

Silver and Gold

Prepared as part of the
Food for Life Partnership



Garden Organic is the UK's leading organic growing charity, and is dedicated to researching and promoting organic gardening, farming and food. We are driven by an enduring passion and belief, founded on over 50 years of research and practice, that organic methods provide a healthy, sustainable life for us all.

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Registered charity no 298104 Garden Organic is the working name of the Henry Doubleday Research Association.

The Food for Life Partnership is a network of schools and communities across England committed to transforming food culture. The Partnership is led by the Soil Association with the Focus on Food Campaign, Garden Organic and the Health Education Trust. Together we work to revolutionise school meals, reconnect young people with where their food comes from and inspire families to cook and grow food.



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Food growing at Silver and Gold



Here you will find a whole range of information and practical, exciting activities to support you in achieving the food growing and community criteria of the Food for Life Partnership Silver and Gold Mark Awards.

By this point you will already have planned and set up your garden and experienced the excitement of harvesting your own fresh food, grown using organic methods.

The Silver and Gold booklet will consolidate those skills learnt at Bronze and enable you to progress with confidence. At the same time, it links food growing with other food education activity, food leadership, and food culture and community involvement.

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SI.1 Criteria for Silver Award



There are two important parts to the Silver criteria, the Food for Life Partnership Award Criteria to achieve and the specific Award Guidance for growing.

The manual consolidates the skills learnt at Bronze and supports you in achieving the food growing elements of the Silver Award, and link it with other food education activity, food leadership, and food culture and community involvement.

Food for Life Partnership Award Criteria to achieve

Food leadership and school food culture

- Our governors have signed off a school food policy with a timetable for action.
- We give lunchtime a clear priority in our school day, and timetabling clashes are avoided.
- We ensure take up of school meals by pupils registered for free school meals is 90% or higher, and we are taking action to raise general school meal take up.
- We have made sure that key teachers or others have skills needed to lead gardening and cooking activities and ensure basic food hygiene.
- We work with parents to discourage unhealthy snacks or lunch box contents.
- We invite parents and/or community groups into our school to eat with our pupils.
- We don't use flight trays.

Food quality and provenance

- We include a range of locally sourced items on our menu.
- We include a range of certified organic or MSC-certified items on our menu.
- We use poultry, eggs and pork that are produced in line with standards set for the Freedom Food scheme.
- We don't serve fish that is on the Marine Conservation Society 'Fish to Avoid' list.
- We display information about the origins of the fresh produce we use.
- We make sure that at least one product on our menu or in vending machines meets Fairtrade standards.

(delivered in partnership with our caterer)

Food education

- We have established a cooking club and our pupils are cooking with seasonal, local and organic ingredients.
- We ensure pupils in our garden group and/or a class are growing fruit, vegetables and herbs organically.
- We have produce from our school garden available at least once a term for pupils to eat or cook with.
- Our pupils explore the ethical and environmental issues around food choices and this is linked to changes in our school meals.
- One or more of our year groups keep in touch with a local farm throughout the year.
- We organise at least one annual visit to or from small local food businesses.

Community and partnerships

- We hold events to involve parents and/or the wider community in growing and cooking activities.
- We actively encourage our pupils and their parents to grow and cook their own produce at home.
- Our pupils share FFLP learning with local schools, the wider community and other partners.

Food for Life Partnership Award Criteria related to growing (facing page)

- We have made sure that key teachers or others have skills needed to lead gardening and cooking activities and ensure basic food hygiene
- We ensure pupils in our garden group and/or class are growing fruit, vegetables and herbs organically
- We have produce from our school garden available at least once a term for pupils to eat or cook with
- We actively encourage our pupils and their parents to grow and cook their own produce at home
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Award Guidance for growing

Stage 2: Development and consolidation

School staff/pupils	Community	Growing area/crops	Organic principles
<p>Provide key staff with training, or information on local courses, to help them lead organic food growing activities</p> <p>Begin to involve more pupils in organic growing, eg each year group has a growing space, such as a raised bed</p> <p>Plan activities to encourage pupils and their parents to grow food at home</p> <p>Record pupils' involvement in organic growing, eg with photos, diaries, blogs, etc</p> <p>Consider ways for pupils to act as mentors to increase participation</p>	<p>Provide key community members with training, or information on local courses, to develop skills in organic food growing activities</p> <p>Involve parents and the wider community in organic food growing by holding events</p> <p>Hold a family participation day</p> <p>Organise a holiday rota for watering and maintenance of the growing area</p>	<p>Growing area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow a wider range of crops • Plan for growing crops year-round • Try using the 'Garden Organic Guidelines' (see DVD) <p>Growing crops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure produce is available at least once a term for preparation and cooking 	<p>Managing soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use crop rotation • Use mulches • Make leaf mould • Make and use organic liquid plant feeds, eg for plants in containers <p>Manage pests, diseases, and weeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide habitats to encourage natural predators and parasites • Grow plants and flowers to feed natural predators and parasites • Use crop rotation • Maximise diversity <p>Manage resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin using compost, eg potting mixes, mulches, etc • Use recycled materials wherever possible, eg plastic bottles as cloches, newspaper for weed suppression, etc • Harvest and use rainwater

Health and Safety – Provide local guidance for all activities related to the growing area and people involvement. See also SGI.2



S2.1 Getting people involved



The aim of the Food for Life Partnership is to raise awareness of food culture. This includes extending growing activities throughout the school and in the community, making sure that as many people as possible get a chance to take part.

Involving the community brings a range of benefits. Parents, neighbours, local businesses and the local authority can be sources of advice, information, practical help and funding. This section looks at the best ways of increasing involvement of the whole school and wider community. For section S2.4, there is an Activity suitable for pupils and the community. This allows you to see at a glance the growing skills acquired and plan for those not yet covered, with signposts to the relevant sections of this manual. See the DVD.

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S2.2 Increasing participation



At Bronze, foundations were laid for involving the school and wider community to help maintain and sustain your growing.

At Silver, your initial support is built upon to develop a wider network of people with a common interest in growing food organically and promoting healthy eating. This section includes inspiring ideas from schools for maintaining and developing participation.

How have other schools achieved this?

St John's C of E (VA) Primary, Bath and North East Somerset

- All pupils given the opportunity to take part in growing activities. Teaching assistants are on an alternate weekly rota to work in the garden with the pupils.
- Parents involved with 'digging days', heavy-duty maintenance and watering rotas during holidays.
- Whole school curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to visit the local farm. They grow and harvest organic vegetables, change animal bedding, discuss food miles and observe the farrier at work.
- Set up a Gardening Committee, which runs independently of the School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG). The group comprises the senior learning team, governor, teacher, teaching assistant, parents, pupils and a member of the local Allotment Association.
- Support from the local community, including the Allotment Association, with planting the orchard and building and planting raised beds.

St Katherine's Comprehensive, North Somerset

- Links with their local farm. The farmer is a member of the School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG).
- Visits to the school by a variety of chefs and food artisans. Pupils from across all year groups are involved in working with these visitors.
- Held an organic breakfast event to which parents and members of the local community were invited.
- An evening meal, which used produce from the school garden, was organised to generate interest and support for a variety of activities including work with the school's Organic Garden Club and Cookery Club. A wide range of local community members were invited.

Twerton Infant School, Bath and North East Somerset

- Expertise within the community was sought through newsletters or direct contact with parents.
- A large number of grandparents work with the pupils in the garden.
- Gardening leads have developed competitions, including growing a meal in a bag, heaviest potato crop, etc.
- Family Cooking Club uses produce from the school garden. Families are encouraged to cook at home. Parents are required to join their child for part of the club to share the learning and take recipe ideas home.
- Local food co-op ran tasting workshops and talked about their role in the community.
- As part of 'Healthy Living Week', the school opened its doors to the local community. Visitors were shown around the new growing areas and cooking facilities.
- An open invitation was sent to parents, grandparents, etc to 'come and garden with your child'.

Top tip



Twerton Infant School

Delivered container gardening workshops.

“With many of our families living in flats this proved very successful.”

Fairford C of E Primary, Gloucestershire

- Have enlisted the support of members of the community, including the local Gardening Club, an allotment holder and governors.
- Talks to pupils by two local farmers. Further visits are planned from a local egg producer, bread maker and holder of a large organic allotment.
- Held Food for Life Partnership information evenings. This gave the school the chance to demonstrate to the pupils, parents and the wider community just what Food for Life Partnership means and what is involved.
- Invited members of the community to lunch at school.

Top tip



Fairford C of E Primary

Seeds and seed trays with instructions were used to grow at home.

“The enthusiasm for growing things in school is extended to the home and parents often join in.”

St Wilfrid's Catholic High School and 6th Form, West Yorkshire

- Established a cooking club which uses produce from the school garden. The club is run by the food technology teacher and is held every Monday after school. Their numbers have increased each week and there are now three groups of 15 pupils attending on a rota basis.
- Planning to invite parents to cook with their children during food technology lessons. This would be for special occasions, eg Valentines Day, Mothers Day, etc.
- Held a Christmas party for 80 local senior citizens.
- During 'International Week', invited parents to an evening event highlighting foods from around the world.

Activities on DVD

- A1 Hosting an annual event
- T1 Event checklist
- A2 Organising a gardening day

Further information

- B2.2 Planning early involvement
- G2.2 Maximising participation
- GN6 School curriculum
- GN8 A whole school approach



S2.3 Working with other schools



Working with other schools and sharing resources and expertise creates enhanced educational and personal development opportunities. Schools often work in clusters and these can be used in passing on positive food messages.

The following examples show a variety of ways in which schools can benefit from working together.

Schools working together

St John's C of E (VA) Primary, Bath and North East Somerset

- Held twilight cookery sessions for local schools who wish to extend their curriculum provision.
- Deputy head spoke at the 'School Food Forum', which is open to all schools within the Local Authority. Several schools subsequently contacted St John's for information on growing and cooking, many visiting them and sharing good practice, including work on the dining experience and gardening.
- Delivered a food growing workshop for a number of schools.
- Other schools used St John's garden facilities for training purposes.

Sweyne Park High School, Essex

- Set up a link with Kisarika School in Tanzania. Kisarika is based on a banana and coffee plantation and the students grow produce to supplement their basic lunch, a type of local 'porridge'. The school plan to work with Kisarika to share ideas on crop growing and cooking.

Franch Primary School, Worcestershire

- After visiting St Andrews Primary, pupils started keeping home growing diaries. This involved growing a plant at school, continuing to look after it at home and keeping a record of the plant's progress.

Further information

S3.4 Planting fruit (transition from primary to secondary school)

Soil Association www.soilassociation.org

Garden Organic for Schools www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools

Focus on Food Campaign www.focusonfood.org

Health Education Trust www.healthedtrust.com

Food for Life Partnership www.foodforlife.org.uk/resources



S2.4 Recognising pupil involvement



A school garden thrives with the involvement of pupils. Recognising their hard work is essential to develop skills and sustain enthusiasm for growing. This section uses examples/methods of recording achievements already used by Food for Life Partnership schools as part of their Award application. This is about the pupils being aware of the knowledge and skills they have gained and how they can extend their skills.

Reasons for keeping a record

<i>Self assessment and evaluation</i>	Pupils are actively involved in the learning process and have a clearer idea of what they need to do and the reason why. It is a crucial life skill.
<i>Peer assessment</i>	Pupils often like, and benefit from, assessing each other's work.
<i>Support recognised qualifications</i>	Recognised vocational qualifications such as NVQs require evidence to show competence in specific areas.
<i>Individual learning plan (ILP)</i>	Aids completion of an ILP and target setting. This allows an individual strategy of learning that accounts for the pupil's strengths, weaknesses and aspirations.
<i>Planning and reviewing</i>	This helps pupils develop skills to manage their own learning.
<i>OFSTED Inspections</i>	Evidence to show pupil learning and progression.

Some practical suggestions

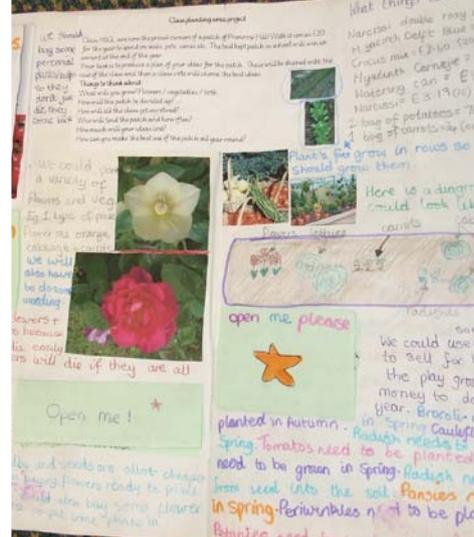
- Enter information on relevant websites, eg school/Food for Life Partnership blog and share with others the good work (or difficulties!) you have experienced in your food growing activities.
- Store all the records/evidence in one place for easy access.
- Photograph gardening activities.



Gardening activities: from left to right; Lillington Primary School, Lancaster School, Lancaster Girls Grammar School



Enhanced learning environment with displays of photos and pupils' work.



Workbook, created by pupils showing garden plans.



Links made to the National Curriculum, eg modern foreign languages, English and IT.

Some practical suggestions (continued)

- Many schools sow seeds in pots at school and take them home to grow on. Pupils at Franche Primary School use entries in their 'growing diary' to keep a record of the progress and bring plants back into school for everyone to see.
- Videos of the school's food growing activities can be used in many ways, including training and promotion.
- Keep and display cuttings from local newspaper coverage of growing activities. This encourages pride and ownership in the pupils.
- Keep a garden diary, recording work done/to do, pests found, crops harvested, etc.

Top tip 😊

Recording tips

- Keep a record from the start.
- Update records regularly.
- Contribute to the Mark awards assessment process.

T7 Recording growing skills (individual)

Name..... Date.....

Skill/technique	Manual ref. (book/activity)	Date completed	Signature of verifier
Use a range of garden tools	B3.2/A3		
Handle and lift using the correct technique	B3.4		
Test soil	B4.4/A9		
Clear ground to start new growing space	B4.8/A14		
Store tools correctly, eg cleaning, closing secateurs	B4.9/A3		
Manage pests and diseases using organic methods	B5.10/A28		
Attract wildlife	B5.11/A30		
Harvest and store produce	B5.12/A32		
Sow seed	B5.2/A18		
Thin seed	B5.3/A20		
	4/A21		

By using templates T7 and T8, pupils can easily keep a record of their achievements.

Activities on DVD	A33 Recording growing skills
	T7 Recording growing skills (individual)
	T8 Recording growing skills (class list)
Further information	Garden Organic for Schools www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools Food for Life Partnership www.foodforlife.org.uk