

Wastebuster: A Guide for Senior Leaders

What we do

Wastebuster is a not-for-profit social enterprise that helps schools to become more sustainable and empowers children to change their environment, by showing them how they can make a difference to their world. Our work is focused around three outcomes, to:

- Help children understand and practise the 3R's: reduce, reuse and recycle
- Help school leaders and teachers to embed the 3R's and sustainability across all aspects of school life
- Empower schools to become catalysts for action in their communities, reaching parents, families and more

How can Wastebuster help my school?

Wastebuster can make learning about plastic, waste and recycling easier and more fun for pupils ...and your staff! This guide helps you to get started with Wastebuster, to:

- Support teachers and eco-coordinators
- Easily find and teach activities that deliver your curriculum
- Create pupil champions for sustainability
- Embed sustainability across your school life and inspire real change
- Involve your wider school community and be a catalyst for change
- Sustain interest and action with regular activities
- Celebrate your success and recognise pupils' achievements

Deliver your curriculum

Wastebuster creates compelling videos and songs for children that make environmental issues relatable, comprehensible and engaging for children.

We back these up with a wide range of teacher-developed activities, lessons and toolkits that make it easy to plan and deliver high-quality teaching and learning, with delivery notes, differentiation and extension ideas and curriculum links.

Wastebuster activities combine fun entertainment with a serious look at the facts. Through songs, debates, art, craft, animation and music activities and more, we help children understand why waste is a problem, introduce some solutions and vitally, help to change their attitudes and beliefs about waste, inspiring them to change their behaviour and help to create a more sustainable future.



Wastebuster activities help you deliver your curriculum for 5-7 and 7-11 year-olds in:

- English / literacy
- Maths / numeracy
- Science
- Geography
- PSHE / Citizenship
- Art & Design
- Design & Technology
- Music, Drama and more!

Using Wastebuster to explore waste and recycling also helps you deliver SMSC in your school:

Spiritual: pupils can explore their beliefs and values and explore the effects of their actions on the surrounding world.

Moral: pupils can explore ideas of right and wrong, understand the consequences of their actions and explore a topical ethical issue.

Social: pupils will develop their social skills as they participate and cooperate.

Cultural: pupils can appreciate cultural influences on their behaviour.

It can also contribute to your work as a Rights Respecting School and provides a wealth of activities to support your eco-team and Eco Schools involvement.

[Guide for Teachers](#)

Why register with Wastebuster?

There are three types of Wastebuster membership with different levels of benefits for schools:

1) ***Free registration***

Simply register for our basic level of membership, which provides:

- Access a range of sample resources to use in school to support themed assemblies, eco-team activities and learning in the classroom
- Take part in Wastebuster campaigns to win awards and prizes
- Be the first to know about new resources, giveaways, campaigns, calendar events and environmental news about waste and recycling and sustainability



2) *Local Authority membership*

Wastebuster works with Local Authorities to provide enhanced membership benefits for schools, which provides:

- Access to the full Wastebuster resource library to use in school, including the complete library of Captain Busta's videos on all types of waste and recycling, assemblies, games, lesson plans, eco-team activities and year planner
- Create your own personalised library showing only your favourite resources
- Opportunities to take part in local competitions and events such as Wastebuster school forum meetings to meet other schools and hear from inspirational speakers
- Be the first to know about local freebies and opportunities (such as trips to local recycling facilities and free recycling posters, bin signage and composters when available) new resources, campaigns, calendar events and environmental news about waste and sustainability

To find out if your school is included in a Local Authority contract, please contact info@wastebuster.co.uk.

3) *Paid membership*

Schools in areas without a Local Authority contract can purchase their own membership of Wastebuster, which provides:

- All the benefits of the local authority service, as above (minus any local features)
- A dedicated School Liaison Officer who will work with your school to create a tailored Wastebuster plan to engage your whole school in waste reduction, including seasonal assemblies delivered by Captain Busta (videos), eco-team activities for the whole academic year, a review of your current waste and recycling scheme, and challenge activities to win a Wastebuster and Eco-Schools award
- A Wastebuster mascot for your school
- Regular opportunities to take part in the Wastebuster Challenge, to complete learning and practical action activities and earn exclusive award certificates and Wastebuster prizes

For details of paid school membership, please contact info@wastebuster.co.uk to find out more

[Register now with Wastebuster](#)



How to find and use Wastebuster resources

We know that every school's needs are different. Wastebuster resources support a flexible approach that lets you teach about waste and recycling in the ways that suit you best, including:

- Fun, engaging videos featuring Captain Busta and his friends
- Assemblies
- Lessons
- Home learning activities
- Quick activities
- Whole-school projects
- School waste reduction
- Eco-team activities

The Wastebuster resource library is packed with resources for teachers, each tagged with key words that help you find the right activities for you. Teachers can browse or search the library, filter by age range, subject, resource type, topic and more, and favourite resources to build a personalised library.

<http://resources.wastebuster.co.uk/Resource/Index>

Support your Eco-coordinator and whole-school activities

Waste, recycling and sustainability are great topics you can use to help deliver your core curriculum. Embedding Wastebuster activities across your wider school life is a powerful way to reinforce the importance of tackling the problem of waste and make a real reduction in the amount of waste you create.

Your school eco team will already be helping to lead your efforts to become more sustainable, and Wastebuster resources provide a wealth of ideas for eco team activities! Eco coordinators can filter the Wastebuster resource library to find [activities just for eco teams](#).

Your eco team can help everyone to play a role, including your leadership team, teachers and assistants, lunchtime supervisors, parent helpers, office team and canteen staff.



Eco team members could:

- Help to lead Wastebuster activities with your eco club, classes and assemblies, or with parents during school events
- Spread the word to pupils and parents about using reusable containers for school lunches
- Survey the amount of plastic waste created in each class, your staffroom, playground and office, and come up with action plans to help pupils and adults reduce, reuse and recycle more
- Help lunchtime supervisors encourage more recycling during breaktime and lunches
- Monitor progress and share successes
- Create displays and other creative works to spread the key messages to your school community
- Help to reward pupils and classes that make the biggest strides towards your goals
- Help to lead after school drop in sessions to help parents learn about the problem with plastic and simple ways to reduce plastic waste

[Guide for Eco-coordinators](#)

Create pupil champions

Creating pupil champions is a great way to listen to and involve pupils, so you can better understand what they do and don't understand about plastics, waste and recycling and identify the best ways to work together.

By harnessing their abundant ideas and energy, you can build their motivation and excitement. Pupils can lead by example, to create real change in their lives and in the life of your school and community.

- Make waste and recycling a regular part of what your School Council discusses
- Create class champions who can demonstrate helpful actions to reduce, reuse and recycle plastics and other waste
- Understand that pupils will come from a range of different home lives with varying abilities to make a difference – tailor your expectations to suit what they can realistically achieve
- Pupils can help plan and deliver assemblies, and monitor your progress towards your goals
- Plan creative work together: what songs, displays, dramas, poems and stories can pupils create to highlight the problem of waste plastic and the many simple ways pupils and adults can make a difference?
- Explore together how to make thinking about waste a normal part of your school's culture and ethos. This might include your playground buddy system, how you make your values and ethos 'real' each day, your regular assembly updates, and how you decorate your classrooms, corridors and foyer



- Help your school eco-team to take a leading role and work alongside teachers and your school council to steer your goals, encourage helpful actions and monitor progress
- Encourage and support more sustainable actions at school events like fairs, sports days and parent evenings

Involve your wider school community and become a community catalyst

Who should I involve?

Your school community includes pupils, parents and carers, families, governors, residents, local councillors and business owners. Who you involve is up to you!

Involving each group creates opportunities to share ideas, get more people acting to reduce waste and showcase your school as an inspiring beacon of sustainability your wider community can emulate.

Work together in partnership

Invite members of each group to share ideas about how they might be involved and the actions they would like to take. What goals do they wish to work towards with you?

Identify ways in which each side can benefit, as well as any barriers that might prevent different groups from taking part as much as you'd like. Don't treat barriers as a reason to avoid an activity or group: instead, identify them positively as a starting point for action. Start where people are and identify the common ground where you agree and can get excited about ideas. Your early successes together can inspire you to identify more challenging goals together in the future.

Share your ideas, goals and successes

Think about how best to communicate with different groups in your school community:

- Use your normal parent communications, including school displays, letters, emails and your school's website and social media feeds
- Find ways to get pupils to communicate your messages to community members and your local media
- Invite community members to your assemblies, activities and celebrations
- Hold a community event where pupils explain the issues and demonstrate how to reduce, reuse and recycle
- Find ways for pupils to visit other places in your community where waste is an issue or where there's a success story to share. This might be a council office, a local business or other community facility that's already on the way to being much more sustainable



Regular activities sustain interest and action

What regular activities could you plan to keep pupils and your community interested and taking action? Regular activities and suggestions will help everyone to build sustainable habits!

- Find ways to remind pupils each day about reducing their plastic use and remembering to recycle
- Set aside regular times for pupils to share their stories and successes, to inspire others
- Set a weekly challenge to find a new way to reduce, reuse or recycle. Share and celebrate pupils' ideas!
- Plan ahead, so you have lots of ideas to use. Take a look at the short activities in the Wastebuster resources library!
- Invite parents and other community members to report on their ideas, suggestions and successes, via their children or in person in an assembly or event
- Encourage pupils to talk to parents and other adults during school events

Use school events to spread the word about the 3R's

Your school events, like sports days, Christmas and Summer fairs, performances and parent evenings are a great way to demonstrate your leadership in sustainability to parents and your wider community.

- Highlight to parents that you are aiming to recycle more and create less waste
- Encourage parents to avoid single use plastics when providing cakes, prizes etc.
- Use reusable or compostable containers, cups and plates
- Clearly signpost recycling bins – show people what to do!
- Include a display that explains what you are doing and why

Celebrate success

What will 'success' mean for us?

You may wish to set some goals for reducing, reusing and recycling at school. Every school is different and it's important to set the right goals for you that are challenging but achievable. Think of some realistic short, medium and long-term goals that relate to the aspects of plastics and waste you'd most like to tackle. Involve staff and pupils in your planning – you might set different goals for the adults and children in your school that link to the different ways people use plastics. Governors and parents could also share their ideas, including for any home activities you'd like to support.



Goals based around outcomes are important, but remember to include goals related to the actions pupils and staff can take. Action-related goals help everyone to build new, more sustainable habits, like using reusable containers, avoiding single-use plastic items and remembering to recycle plastic packaging for food and school items.

Share your goals

Share your goals in an assembly and class sessions. Help pupils, especially younger ones, understand what each goal means and what actions they need to take to achieve each one. Again, this helps to build helpful habits!

Involve adult and pupil champions, who can demonstrate what to do and explain how you've involved your school community in setting your goals.

To help you make your goals part of your school life,

- Create posters, displays and charts for classrooms and other school areas
- Share your goals with parents and your community

Monitor and share your progress

Monitoring your progress is another great way to involve pupils and support literacy and numeracy. This might be to monitor the amount of waste and recycling you create (with adult help), keeping count of how many pupils remember to avoid single-use plastics in their lunchboxes or take recyclable packaging home, or tracking progress towards another goal.

Make sharing your progress a regular part of your school life. This might be to share news in an assembly, with classroom and corridor displays, or in your foyer or parent communications.

Celebrate success!

Pupils are more likely to make long term changes if they can see the difference they are making and celebrate their achievements.

- Use the Wastebuster resource library to plan regular lessons and assemblies that keep waste and recycling in pupils' minds
- Use our calendar to keep up to date with events
- Recognise pupils, classes – and teachers – who do the most to change their own habits or to encourage others, with certificates and a big 'well done!' in assembly
- Create a 'recycler of the week' award
- Reward the school when you reach one of your goals. This might be a 'well done' assembly, or a special treat like some suspended timetable time
- Remember to invite parents and other community members who have been involved!



Create sustainable change

Wastebuster wants children and young people to permanently change how they think about waste and recycling. As you reach your goals and celebrate your successes, think about how you can:

- Involve pupils – what would they like to do next?
- Identify new goals, both incremental and step changes
- Balance what new pupils can aim to achieve, with bigger goals for those already involved

Don't forget to register, to be the first to know about new and exciting Wastebuster videos and teaching resources!

What to do next

- Share our quick guides for [teachers](#) and [eco-coordinators](#) with your colleagues.
- [Register with Wastebuster](#) or find out if you are covered by a Local Authority membership contract, and then search and [browse our resources](#) to begin creating your own Wastebuster resource library for your eco-team.

