

Grow & Learn Awards – General FAQs

Q. How do I apply for any of the awards?

A. If you wish to apply for the Award then fill out the Site Form and Registration Form for your chosen Award. Once complete email the form to us at growandlearn@rchs.co.uk for Grow & Learn Award. We will get back to you and help you start your Caley awards journey.

Q. Does a group leader need to have any horticultural training?

A. Yes, the Award is led by your own group leaders so basic horticultural knowledge and skills are required. Ideally someone with horticultural training or experience should be the group leader, so they can teach the learners/participants. We will provide support to you throughout your award, through emailing, monthly online drop in-sessions and phone calls where needed. There will also be in-person Train the Trainer courses coming soon, so look out for course dates in emails and on our Events Calendar on the website thecaley.org.uk

Q. How much do the Awards cost to complete?

A. There is a basic registration fee, a verification fee and a separate visits fee for the Awards. The details of all the costs can be found on our website in the 'Grow & Learn Fees Structure' page.

Q. I would like to do the award but cannot afford the fees for myself/my group/my participants. Is there somewhere I can get funding to do these awards?

A. Yes, many groups get external funding to help support them to pay the fees for the awards. Please remember to include the registration fee, the verification fee per person for each participant and the cost fee for a visit, if you would like one when applying for your funding.

Q. I have tried and failed to get funding towards the costs of the Awards. How can I raise funds to pay for the Awards?

A. If funding isn't an option to help you pay the fees for the Awards, then there are a few other ways to raise the funds. If you have a site/garden/growing space can you grow plants or vegetables to sell, could you save seeds and sell packets of seeds. Alternatively, can you have an open day, fair, fundraising day or car boot sale to help raise funds. Could you craft items to sell, make bug or wildlife homes to sell, have a bake sale, host a race, run a car wash, make a go fund me page, etc? If you are a school, nursery or education centre could you host a non-uniform day, a bake sale, craft sale, could you have a fundraising box, host a fundraising event, host a plant sale or ask your PTA for contributions, etc?

Q. Why do you now charge for site visits?

A. Historically only the first and final visit were ever included in your registration fees. Any additional visits were always charged at £60 plus mileage.

However, now due to staff and volunteer time restraints, the increased cost of living, increased travel costs and inflation we have had to charge for each visit. We have also had to change the site visit fee to £65 per visit plus mileage. This may be upsetting but it is the only way we can sustain everything we do to keep the Awards running.

Q. Is there a deadline or time limit to complete the Awards?

A. No, as our Awards are designed to be flexible, we have not set any deadlines or time limits. The Grow & Learn Awards have a minimum number of gardening hours to complete, 80 hours.

Groups completing the Grow & Learn Roots and Nurture Awards with their minimum of 80 hours, tend to take 1-2 years to complete their Awards. Some groups and participants have taken longer, and we do not penalize anyone for this as we pride ourselves on the awards being adaptable for the learners/participants.

Grow & Learn Awards – Roots and Nurture

Q. What are the Grow & Learn Awards?

A. The awards are a person-centered award, recognizing individual progress and achievement in horticulture. Our awards are inclusive, individualized and offer life skills-based education for all. Each Award requires 80 hours of practical gardening activity, has seven core activities to complete, has flexible additional or seasonal activities, personal goals and a portfolio to complete.

The Awards focus on basic horticultural skills; Cultivation, Composting, Seed sowing, Potting on, Propagation, Plant Care and Harvesting. The Additional activities in the Roots Award can be anything from making bird feeders to crafting clay hedgehogs to learning how to use a petrol lawn mower.

The Seasonal activities in the Nurture Award are a way to advance your horticultural skills by focusing on set activities to complete over the four seasons. This could be care for fruit trees, maintenance of compost bins, maintaining a pond, looking after a wildflower meadow and much more depending on your site/garden.

They are flexible to suit your site/garden, your own expertise and your learners/participants own interests, hobbies and skills they wish to develop.

The personal goals can be designed to suit the learner/participant and could be anything from building their confidence to chat to others or improving their IT skills or learning how to cook a meal for themselves from food they have harvested. We have learners of all ages and abilities achieving their Grow & Learn Awards.

Q. Is there an age range that Grow & Learn is suitable for?

A. The awards can be completed by anyone of any age or ability if they have support from group leaders, care/support workers, parents, etc. to fill out their portfolio. The portfolio's do take time to fill out, so it is wise to do this each week. We do suggest if the focus is on the learner completing their own portfolio that the minimum age of 12 years onwards participate in the award, as the portfolio can be difficult to fill out without assistance.

Q. What is the difference between **Roots** and **Nurture**?

A. The Grow & Learn Award has two levels, the first being **Roots** and the second more advanced being **Nurture**. The **Roots** Award is for those who have little to no horticultural skills or knowledge. It is an award to develop the learners' practical skills and help them build confidence in their own horticultural abilities and knowledge. The **Nurture** Award can only be completed by learners who have previously completed their G&L **Roots** Award. It is an advancement built on the horticultural skills and knowledge developed in the **Roots** Award and further progresses their skills, knowledge and confidence in their own abilities with an emphasis on their different seasonal skills.

Q. Do I need to complete the **Roots** Award before completing the **Nurture** Award?

A. Yes, you need to complete your **Roots** Award before starting your **Nurture** Award.

Q. Can you fill out the portfolio at the end of the Awards?

A. No and we advise against this. We strongly suggest that the portfolio is filled out as you and your group/learners/participants work on your award. In the portfolio you need to fill in dates and times of activities which helps us see what tasks have been completed and when. It also helps track how many hours a learner/participant has completed as part of their Award. We have many learners/participants completing on average between 100-300 hours of gardening work, so it is good to record this weekly to evidence all the arduous work they have put in. If their portfolio is contributing evidence towards a CV, a traineeship, apprenticeship or another award e.g., Duke of Edinburgh or Saltire Volunteering Awards having tracked the hours illustrates their dedication to the award. To help with this we have created the new Record of Gardening hours trackers for both **Roots** and **Nurture**. You can access these in the resources section of the website once you have signed up.

If you have any questions about the Grow & Learn Awards or if you need help with anything else regarding the Awards, please contact growandlearn@rchs.co.uk