

Press release

Triple win for First 5 Garden of Wonder and Discovery at Bord Bia Bloom

From [Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth](#)
([/en/organisation/department-of-children-equality-disability-integration-and-youth/](#)).

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- the garden is the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's inaugural garden
- garden designed by children for children to promote the importance of outdoor play
- the garden achieved overall 'Gold Medal', 'Best in Category – Large Garden' and 'Best Planting'

Oliver Schumann - Designer and Paula Crilly and Bernadetta Laboni from Mount Venus Nursery

Following a rigorous two-day judging process by a panel of independent expert judges, a garden designed by children for the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth has won three prestigious awards at this year's Bord Bia Bloom Festival.

The purpose of the garden is to promote the importance of outdoor play for a child's learning and development, demonstrate the benefit of consulting young children on matters affecting them and to raise awareness of First 5: the whole-of-government strategy to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families.

Minister Roderic O'Gorman said:

"I am delighted that my department has won a medal for its First 5 Garden of Wonder and Discovery. I would like to congratulate garden designers Oliver and Liat Schurman and the 20 pre-school children from Creative Kids & Co in Walkinstown with whom they collaborated with on the design of this garden. The final garden design – a natural and untouched woodland - shows that children are the real experts in their lives.

"I would encourage anyone visiting the Phoenix Park this Bank Holiday weekend to see this for yourself. I would also encourage parents to visit the National Childcare Scheme stall in the Budding Bloomers section this weekend to find out more this Scheme and the benefits it can bring to their families."

The award-winning garden was co-designed with young children. The Educators from Creative Kids & Co in Walkinstown, Dublin, supported 20 pre-schoolers to participate in the development of the garden with the garden designers Oliver and Liat Schurmann.

This process followed the Participation Framework championed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The Framework is based on the child-rights model of participation developed by Professor Laura Lundy, Queens University, which provides guidance for decision-makers on the steps to take in giving children and young people a meaningful voice in decision-making.

Notes

First 5 is the whole-of-government strategy to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families. This ten-year plan aims to ensure all children in Ireland have positive early experiences and get a great start in life. [Find out more about First 5.](https://first5.gov.ie/about-first-5) (<https://first5.gov.ie/about-first-5>).

The National Childcare Scheme is one of a number of schemes under Together for Better, the new funding model for early learning and childcare that also includes the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, the Access and Inclusion

Model (AIM) and the Core Funding Scheme. The new funding model is being backed by record levels of State investment in early learning and childcare – which will for the first time exceed €1 billion this year.

Visit the First 5 Garden of Wonder and Discovery at the Show Garden Section and the National Childcare Scheme Stall in the Budding Bloomers Section and meet department staff to talk about the importance of outdoor play and how the Department of Children is enhancing the lives of children and recognising diversity and promoting equality of opportunity.

The First 5 Garden is funded by Dormant Accounts Funding.

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