



About The London Children's Flower Society

Founded in 1945 the London Flower Lovers' League, held its first competition for growing daffodil bulbs in 1948. The League's founder was Mrs Alice Street, who became the first Chairman and remained in that position for 17 years. In 1967 the League became a registered charity and in 1974 the name was changed to the London Children's Flower Society.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother was the Society's patron until her demise in 2002. In 2004 we were pleased to announce that Her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex, now Duchess of Edinburgh, was to become our new patron and has attended several events on behalf of the Society.

Since its foundation, the Society has given children from Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Special needs schools across London, the opportunity to take an interest in horticulture by encouraging them to enter our gardening competitions. Many of these children live in impoverished areas, with little to no access to outside space.

We currently run a spring bulb competition in the autumn, where we provide daffodil and hyacinth bulbs to schools, and our Summer Seed and Garden competitions are launched in January. We sell Bee & Butterfly friendly flowers, herbs, and vegetable seeds at a massively discounted rate. In the past we offered free bulbs and up to £20 worth of free seeds to all Special Needs schools in London boroughs, but from September 2024 we will be offering **all schools £5 worth of free bulbs/Seeds**. Gardening is therapeutic for children we hope to be able to continue to offer free bulbs and seeds to schools in London every year and try and secure the funding to support this.

We support approximately 200 schools and their teachers in encouraging children to take part in our competitions. When ready we send one of our team of volunteer judges to attend and award certificates to each child for their efforts. From these schools we select the top 27 gold awarded schools and invite them to attend our Annual Trophy ceremony at the London Guildhall. The children get to come along to receive their school's trophy and prizes, presented usually by either our Patron HRH the Duchess of Edinburgh or our President Mr Alan Titchmarsh MBE along with the current Master of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners.

We have created a Teachers Toolkit for schools to show the benefit of Growing and Gardening and how they can link this activity to other subjects in the national curriculum such as Art, English, Religious Education and Science.

Our Society, in association with the Jack Petchey Foundation, successfully rolled out our 'Planting in the Playground project' to 110 secondary and special needs schools across London in 2022 and 2023. We were able to supply each school with raised planters, compost, gardening tools, a gardening guidebook, and seeds. All schools selected are eligible to enter our gardening competitions and will have ongoing support for three years from the Society.

LCFS feel there are many schools in London that would benefit from gardening and that there is a real appetite for schools to get involved, especially in the current climate. Not only does it encourage children to spend more quality time outside in the fresh air, but gardening has also been proven to have many health benefits, not only for physical well-being, but also the positive impact it has on mental health. Then there is the environmental aspect, with more people than ever living in London, it is vital that more green spaces are created, improving air quality and biodiversity as well as creating wonderful outdoor oases for the school pupils.

LCFS runs entirely on donations and has to secure funding each year, to continue to provide opportunities for Schools to get involved in horticulture. We have a small team of part time staff, a board of trustees and over 70 volunteers. The Society is keen to engage with other Organisations that may be able to support and foster our work as a Charity along with a wider knowledge of the Societies aims to support our Horticultural Education to London Schools.