



EAST MIDLANDS

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Bleasby Church of England Primary School
 Station Road,
 Bleasby
 Nottingham
 NG14 7GD

Dear Angela,

Thank you for inviting me to Bleasby Church of England Primary School. It was a delightful visit and you, Zoe, Laura, Mrs Cast and all the pupils made sure I saw and heard about everything you had done through the year as well as your amazing plans for the wildlife area going forward. Evan, Ottie, Daya, Emily, Tilly and Tommy did an excellent job and were a credit to the school.

It was so good to see a school where growing and environmental activities were so embedded in the curriculum across all the year groups. This was exemplified at the end of the visit. Daya invited me to see the morning's literacy work relating to the book "The Last Garden and then talked about other work done in class. A special thank you to him and his teacher for sharing his and his classes work.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge					
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.				x	
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.				x	
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.				x	
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.				x	
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.				x	
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.			x		
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.				x	
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.				x	



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SECTION 2 <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Developing	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges Imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching A wide range of curriculum subjects covered				x	
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved				x	
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign				x	
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach				x	
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time Clubs each week The garden has a sustainable future.				x	
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community				x	
SECTION 3 <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Developing	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.			x		
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.			x		
Examples of features for wildlife			x		
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.				x	
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils			x		
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.			x		
SECTION 4 <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Developing	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.				x	
Pupils' practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care				x	
Quality of food grown is evident.			x		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .				x	



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Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year				x	
SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance	Developing	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)			x		
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.				x	
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year				x	
Holiday maintenance plans in place.			x		
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events			x		
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.				x	

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
19	18	16	17	17	<u>87</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : GOLD

Judge's Discretionary Award:

To Angela Dunning and her fellow volunteers for creating such a coherent growing plan to integrate garden and growing activities to the curriculum and to meet each teachers needs. It was flexible and clearly supported classroom activities. The plans were an exemplar in this respect.

Judge's Overall Comments:

You are an active school with so much to see and it is very clear that growing, gardening, wildlife and environmental activities are important to and integrated with the curriculum. The school is very fortunate to have extensive grounds. I was impressed that the "garden and grow" noticeboard was the first thing I saw on arrival and the pupil's design for the new wildlife area was well supported by the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Everything was pupil led, and I particularly like the flower choice bar chart on display in a classroom. The polyculture growing areas are good and the pupils really understand the value of



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companion planting. Enthusiastic compost makers grasped the importance of looking after the soil and with nettle soup the school growing group create their own fertiliser. Reduce, Reuse and recycle are well understood. The daisy chaining of water butts optimised water capture and storage and there was evidence of mulching. The recent school art week made good use of the wildlife area across the curriculum and the Forest School sign made with found materials was effective.

Planting 100 saplings to create a fruiting hedge at the boundary of the wildlife area is a great achievement and it complements the considerable orchard tree planting that is thriving. A wide range of flowers, vegetables and herbs are grown. Many are grown from seed, saved and from a seed swap alongside donated plants (Over 50 packs) from local DIY stores. The Leek line was an imaginative use of a huge number of donated leek plants and I am sure the new kitchen staff will be able to make good use of the produce alongside vegetables grown near the kitchens.

You have an excellent relationship with the local community, including the Bleasby Grasshoppers (community volunteers), the local pond expert, Lowdham Horticultural show and the local ploughing match. Getting donated varieties of Rhubarb from the national collection at Clumber Park was very enterprising and the rhubarb beds work well. I particularly liked the multigenerational activities with the pupils and residents of the local care home making Easter bonnets using the schools home grown spring bulb flowers. It was good to see the Friends Association supporting the growing activities, funding new child sized gloves and tools. Alongside plant sales to raise funds the garden and grow group are well supported.

The school is a bee friendly school and much of the planting reflects this. The large bug hotel has a very successful green roof and is well maintained and explored. There are many different sorts of bird boxes in trees and the pupils understand the needs of different birds. The school took part in the RSPB big garden bird watch. The new wildlife area is developing well and the paths are marking a wide range of habitat zones. The planned amphibian mats created a lot of discussion on the visit. The new pond, when complete, will make a huge difference to the area, as will the installation of the log seats being donated by a local resident. The use of a web cam was clearly a success.

Continued monitoring of the impact of the wild life area changes will be a valuable resource to the school. The wildflower sowing has had limited success and a different seed mix may work better. The school may want to consider growing wild flowers from seed for the wildlife area and there is a local specialist nursery at Langar who may be able to advise. The planting of native bluebells will work well under the canopy and these are to be donated by a local resident.



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The school is very fortunate to have such a lovely greenhouse and it is clearly well used raising seedlings. The school may want to use that space in the summer for tender exotic edibles.

The new kitchen staff are clearly keen to use school grown produce going forward and this may encourage a more extensive year round edibles growing plan.

The pupils told me about their bird feeder activities using cones, seeds and fats. With the new wildlife area there is scope for greater diversity of bird feeding stations and more creative designs. The pupils may wish to grow crops purely to feed birds and wildlife.

I congratulate Bleasby for a wide range of growing and environmental activities year round that clearly and actively engage the pupils.

We at EMIB wish you all well at Bleasby Church of England Primary for the coming year and do hope you will invite us back as part of the School Competition in 2025. We look forward to seeing how you progress on your green fingered journey with the whole school community.

JUDGE (S): Joyce Slater

DATE: 11 June 2024