



# **Guidance for Schools**

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# Guidance

## **What is the Zero Waste Challenge Week all about?**

The essence of the Zero Waste Challenge Week is to try to create little or no rubbish for one week! It's not the winning but the taking part that counts, so it doesn't matter at all if you don't reach zero - we'd be amazed if you did! (However, Bath and North East Somerset residents who took part in a similar event managed to achieve an average of a massive 75% reduction in their rubbish!)

This is a fun opportunity for individuals, families and communities to make an extra special effort to

- Reduce (eg buy goods that have less packaging)
- Reuse (take an old bag shopping)
- Recycle (look around for packaging that can easily be recycled)
- Compost (get a bin or build a wormery)

## **How can we promote this through our school?**

New research published by WRAP indicates that up to 78% of day-to-day waste - mainly food, paper and card - produced by schools in England could be easily recycled or composted. England's 20,871 primary and secondary schools produce around 250,000 tonnes of waste each year -enough to fill Wembley Stadium. Recycling or composting this waste could save local authorities around 6.4 million pounds in Landfill Tax. It could also potentially save an estimated 176,000 tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions.

Schools are ideally placed to promote the challenge through your links with the community. In this pack you will find lots of ideas for ways to help you do this. We understand that not everyone will want to take part in the Zero Waste Challenge Week, however, if we can all encourage as many people as possible to do something as basic as recycling one extra material, this will add up to a great waste reduction across the County.

## **What do we need to do?**

- Spread the word! Publicise the week in advance and encourage people to take part. (See below for some ideas on how you can do this)
- Give out packs to anyone wanting to join in. Alternatively guide them to our website [www.recycleforgloucestershire.com](http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com) where they can download it, or email their contact details to us and we will send them a pack. The pack contains an important Record Sheet, which ideally needs to be started a week in advance.
- Hold a Class/Year/whole-school waste audit before the challenge, to see what your 'normal' waste levels are.
- January 26<sup>th</sup> – February 1<sup>st</sup>. Zero Waste Challenge Week! Enjoy the challenge and be creative with your solutions! Remember to record anything you DO have to bin, and let us know of any novel ways you dealt with your trash.
- Challenge Week in the subject box. This will help us evaluate the success of the week.
- Finally, don't forget to remind everyone to send their Record sheet back to us! All Record sheets we receive will be entered into a prize draw.

## **Timetable for the Challenge Week**

Any time up to and including January 26 <sup>th</sup>	Publicise the week to your community
19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> January ( Zero Waste Minus 1)	Measure/audit the amount of rubbish you throw away in the week prior to the Zero Waste Challenge Week
26 <sup>th</sup> Jan – 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb	Zero Waste Challenge Week
28 <sup>th</sup> February – Date for the return of questionnaire	Send questionnaire and Record sheets back.

## **Ideas for publicising the week**

**Word of Mouth**\_See if you can encourage children, friends, family, staff and Governors to get involved. Talk about the challenge in class, at a family assembly (see suggested assembly script) or at any events you hold. You can borrow our display materials for extra impact. Why not talk to local community members you have links with, such as a local shop or faith group.

**Publicity Materials**\_Put up posters (see attached, or design your own) in school and at local information points such as the Library. Tell parents about the event in your newsletters. (sample text attached)

**Run a competition**\_You could see which class can get the most number of people to take part, or which class has the least rubbish left over from a Zero Waste Lunchbox Challenge Day (further details attached)

**Set an example!**\_Zero Waste isn't everyone's cup of tea. However, sometimes gentle persuasion may encourage someone who is undecided. Do the challenge yourself. Sharing your plans and pitfalls is one of the best ways to give others the confidence to take part too. Or you could encourage the Head and Chair of Governors to take the lead. Get the children to input their ideas.

**Show it off!**\_Have a display in the foyer to explain what Zero Waste is all about. It could include different types of packaging for food, such as a soup can, pouch, and tetrapak. You might like to show the 'ideal' lunchbox.

**Everyone's a winner!**\_It can't be stressed too highly that you CANNOT LOSE! The challenge is trying to reduce the amount you normally throw away. Reaching Zero (or getting very close) is a bonus. It doesn't mean you can't use anything this week, as things can still be reused, recycled or composted as normal.

## **Contact details**

As a school you can make contact directly with us on 01452 426525 for advice and further information.

## **Sample text for newsletters**

Join us for the County-wide Zero Waste Challenge Week Monday 26<sup>th</sup>  
January – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February

*(name of your school)* has teamed up with Gloucestershire County Council and *(insert appropriate District)* Council to see how little we can throw away over one week. The aim of the zero waste challenge week is to have fun trying to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost as much of our rubbish instead. You don't have to reach zero – it's the taking part that matters, but you might be surprised at just how little goes in the bin when you make that special effort.

*(You may like to insert a paragraph here about activities and events that will be taking place at your school)*

We are keen for as many people as possible to take part in the challenge so we hope that you will support us by registering to take part. You can register by completing the sign up page on [www.recycleforgloucestershire.com](http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com) or telephoning 01452 427057 and registering your details. The registration pack is full of tips and ideas and a Record form for the week, with the chance to win **details**

The more of us taking part, the bigger the impact, so please encourage your friends and family to register too. Further information can be found at [www.recycleforgloucestershire.com](http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com)

## **Waste Audit Activity Plan**

A waste audit is when a class or school gathers up all the previous day's waste and has a close look at it to see what is being thrown away.

Doing an audit before Zero Waste Challenge Week will help you see how much rubbish you make, what types of material you throw away, will help identify rubbish hot-spots in school, and will allow you to measure your improvement during Zero Waste Challenge Week. It can also help inform future improvement in your school's waste reduction/sustainable development plan.



### **Resources**

- Waste in labelled bags from the day before (eg 'staffroom rubbish') Ask staff to keep any confidential or hazardous waste OUT of this rubbish for one day
- Paper and pencils
- Hand washing facilities
- Use of the hall if possible
- Photocopies of the attached record sheet (Waste 1)
- Gloves
- Table covers or tarpaulins
- Spring balances
- Plastic bags

### **Workshop outline**

- Discuss what happens to rubbish when it goes in the bin and talk about the Zero Waste Challenge
- Split the children into groups.
- Record on the worksheet (Waste 1) who is in the group and which bag they are weighing.
- Ensure all children have gloves on before touching the waste.
- Weigh the bag and record its weight.
- Tip the waste slowly on to a covered table or tarpaulin.
- Separate the waste into different materials. ( eg 'paper', fruit/veg waste)
- Weigh each material and record on sheet (Waste 1).
- When all waste is weighed and recorded put back in original bag.
- Children will wash hands with gloves on and then with gloves off.



## Zero Waste Lunch Day



A Zero Waste Lunch is a great way to get the whole school community thinking about ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost our food and packaging waste.

The typical ZW lunch is packed in a lunchbox, and the food is in reusable pots (eg margarine tubs) rather than wrapped in disposable plastic film. Drinks are in refillable bottles.

All containers are re-sealable so that any leftovers can be saved for later.

## Organising your Zero Waste Lunch

- Discuss the impact of making/disposing of rubbish
- Have a look at the rubbish from a typical day's lunch (perhaps carry out a modified waste audit)
- Let the community know the results (eg Class 2 produced 12 drinks pouches, or 15% clingfilm etc)
- Brainstorm with the children possible foods and packaging they could bring. If their favourite food was in a single-use pouch could they think of a tasty alternative?
- Send details of your Zero Waste Lunch day home in good time, to allow carers to plan ahead and be SMART shoppers (Save Money and Reduce Trash) See attached sample letter
- Set up a demo lunchbox display in your Foyer and invite parents in to have a look
- Design posters/hold an assembly
- Make the lunch a fun event ( can you wear something green? Can staff eat with pupils today? Can Zero Heroes collect the compostable stuff?)
- Set up a weighing station for any left-overs
- Celebrate the results! We would love to hear about your experiences and see any photos.

## **Sample text for Zero Waste Lunch**

Dear Parents

*(Your School)* is holding a Zero Waste Lunch Day on *(date)*

Pupils have been asked to bring lunches that include as many items as possible that can be eaten, reused, recycled or composted. We are also hoping to have as little 'throw-away' packaging as possible.

You can help your child pack a Zero Waste lunch by including only what they will eat, using reusable containers and buying non-perishable foods in bulk. If your child has a school dinner don't worry – they will still get their lunch as normal, and we will encourage them to make as little food waste as they can!

### **Waste-Free Lunch Tips:**

- Sandwiches in reusable pots such as margarine tubs
- Whole fruits without packaging
- Drinks in reusable flasks
- Snacks purchased from bulk packs and brought in reusable wrapping
- Try roasted sunflower seeds or boxes or raisins instead of singly-packaged crisps

Finally – the aim of this event is to reduce waste, but also to have fun. Rest assured - we WON'T be singling anyone out or identifying individual pieces of packaging.

Thank you for your support, and please help *(your school)* make *(date)* a waste-free lunch day!

## Suggested Zero Waste Assembly plan

Ask the children “Hands up if you have ever thrown things away?”

Select some pupils to come and write on a whiteboard any materials they/their family have recently thrown away.

Ask the school to think about how long they feel they could go without binning – an hour, half a day, 24 hours, a week?

Explain the Zero Waste Challenge Week. The aim isn't to get to Zero or fail, but to see how low you can go. Even if we all make just one less item of rubbish we will be Zero Heroes. Explain that each individual can take the challenge – so that's pupils, mums, dads, friends, etc. Explain how they can get a pack.

Ask children what can we do instead – we all need to eat, shop, clean etc. Pupils will hopefully say **'reduce reuse and recycle'** Add **'compost'** if they don't mention it.

Talk about **'reduce'** first. This is the most important thing we can do, and display a relevant example eg buying individual juice pouches or diluting juice from a 1L bottle – which choice would reduce their waste?

Next comes **'reuse'**. Hands up who brings a refillable water bottle to school? What else has anyone ever reused? Who takes old books etc to a charity shop?

Now for **'recycle'**. Show an item of food ( eg soup) in different containers (tetrapak, plastic pouch, tin etc) and explain how some containers are easy to recycle (all children in the county should have a kerbside collection for cans) while others are harder (tetrapak banks are located at various points across the county) while others aren't recyclable at all (plastic pouch)

Finally **'compost'** Explain that nature already has a brilliant zero waste system going! If you already compost fruit waste etc in your school, ask a pupil to remind everyone of the system for collection. If you don't yet compost, this could be a great way to launch your intention to start, or talk about the benefits of composting at home.

Revisit the whiteboard – was there anything here that could have been reused/recycled/composted?

Finally – hands up – who's ready for the **'Zero Hero'** challenge? Remind them that the aim isn't to get to Zero or fail, but to see **how low you can go**. Even if we all make just one less item of rubbish we will be Zero Heroes. Remind them that each individual can take the challenge – so that's pupils, mums, dads, friends, etc. Remind them how they can get a pack.

## Zero Waste lesson activities

### Carrier Bag Monsters

Plastic isn't always fantastic. However, it's easy to forget to take a bag to the shops, unless you have your own bag monster! This is a hands-on activity to make a bag holder to take home, to store and reuse all those old plastic bags most families have hanging around.

Discuss what happens to rubbish when it goes in the bin. Discuss the problems with plastic. What is 'finite resource' and 'fossil fuel'?

Show an old plastic bag, a cotton bag and bag for life etc.

Ask the children to bring in old shirts to cut up. (One between two is OK) The arm of one shirt will become the 'tube' to store their bags in. Hem or glue-gun (under supervision!) the top of the arm, leaving a gap through which you need to thread elastic.

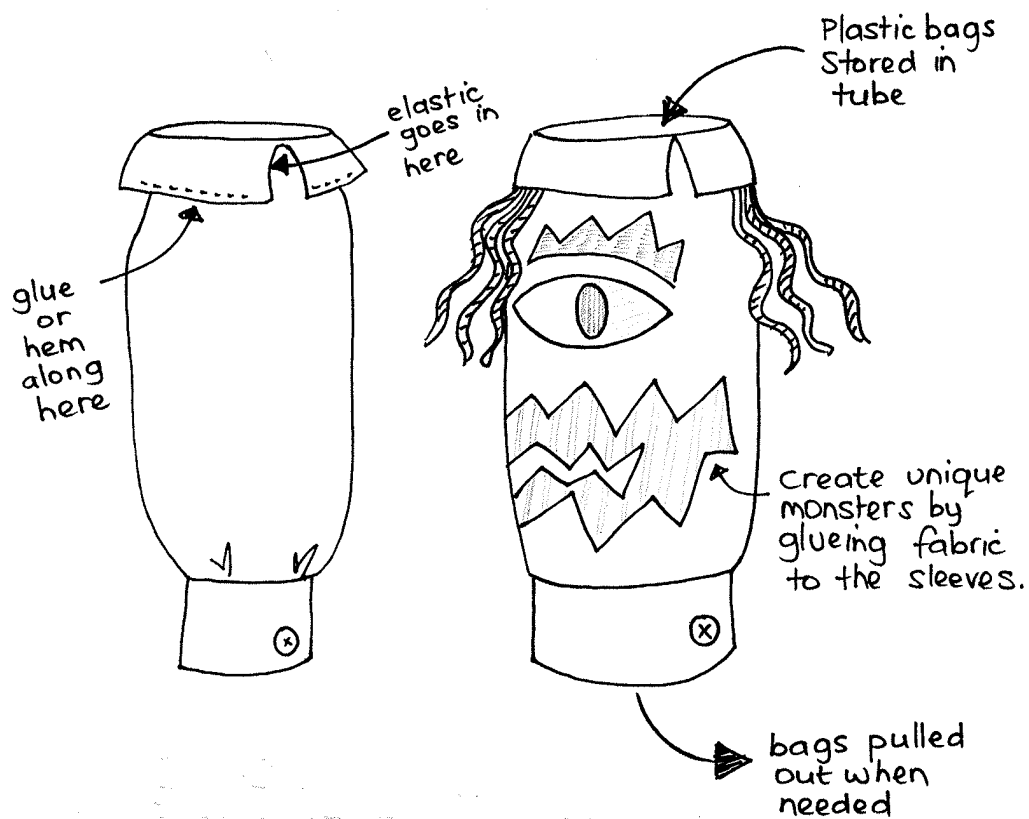
Personalise your bag carriers with scrap materials. These can either be glued on with glue sticks or sewn on if children are proficient with needles and thread.



### Resources

Old jumpers, shirts etc to cut up

Needles, elastic, scissors, glue and scrap materials for decorating.



## Landfill Pizzas

It may be hard to imagine how much of each type of rubbish is buried in landfills, but it's easier to visualize if we make a pie chart showing the percentages. Create a model by making a pizza covered with samples of the actual solid waste that is thrown away everyday. It will help you become more aware of the amount of rubbish we throw away and the composition of our landfills.

On average, each man, woman and child in Gloucestershire makes about 1.4kg of rubbish every day. That comes out to more than 500kg per person, per year! Some of our waste is reused or recycled, but most of it is buried in landfill. The kinds of things that make up the average bin can be placed into main classes or categories

<i>Paper and card</i>	<i>25.1%</i>
<i>Garden waste</i>	<i>21.3%</i>
<i>Food scraps</i>	<i>18.1%</i>
<i>Other ( hazardous, WEEE)</i>	<i>10.6%</i>
<i>Plastics</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Glass</i>	<i>8.8%</i>
<i>Metals</i>	<i>3.8%</i>
<i>Clothes and shoes</i>	<i>2.2%</i>

You will need a cardboard circle as large as you can make it – the bigger the better! Really big pizzas make great wall displays. Ask the site manager to save any large boxes that come to school. From the data table above, work out the angle for each section of pizza, and cut out your 'slices'.

Split the class into 7 teams ( eg one team will be 'paper and card') and ask them to paint the base of the card a rich tomato-sauce red, and then decorate the slice with appropriate materials.

For food scraps we find dry pasta, pulses, tea bags and cereals to work well. For glass, try round glass nuggets that are used in flower vases. Other materials such as foil, cloth, stamps, bottle caps, twigs etc all make great decorations.



## **Compost Activity - Making an inexpensive Wormery**

Nature already has a zero waste policy! Animal or vegetable matter is broken down by bacteria, fungi and other micro-organisms and the end product returned to the soil as compost to complete the cycle. Lots of schools already have composters, so why not have a go at making yourselves a wormery.

### **Materials**

- Plastic dustbin or box with a lid. A short fat one is better than a tall thin one as it provides a greater surface area for the worms to feed.
- Some sand or gravel.
- Some small wooden slats.
- Bedding material for the worms. You could use shredded office paper or straw.
- A plastic tap. You can buy these from most hardware or garden shops (if you don't want to use a tap you will need to simply drill holes near the bottom of the bin for drainage).
- A drill
- 400 compost worms. Tiger worms are the best and are available from most fishing shops. Alternatively companies such as Wiggly Wigglers sell 250g packs online.

### **How to make your worm composter**

- Either drill a tap into the bin about 5 to 10cm from the bottom, or drill about 10 drainage holes into the box. Any higher and the worms will get too wet.
- Drill some breathing holes into the bin lid.
- Place 5 to 10 cm of sand or gravel at the bottom of the bin for drainage.
- Place the wooden slats on top of the sand or gravel. These will separate the drainage material from the compost you are going to produce.
- On top of the wooden slats, put down 10 to 15 cm of damp bedding material for the worms.
- Dig a small hollow in the bedding material and place the worms inside.

### **Feeding and looking after the worms**

- Make sure that you spread the fruit and veg scraps around the bin and not all in one area.
- Place a thick sheet of wet newspapers over the surface to keep the light out and moisture in.
- Only add more food when the worms have finished the last lot. The speed at which the food is processed will depend on the number of worms, the time of year and the type of food added.
- Never over feed the worms, as the food will rot, upsetting the worms and making nasty smells!
- You can keep your worm bin outside but in winter the worms will be warmer (and hungrier) if you keep them inside a garage or shed.

### **Collecting your compost**

After a few weeks you should be able to collect some liquid through the tap if you have one. You can use this as a liquid feed for your plants. This will be quite strong so dilute it with 10 parts water before adding it to your plants. After a few months you can empty the bin and use the compost in the school grounds, then put the worms back and start again!

[Textile Recycling and how it can financially benefit your school/group](#)

So far these ideas have required a bit of work from you, but here's an idea that requires almost no work, can almost guarantee you some money *and* fits into the Zero Waste ethos perfectly!

There are quite a few companies that collect second-hand clothes, which are then sold to emerging nations or recycled into rags and wipers. They offer between £150 - £400 per tonne and will collect textiles your families have donated, on a pre-arranged date, so no storage issues!

Bag2School – 0870 242 1212 [www.bag2school.com](http://www.bag2school.com)

Offer personalised bags for children to take home and fill. Currently pay between £300 and £400 per tonne of textiles.

Bag2thefuture.org offer a similar scheme, but for faith groups, community organisations, youth groups etc

BCR Global Textiles – 0121 520 7586 [www.bcrglobaltextiles.com](http://www.bcrglobaltextiles.com)

Send each school a textile recycling pack and stickers. Currently offer £150 per tonne. Like schools to agree to a minimum of 4 collections per year.

Ragtex UK – 0116 2340648 [www.ragtexuk.com](http://www.ragtexuk.com)

Operate from Leicestershire and grade materials by hand. Currently pay around £300 per tonne.

### **Does your school have an Appetite for Action?**

Appetite for Action is a new, free online resource for all Primary Schools in the UK and Ireland, from Global Action Plan and Sky. Developed in conjunction with teachers and endorsed by the United Nations Environment programme, the website offers schools the chance to take on a challenge to win £3,000 and the unique opportunity to turn their school into a Sky News studio for a day!

Appetite for Action will help your school community to tackle a range of sustainability issues through the topic of food, helping pupils to reduce food waste, grow their own fruit and vegetables, understand composting and reduce waste to landfill.

Through the interactive website, a group of your students can join the Action Club, a network of thousands of school Action Teams from across the UK and Ireland. By creating an online team profile, schools can write blogs about their actions, show visuals of their measurements and even twin with other schools.

Register your school now at [www.appetiteforaction.org.uk](http://www.appetiteforaction.org.uk).

Good luck and don't forget to let us know how you get on. Make sure you send us your completed feedback form so that we can enter you into the prize draw!

Kate Cole

Katherine.cole@gloucestershire.gov.uk