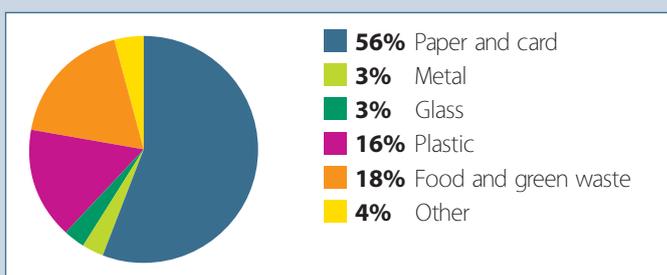


Top Tips to reduce waste in schools



The education sector disposes of 615,117 tonnes of waste per year. Schools can currently spend between £300 and £1000 per year (depending on their size) on waste disposal. Through reducing, reusing and recycling, schools can cut waste production by more than 50 per cent, saving money on disposal costs and reducing their burden on the environment.

The following chart provides a breakdown of the types of waste produced by a school.



Source: Waste Watch

Here are ten tips on how to minimise waste in your school.

1

Work with your local authority.

- To arrange recycling bins and collections for your school.
- To acquire information and materials about which specific items and materials can be recycled in standard collections, special local collections and civic amenity sites in your area.
- To obtain posters, leaflets and possible speakers or activities.

2

Get to grips with your paper and card waste – it can account for as much as 60 per cent of school waste.

- Place scrap paper trays in each classroom, office, copier room and IT suite.
- Make double sided printing and photocopying routine.
- Instruct cleaners to empty classroom recycling bins into the external bins each day, or set up a system of student recycling monitors.
- Encourage staff to save documents electronically rather than printing out in hard copy.
- Offer parents the choice of receiving newsletters by email and post other information on your website.

3

Communicate waste and recycling initiatives regularly to staff, children and parents.

- Ensure the recycling bins are obvious and appealing.
- Use colourful stickers and posters to point out what goes in the recycling bins.
- Regularly announce recycling initiatives in school assemblies, staff meetings, newsletters and on the website.
- Use noticeboards and displays around the school to make waste minimisation central to the school's ethos.
- Regularly run class competitions or recycling days to refresh pupils' awareness of waste issues.

4

Set up a composting scheme to get rid of everything from grass cuttings to tea bags. Food and green waste can make up almost one fifth of the weight of waste in schools.

- Ask your local authority recycling officer if cut price composting bins are available.
- Incorporate composting activities into science lessons or eco/gardening clubs. This is a great way to get pupils involved with the environment and is also a valuable educational tool.
- More information on making compost and how to build an organic garden can be found on the learning zone of www.hdra.org.uk/schools_organic_network
- Encourage pupils not to bring more food than they can eat.

6

If your school hasn't already banned soft-drinks, set up a dedicated collection for steel and aluminium cans. Your school could make money out of them. Find out more about recycling aluminium and about how your school could benefit from www.cashforcans.co.uk, www.thinkcans.com and Alupro www.alupro.org.uk

- Making aluminium cans from old ones uses only one twentieth of the energy needed to make them from raw materials. Every can made from recycled aluminium saves enough energy to power a TV for three hours.

6

Recycle printer cartridges and mobile phones. There are many schemes out there that will collect old cartridges and phones and actually give you money in return or donate funds raised to charity. The www.recycool.org programme is a great scheme for schools. You can also donate redundant IT equipment to reuse organisations.

7

Purchase paper, pencils and other products made from recycled materials. Also look out for 'scrapstores' that collect items from local businesses and make them available to schools at very low cost (www.childrensscrapstore.co.uk/directory/scrapstoredirectory.htm).

8

Switch to using mugs and glasses in the staff room instead of disposable vending cups. Avoid using disposable catering items (plastic cutlery). Encourage pupils to use reusable bottles/flasks for drinks.

9

Reupholster items of furniture to prolong their life, and when items do need to be removed check whether local organisations can use them. Similarly with second hand uniforms and clothes – set up a swap shop to help parents exchange items.

10

Reuse old envelopes by sticking a label over the previous address. You can get recycled paper labels from a number of places – search online for suppliers.

Further information and guidance on reducing, reusing and recycling waste can be found at the following:

Waste Resources and Action Programme: Recycle Now
www.recyclenow.com

Useful Information on waste, includes a recycling bank locator and a fun section for kids featuring Recycler the rapping Robot.

Waste Watch: Waste Online
www.wasteonline.org.uk
Recyclezone
www.recyclezone.org.uk

Downloadable information sheets are available on composting, glass, paper and plastics. Great source of information on every aspect of waste.

Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste

The Defra website for recycling and waste contains the governments approach to waste management.

Recycle More
www.recycle-more.co.uk

Includes games and information on waste such as key stage activities, rubbish facts and recycling games.

The Environment Agency
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

The kids' section of this site contains games and animations on the themes of waste, plastics and the 3Rs.

Eco-Schools
www.eco-schools.org.uk

This awards programme aims to get everyone in the school community involved in protecting the environment.

The Yellow woods challenge
www.yellow-woods.co.uk

This simple, educational and fun environmental campaign for schools is run by *Yellow Pages*, working with the Woodland Trust and local authorities. It offers cash prizes for collecting and recycling yellow pages.

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