



## Discovering trees (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Oakwood, Arboretum, Pinetum

Come and meet the biggest living things in our collection on a journey through the Pinetum or Arboretum. Identify a variety of native British trees as well as trees from around the world. Explore deciduous and evergreen trees, find out just how large the biggest tree in the world can get and use a range of methods to measure these garden giants. Learn about the importance of healthy trees in supporting biodiversity in our gardens and beyond.





## Plant hunters (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Glasshouse

Pack a passport and travel thousands of miles without leaving RHS Wisley. Discover how plants adapt to their surroundings as you journey through a steamy rainforest and hot arid desert. Be amazed at the range of adaptations that plants have evolved in order to thrive in some of Earth's most challenging biomes. Find out about the epic adventures of RHS plant hunters who collect plants from all over the world.



## Get growing (suitable for all ages)

### Visiting: Allotments, World Food Garden

Become a gardener for the day and discover how to sow seeds, take cuttings, and assist with seasonal gardening tasks in the learning garden or allotments, whilst learning the requirements plants need for life and healthy growth. Be inspired to garden and enjoy hands-on experiences with plants in RHS Wisley's wonderful surroundings. Learn how being a gardener supports biodiversity and can have a positive environmental and personal impact. *This workshop involves a significant walk so may not be suitable for EYFS.*



## Inspiration for your National Education Nature Park (suitable for all ages)

Be inspired by this fun and hands-on opportunity for students to explore an RHS Garden. Experience different habitats and learn about the diverse species that interact within them. Students will develop confidence in learning and using some of the skills needed to create and improve green spaces at school as part of the National Education Nature Park. The session will explore ways to observe, record, monitor and increase biodiversity. 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.

# Self-guided visits

- Schools are welcome to book a self-guided visit to the garden.
- Several areas of the garden lend themselves to science teaching. The garden can be used for small-scale ecological studies. The World Food garden and Allotments are an ideal place to engage with issues such as food production and sustainability and 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.
- The RHS expects that students are supervised at all times by accompanying adults. Lunches can be eaten in most areas of our garden.

## Wellbeing at RHS Garden Wisley

Spending time outside promotes better physical, mental and social health and can transform your pupils' wellbeing. From the physical exertion of gardening and exploring green spaces, to colours, textures and scents of plants soothing our emotional and stress responses, gardens and green spaces actively promote good health. Our self-guided primary wellbeing walks are a simple and effective way to support the wellbeing of your pupils and can be found on the [RHS website](#).

### Admission

Educational visits to RHS Gardens 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 child for your visit.

### Pre-visits

We strongly advise teachers to come to the garden for a pre-visit at least one month before the visit date to ensure they are familiar with the garden and to assist with their risk assessment. Teachers can visit the garden independently, at their own convenience. All pre-visits must be booked in advance via the link provided on the 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.



# Adult supervision

These ratios may include volunteer helpers. Adults must accompany their groups at all times for health and safety reasons. Please see the information contained in the 'Planning your School Visit' document or accessed through the [RHS website](#).

- Special Needs 1:1
- Foundation Stage 1:4
- Years 1-3 1:6
- Years 4-6 1:8
- All others 1:15

*Safeguarding policy requires a minimum of 2 supervising adults per class.*

## Bags and lunches

If you have booked a guided visit, we have cloakrooms available to store coats, bags and packed lunches. We encourage schools to bring packed lunches that result in the least amount of landfill waste possible.

## 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 in our 'Planning Your School Visit' document, which includes guidance and responsibilities for leaders. Please speak to us about any special needs or access requirements that you may have. Our gardens are accessible for wheelchair use.

Come rain or shine, all our programmes include outdoor experiences in the garden. Please ensure that your children and adults are dressed appropriately for the weather, with suitable footwear, regardless of the season!

## 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 us about any allergies (children and accompanying adults) before you visit the garden.

# How to book your free school visit

Booking is essential for all educational groups who would like to visit the garden, for either a guided or self-guided visit. We recommend booking your visit well in advance to avoid disappointment, particularly for visits in the summer term, when we are busy.

- Please complete our **School Visit Enquiry Form** which can be found on the school visit page of our website. Visits should be booked at least 1 month in advance to allow us time to plan for your visit.
- We can accommodate approximately 120 students per day for a guided visit. The minimum number of students for a guided visit is 15 (4 for SEND). There is no minimum number for a self-guided visit.
- We will either confirm your requested reservation date or offer you some alternative dates.
- Once the date is agreed we will send you a booking form to complete and further details of the day including a comprehensive visit planning document and how to book your pre-visit.
- Your booking will be confirmed once we have received your completed booking form.



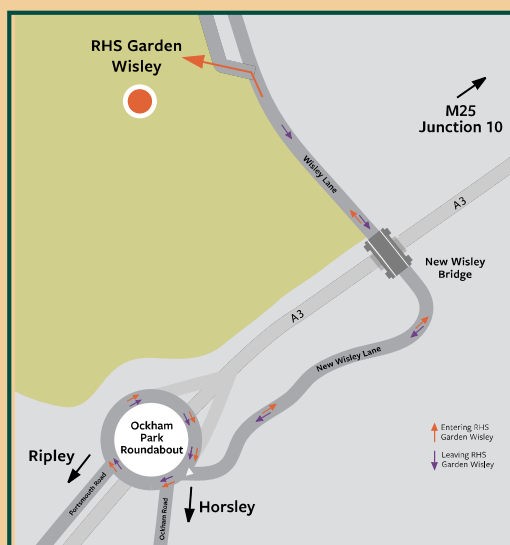


## How to contact us:

Should you wish to get in touch please **email** [schoolswisley@rhs.org.uk](mailto:schoolswisley@rhs.org.uk) or **telephone** 01483 212432.

**Address:** Education and Learning Team, RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB  
[rhs.org.uk/wisley](https://rhs.org.uk/wisley)

## How to find us:



A new 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** - [rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley/plan-your-visit/how-to-get-to-wisley](https://rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley/plan-your-visit/how-to-get-to-wisley)

