



PRESS RELEASE

THE REEP GARDEN AWARDS FOR SCHOOLS 2002-2003 For school garden designs reflecting community and spiritual values

Every school should have a garden!

Whether in a busy urban area or a quiet rural setting, whether there are two thousand pupils or fewer than a hundred, there's always scope for a place where everyone can take time to reflect and renew their energy.

The REEP (RE and Environment Programme) Garden Awards scheme is a unique major initiative in association with the National Trust. It provides a chance for the 25,000 schools in England, Wales and Scotland to design their own gardens. Over £10,000 worth of awards, of £500 each, provide the basis for building your own garden and help to raise interest, and perhaps sponsorship, from other members of the community.

Why are the Awards unusual?

They combine one of the oldest human activities – gardening – with one of the most recent – using information technology – and they give schools a chance both to improve their environment and to reflect on the process. Schools who have already made themselves a garden can still enter by designing something for their neighbourhood.

In association with the National Trust

The Awards are presented in association with the National Trust. Mike Calnan, Head of Gardens and Parks for the Trust and Chair of the Judging Panel, says...

“Gardening is about more than tending a piece of land. It’s about expressing who we are and what we think. This exciting Garden Awards scheme gives children everywhere an opportunity to reap the harvest of success, and to make their mark, by creating beauty for all to share.”

Endorsed by Chris Beardshaw

The BBC’s ‘Flying Gardener’ Chris Beardshaw has endorsed the REEP Garden Awards. He will be one of the judges and will be present at the Awards ceremony.

“Wherever you live, the REEP Awards are a great chance to have fun making your school blossom. I look forward to seeing your entries.”

The Awards and the School Curriculum

Diana Lazenby, Director of REEP, says “*The Awards are a great focus for RE and other curriculum work, especially Citizenship, Music, ICT, Art and Science.*”

By entering for an Award you can...

- Give your school an opportunity to develop a garden
- Access fun and unusual learning materials that help pupils and teachers reflect on the role of the garden in world faiths, and the importance of the natural world
- Explore work with a spiritual dimension in different subjects
- Improve the school environment and pupils’ interest in it
- Explore the idea of the garden as a way to create and maintain links inn the local community
- Use information technology in spreading ideas and good practice

Awards Categories

The scheme is in two sections (Primary and Secondary) for all schools in England, Wales and Scotland. Special schools are encouraged to apply. Some Awards are being presented jointly with an associated sponsor (e.g. a £3,000 art award with ACE, the Art and Christianity Enquiry Trust, for working with an artist). Gardens may be produced in all shapes and sizes. Awards are related to five main curriculum areas...

Religious Education

- For overall concept
- Memorial gardens
- A ‘faith-inspired’ garden

Environmental and Citizenship Studies

- Ecology and wildlife conservation
- Community involvement
- Urban and rural contexts
- Participation in planning urban space

Art

- Incorporation of a work of art
- Involvement of an artist

Music

- ‘Garden’ compositions
- Using music in the entry presentation

Information Technology

- Presentation of entry

For further information, see the [Award details](http://www.reep.org/awards/categories.html) section: www.reep.org/awards/categories.html

The Awards Website

At www.reep.org you will find...

- Details for entries and online registration
- Virtual gardens to visit, featuring a Wild Garden, a Pleasure Garden, a Garden for Meditation and a Working Garden. The gardens are full of background information on different sorts of gardens, their origins and their symbolic traditions in world faiths
- Practical hints for gardening and for making your Awards entry.

Examples of Award winners and other good practice will be featured after the Awards have been made.

The website will be updated regularly in the course of the Awards process.

Timescale

Launch: 5th October 2002

Closing Date: 28th April 2003

Judging: May 2003

Awards Ceremony: September 2003

About REEP

The RE and Environment Programme, set up by a charitable trust in the 1990s, is a resource for teachers and learners at all stages of school. It provides unusual and thought-provoking resources on sustainability, ecology and environmental issues, for use in Religious Education and related curriculum areas. These materials are all provided via the internet and are free of charge to the user. The site is well established as a leader of good practice in educational technology, is widely used in schools and is part of the National Grid for Learning (the kitemark for educational resources on the internet). REEP has a very extensive network of supporters and contacts. It works with all faiths and is non-denominational.

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