



# Zero Waste Schools

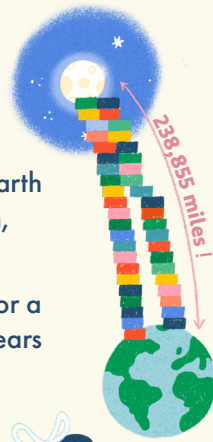
A simple guide to designing out  
waste in school

# Zero Waste Schools

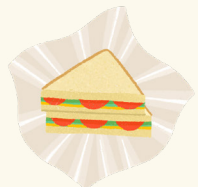
**Did you know we create 2 billion tonnes of waste a year?**

If you put that in shipping containers they would stretch from the earth to the moon and back again! This affects climate change, pollution, animals & plants and uses up the world's natural resources.

We use precious resources like oil to make stuff we only use once or a few times before throwing it away - where it can take up to 500 years to decompose.



Oil is drilled and used to make cling film



Cling film is used to wrap a sandwich



Sandwich is eaten and the cling film ends up in landfill where it will take years to decompose

A zero waste approach means we keep using the same stuff for longer. This is called the Circular Economy. Goodbye to single use coffee cups, water bottles or costumes that only get worn once or twice; and hello to reusable cups and bottles, swap shops and repair clubs!

Litter picks and recycling can be useful but they only deal with waste **after** it's happened. Zero Waste Schools looks at how we can design out waste **before** it's happened.



**Use this guide and our companion Classroom Waste Guide to:**

- Make your school a nicer place
- Save money
- Help animals, plants and the planet
- Look after the world's resources to make sure there's enough to go round for everyone



# Schools Going Zero Waste

Six Scottish schools have been piloting a zero waste approach. Each school tried lots of initiatives across key areas, from Halloween Swap Shops to No Waste Wednesdays. Below you can see just one example from each school:

## Food and Drink

"We redesigned our Friday packed lunches to take out plastic water bottles and make the yoghurt optional. This prevented 20,026 pieces of single use plastic coming into our school in just one year and saved the school £16,000. We worked out that if every primary school in Scotland did this we could prevent almost 39 million pieces of single use plastic and save over £31 million." (based on 1,944 primary schools in Scotland and using our school as a comparable size)



**-Castleview Primary**

## Playground and Outdoors

"We saw lots of litter from snacks so we started Fruit Thursdays to encourage less packaging; and Clean Art Club, where we collected suitable packaging and used it for materials instead of buying new things."

**- Strathyre Primary**



## Special Occasions

"We realised that school fairs can create lots of waste, from single use cups, plates and bags to people buying lots of new stuff. So we designed a waste free Carnival with loads of fun games like guess the number of sweets in the jar or guess the teddy's name - and there was no waste at the end!"

**-St Peter's Primary**



## Stationery and Equipment

"We tackled a lot of stuff by organising a book and game swap. 340 books and toys were brought in and 240 were swapped out. The 100 left over were donated to classroom libraries."

**- Echline Primary**



## Reuse Fair

"We started an annual reuse fair just before Christmas. Families sent in unwanted clothes and accessories and we laid them out to look good at the Fair. People came and picked what they like and we've kept over 1,000 items of clothing in circulation instead of going to waste."

**-Portobello High**



## Digital Signatures

"We learned about the wasted energy from sending and storing messages, files and photos. We made a really simple change with a big impact - with the help of the technician we redesigned the teachers' email signatures to contain a single image instead of multiple ones. We did a teacher training session to introduce it and this reduced the energy cost of each email by 66%."

**- Barrhead High**






For more Zero Waste Schools and Making Circles tips, talks and workshops, please contact:

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For sources to this guide, visit <https://ostrero.com/making-circles/>



Design and Illustration by Hannah Riordan

# Zero Waste Schools

A simple guide to designing out waste in school

Use this poster alongside our Classroom Waste Guide to get started

1

## Choose an area to start from the 6 key areas

This could be an area where you see a lot of waste, it could be something you've recently learned about or it could be something you think would be fun to work on.



"We chose to work on a Halloween Swap Shop because we found out that 7 million Halloween costumes get thrown away in the UK every single year." *Barrhead High*

2

## Pick 2 or 3 suggestions for that area from the Classroom Waste Guide

Pick 2 or 3 actions from that area from our Classroom Waste Guide on.



"We saw a lot of extra waste around Christmas time so we started a gift exchange and a Winter Reuse Fair" *-Portobello High*

3

## Think about who you need to tell and what you will need

Will you need permission from your teacher or head teacher? Do you need to book a space or time? How are you going to let people know it's happening?

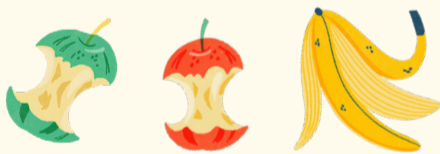


"When we organised our Book & Game Swap we went round each classroom to tell people how it worked, we made posters to go up round the school and we sent notes home to parents so they knew about it too." *- Echline Primary*

4

## Work out how you are going to motivate people to take part

Competitions between classes are a great way to get people involved. Incentives work well, like 10 minutes extra break time, a movie or other treats.



"We made a big red arrow in the canteen that showed how much food waste we were avoiding and how that brought us closer to winning prizes. It really motivated people to keep trying." *- Strathyre Primary*

5

## Remember to count what you are doing

This will help show the difference you are making and is a good way to motivate people to do more. If you can, try to work out how much money or time you have saved too. All of this helps to show that small changes can add up to make a big difference.

"Counting how much plastic we avoided and how much money we saved showed that a small change can have a big impact. Working out the difference it would make if every school did this showed that if we all make small changes we can make a huge difference." *-Castleview Primary*

6

## Repeat with a new area - the more you do, the easier it gets!



"We started with food waste and the no waste school play. We realised special occasions can be expensive so we started swaps for school camp clothes, then did the same for Halloween. Holy Handover was next for communion outfits. The more we do, the easier it gets!" *-St Peter's Primary*