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Dear Headteacher, 8 February 2022

**Cumbria in Bloom Schools Gardening Competition 2022**

For over 30 years Cumbria in Bloom has sought to bring communities together by encouraging people to take a pride in, and visually improve, their surroundings for the benefit of residents and visitors alike, thus bringing huge benefits to Cumbria’s tourism industry.

The Cumbria in Bloom Schools Gardening Competition gives an opportunity for pupils to learn gardening skills from an early age which will hopefully lead to a lifelong interest or hobby.
The competition is open to all schools throughout the county and has five categories to enter. This year there will also be Cumbria in Bloom school special awards for Biodiversity and Small Woodland Copse, as well as a very special Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Feature Award which will be open to all entrants in 2022.

This notification will, we hope, assist with planning for participation in this competition, the judging of which will take place in late June/early July.

Whilst it is hoped that judging can be undertaken by visits as is the usual custom, due to possible future restrictions, greater flexibility will be required and so emphasis will be put on the production of a concise digital photographic and text diary of activities compiled by pupils. More information on this can be found attached.

An entry form is also attached with this letter which will need to be completed and returned to Cumbria in Bloom by **Saturday 30 April 2022** along with a £20 entry fee. Further information and entry forms can be found on the Cumbria in Bloom website: [www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk](http://www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk).

Myself, my Vice-Chairman, Councillor Andy Connell, and Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning, Councillor Sue Sanderson, would like to support Cumbria in Bloom and hope that our schools are able to take up the challenge.

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Tony Markley

Chairman of Cumbria County Council

**Registered Charity No: 1117828**

**Administrator - Elizabeth Auld**

**Bannerdale**

**Unthank**

**Dalston**

**Carlisle**

**CA5 7BA**

 **Contacts:**

**Tel: 01228 710128**

**Email:** **liz@cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk** **Website:** [**www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk**](http://www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk)

For Pupils, Staff, Parents and Friends

To all those schools who shared their school gardening activities in 2021 – congratulations. The Cumbria in Bloom judges really enjoyed their visits, especially when they were able to meet with pupils and hear about their activities first-hand. They returned to most of the school entrants to present certificates showing the levels of achievement and the results were of such a high standard. Well done to you all, but particularly to Dane Ghyll Primary & Nursery and Wiggonby CE Primary for being joint winners of the Sheila Hensman Trophy for outstanding achievement, and to Pennington CE Primary for winning the Rex Marsden Memorial Shield Special Award for Section B - Enriching the Curriculum.

All schools in Cumbria are invited to take part in the **Cumbria in Bloom Schools Gardening Awards 2022** and couldreally build on the enthusiasm and momentum developed last year or be a newcomer to the competition – see attached entry form for details. Attention should be given to biodiversity, protection of wildlife and adapting to climate change. There will be school special awards for a} **Biodiversity** andb} **Small Woodland Copse** to endorse these contributions to the environment – see separate information sheets for details. To get you started when you enter, you will be sent a packet of seeds to keep the children involved through sowing, watching them grow, to planting out.

This year, Cumbria in Bloom will be presenting a special Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Feature Award. This will be open to all entrants in 2022 for any size of project (from plant pot to forest!). Please send any specific photographs (one to five), or video records to publish on the CiB website and social media prior to the celebration weekend in June – we will try to put together something special to mark the occasion.

It is hoped that judging can be undertaken by visits, as usual by a lead and assistant judge on an agreed date in late June/early July. However, because of possible restrictions, there will be emphasis put on the production of a concise digital photographic and text diary of activities compiled by pupils regularly for the three months from the initial entry. This will give a good insight into what has been happening on the ground throughout the year and should be either available on your school website or sent direct to [www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk](http://www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk) for publication. Every school entry will be awarded with a level of achievement Certificate following judging. Remember, taking part, making a difference, and getting an award – Gold, Silver-Gilt, Silver or Bronze is as valuable as winning!

Schools are very much part of the town or village in which they are situated. The importance of community involvement is highlighted by our main competition being titled “Pride in Your Community” - named to emphasise that the visual impact should show the care taken by a community with its appearance: tidiness, good maintenance as well as floral, horticultural, environmental, and public support. Hopefully, you are excited about giving this schools’ gardening competition a go. It is all about children and young people joining in with activities to have fun, be creative and learn along the way – their input is important and must be evident to the judges. Further information and entry forms can be found on our website at [www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk](http://www.cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk) or if you need any extra help please get in touch with me as above. In addition, you might like to get ideas from [www.schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk](http://www.schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk) – Cumbria in Bloom runs its own Schools Gardening Competition, but you could get involved nationally too.

Liz Auld, Administrator

**Registered Charity No: 1117828**

**CUMBRIA IN BLOOM SCHOOLS GARDENING AWARDS 2022**

**Categories –** please tick the categories being entered.

1. **Edible gardening – fruit, vegetable, and herb production.**
2. **Decorative features – trees, shrubs, perennials bulbs etc.**
3. **Environmental – soil quality, water, plant types, wildlife impact, bees, birds etc.**
4. **Sensory/quiet garden**
5. **Container garden**

The overall winner will be assessed on the sum of their three highest marked categories in Section A plus their marks for Sections B, C & D.

**SECTION A:**  ***MEETING THE PURPOSE OF CATEGORIES*** 15 POINTS PER CATEGORY (MAX 45 BEST 3)

Evidence of the **involvement and engagement of pupils** in choosing appropriate plants and materials, care and maintenance, originality, and interest.

**SECTION B:**  MAX 25 POINTS

**Rex Marsden Memorial Trophy Special Award**

***ENRICHING THE CURRICULUM***

Evidence of how gardening is being used to aid the teaching and learning of the wider curriculum e.g., Maths, Art, Design, Nutrition, Special Projects etc. Specific evidence from pupils to show how they have responded e.g., Drawings/artwork, calculations, posters, planting plans, menus/recipes etc.

**SECTION C:** MAX 15 POINTS

***SCHOOL IN THE COMMUNITY***

Evidence of school using gardening to foster links and increase participation with other neighbourhood groups: parents, businesses and organizations in the locality, scouts/brownies, social clubs, gardening groups etc. Develop on-site recycling facilities.

**SECTION D:** MAX 15 POINTS

***UNDERSTANDING THE ENVIRONMENT***

Show how the school cares for the environment and biodiversity through its approach to gardening e.g., Plant types and mix, soil and composting, pollinators, birds, natural pest control, wildlife support, use and gathering of water, type of container compost.

**ENTRY FORM**

NAME OF SCHOOL -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

ADDRESS -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

CONTACT PERSON -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

TELEPHONE & **EMAIL** ADDRESS ---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**CATEGORIES ENTERED (1-5) -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**Special category award a} Biodiversity: …… Y/N b} Woodland Copse: ……Y/N c) Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: ……Y/N**

**Please return completed form and £20 entry fee (cheques made payable to Cumbria in Bloom or by**

**BACS: Sort code 20-66-97 A/c 40098841) by 30/04/22. Judging will take place during period 27/06-08/07/22.**

Post: Mrs E Auld, Bannerdale, Unthank, Dalston, Carlisle, CA5 7BA Email: liz@cumbria-in-bloom.org.uk



**Cumbria in Bloom Small Woodland Copse Special Award**

**Criteria and Marking Sheet**

* Our towns, villages and school grounds have lots of open space that could be more productive for wildlife and biodiversity. Many spaces are monoculture grass when they could have a diverse range of trees, shrubs, plants etc. by creating a copse or small woodland.
* The size does not matter. It could be a few acres, the size of half a football pitch or smaller. A copse consists of a mixture of varieties and sizes of trees, shrubs, plants native to the British Isles or are common in the countryside. The tree canopy should allow woodland plants and ferns to flourish with some open glade provided to just allow wild plants to grow. It is important that these copse do not interfere with services. What can be planted relies on their position and soil type. A copse can take a few years to establish but the benefits will be immediate.
* The RHS and Woodland Trust web sites ([www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) and [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk) ) list hundreds of trees, shrubs and plants that are suitable. The RHS website shows a link to how a copse can be created ([www.perrywood.co.uk](http://www.perrywood.co.uk) ) as well as a copse being an interesting educational area of a children’s playground.
* This project would be suited to a Cumbria in Bloom Pride in Your Community, It’s Your Neighbourhood, School Gardening or Tourism entry. Enhancement and improvement to an existing copse can be entered.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Site:** |  |
| **Judge/Judges:** |  |
| **Date of Visit:** |  |

**Judging Criteria and Marks**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Layout – perimeter planting, centre planting, use of site. | 20 |  |
| Whether the trees, shrubs, plants are suitable for the location and wildlife. | 20 |  |
| What provision is made for future management and maintenance, short and long term. | 20 |  |
| Educational features. Photographic evidence of all year interest. | 20 |  |
| Quality and suitable care of the site. | 20 |  |
| **Total marks** | **100** |  |

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7th February 2022

To all schools in Cumbria

In addition to the invitation letter and entry form for the Cumbria in Bloom Schools Gardening Awards 2022, please find below some information about the RHS Campaign for School Gardening. Your involvement in this is in addition to what happens in Cumbria. If you decide to take part in this programme, please could you let me know for the CiB records – thank you.

*The* [*RHS Campaign for School Gardening*](https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/home) *is a fantastic programme for those working with young people to get involved in. Supporting schools and communities to provide children with gardening opportunities, registration to join the Campaign is free and they have a wealth of resources available to help you get young people’s hands muddy.*

*Resources*

*The Campaign for School Gardening has a number of* [*resources*](https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/resources) *available to download for free, including information sheets and practical activities. From getting started in the garden, to learning about the properties of soil or how to attract wildlife into the garden, the resources provide an easy to understand and hands on way of learning for young people – helping them learn about the science behind growing.*

*School Gardening Awards*

*To help groups turn their gardens into a valuable learning resource, the Campaign for School Gardening also offers a five-level reward scheme – the School Gardening Awards. Each level is easy to achieve by submitting a few words and photos via their website. As you work through the levels, you’ll be asked to share your gardening plans, the skills the young people have been learning and how the gardening projects have impacted the wider community. Upon successfully completing each level, you’ll be rewarded with gardening gift vouchers and seeds* *to help the projects thrive. Learn more about the School Gardening Awards* [*here*](https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/school-gardening-awards)*.*

*Get in touch*

*If you’d like to know more about how the Campaign for School Gardening can support the young people you work with, email them at* *schoolgardening@rhs.org.uk* *to speak to a member of their team.*

Liz Auld

CiB Administrator