



Secondary

www.eco-schools.org.uk



Introduction

In England, Eco-Schools is part of Keep Britain Tidy and we are passionate about reducing litter. In the UK over 2.25 million pieces of litter are dropped each day and annually this costs £885 million to clean up (or 805,277 iPhone XS's). It affects streets, parks, beaches and our wildlife: each year the RSPCA receives over 7,000 calls about litter related incidents. Completing a litter pick allows you and other students in your school to tackle the litter problem in your community. Not only do litter picks actively remove litter, they also influence behaviour by discouraging future littering. This booklet is designed to give you inspiration and advice for completing litter picks in your school and local community. We hope you find our guidance useful and are able to organise successful, safe and satisfying litter picks.

We love hearing from you and seeing your photos @ecoschools #ecoschools



Why participate in a litter pick?

Litter picks:

- Are fun and rewarding.
- Allow you to make a difference to your local and wider area.
- Help your school work towards an international Eco-Schools Green Flag award.
- Give your local community a positive impression of your school and it's teenage student body.
- Raise awareness of litter related problems.
- Make you feel part of a community.

Don't just take our word for it

As a result of taking part in an organised Keep Britain Tidy litter pick:

- 92% of people said they enjoyed it.
- 88% felt that they had made a difference to their local area.
- 88% said they would encourage others not to drop litter in the future.
- 86% felt more pride for their area.
- 83% felt an increased sense of community.
- 82% felt more aware of the impact litter has on the environment.
- 73% agreed that tidying their local area will help reduce the amount of litter ending up in the sea.



Crisps

This academic year, Eco-Schools have decided to focus on one specific item of litter and this year it is crisp packets. During Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean 2018, 49% of participants found crisp packets (or similar) when they completed a litter pick. At Eco-Schools this doesn't surprise us as at the moment crisp packets cannot be recycled; despite looking like foil they are metallised plastic film. The largest crisp brand in the UK has committed to making their packaging recyclable or biodegradable by 2025, but that is 6 years away! With The Guardian newspaper stating that the UK eats 6 billion packets of crisps each year that is a colossal amount of waste in the meantime.

How many packets of crisps have you eaten this week?

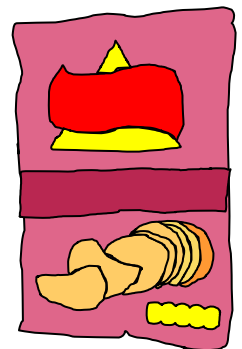
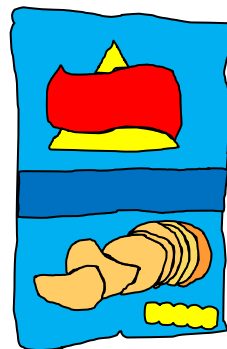
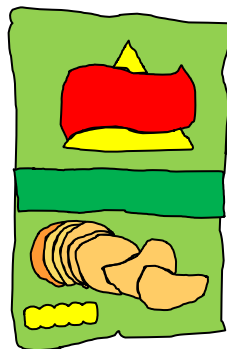
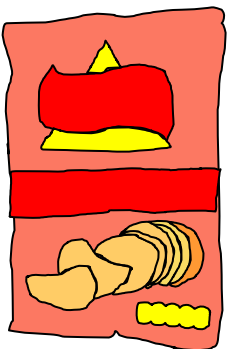
As crisps is our focus, we want to monitor what we can achieve together. To do this we ask you to collect the following information:

- Total number of crisp packets picked up.
- The number of salt and vinegar; ready salted; cheese & onion and other crisp packets collected.
- The most littered brand of crisp.

Once you have collected your information, we ask that you complete our simple, online survey which you can find here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/EcoSchoolsLitter>

Thank you very much for your support, Eco-Schools England.





Step 1: Litter Committee



To begin, you will need to decide who will take the lead in organising the litter pick(s) in your school. As you are reading this guide, this is probably going to be you! It will be your responsibility to coordinate the litter pick(s) and make sure the whole school and its wider community are involved as much as possible. You will need to gather the rest of your Eco-Committee or a group of likeminded friends to help you. You will also need to involve a teacher to help with logistics and encourage whole school involvement.

Your responsibilities:

- Deciding how often your school will complete litter picks (will it be a one-off event or a regular occurrence).
- Choosing who is going to join in your litter pick(s).
- Reviewing the litter problem in your school and local area.
- Deciding where and when your litter pick(s) will take place.
- Gathering, storing and maintaining litter picking equipment.
- Informing your school about litter issues.
- Gathering information to monitor and evaluate the success of your litter picking event(s).





Step 2: Litter Review



Review

At the back of this booklet, you will find a simple questionnaire that you can hand out to other students in your school to find out if litter is a problem in your school and its surrounding area. We suggest you ask as many other students as possible to complete the review as this will help you to gather enough information to see the full extent of the litter problem in your school. The review should take a student no longer than 15 minutes to complete. As well as reviewing the litter situation in your school, the survey is also designed to get you and your schoolmates thinking about the causes of litter and how to tackle them.

Reveal

Once you have collected data from your Litter Review, it is time to collate, analyse and share it. We recommend you use this information to identify litter 'hot spots' and create graphs, charts and fact sheets which can be posted on your Eco-Board. You should also try to share your findings in an assembly and inform your wider school community through newsletters or social media.

Repeat

When you have completed your litter pick(s), we recommend you repeat your Litter Review Survey again. Then, you can compare your new and old results to (hopefully) show a reduction in litter and an improved awareness and attitude towards litter. Post your findings on your Eco-Board and tell the rest of your school what you found out this can be used as evidence towards Step 6: Monitoring and Evaluating Litter.



Step 3: Planning a Litter Pick

Now you have gathered a group of friends and classmates and completed your Litter Review, it is time for you to begin planning your litter pick.

Who?

Who do you want to be involved in your litter pick? You may decide to just complete a litter pick with your Litter Committee, however, at Eco-Schools England we encourage whole-school involvement whenever possible. You could create a litter picking rota allowing a different class or year group to participate in a litter pick at different times of the year. Remember you can involve the whole-school in a week or single day of action such as:

The Great Big School Clean, which will be back in 2020.

You may also want to invite parents/guardians and other members of your school community to get involved and show that teenagers really do care. Their involvement will provide you with evidence towards your Eco-Schools Green Flag Award for Step 5: Informing and Involving.

When?

This is up to you. We have seen schools carry out litter picks during break, lunch and lessons (with permission). We have also seen students host litter picks outside school hours and weekends—believe it or not!

Don't forget to participate in The Great Big School Clean 2020 for your chance to see how much can be achieved when we all join forces!



Where?

If it is only you and your Litter Committee involved, then the best place to begin litter picking is within your school grounds. If you are trying to get others involved then you might need to consider areas outside your school grounds, as hopefully your school doesn't have enough litter to keep your whole school busy! Your Litter Review will help you to find the most littered areas surrounding your school. Please remember to keep yourself and your schoolmates safe by only litter picking in low-risk areas.

What?

You will need equipment to help you successfully and safely complete a litter pick, for example:

- High visibility jackets or tabards
- Heavy duty gloves
- Heavy duty refuse sacks
- Litter pickers
- Litter hoops
- Suitable footwear

If your school doesn't have equipment like litter pickers or litter hoops, ask your Eco-Coordinator to contact your local education authority or the council as they are often able to lend you equipment or give advice and support funding or buying your own equipment.





Safety

Remember to stay safe. If you complete a litter pick outside the school grounds, then a teacher or member of school staff must visit the site before the litter pick to carry out a full risk-assessment. Boring, annoying but totally necessary. Depending on where you choose, for example council owned land, you may need to gain permission in advance.

You should always choose sites that avoid major hazards such as busy roads, train lines, fast-flowing water and derelict buildings. It is also important to remind other students that they should never reach across into hazardous areas (such as roads or rivers) to pick up litter. In geography you could sketch a map of your chosen area and clearly label out of bounds areas and hazards. Don't forget to add where your litter is going to be collected and first aid points.

High visibility jackets (although not on trend) will allow you and your school mates to be easily seen and provide your group with a sense of identity. Heavy duty refuse sacks help to store rubbish collected and heavy duty gloves protect hands. We also recommend you use litter picks and hoops.

Before you begin your litter pick, it is really important to make sure everybody knows what to do if they come across hazardous items such as broken glass, drug related litter or biohazards - these should in no circumstances be picked up. You will also need to tell everyone what to do if they find such items (ask your Eco-Coordinator for guidance on this, local council websites also often have recommendations on this issue). The best piece of advice is, if in doubt ask.

It is also important to tell everyone involved about hygiene issues:

- Wear heavy duty gloves at all times
- Cover any cuts (however minor) with surgical tape or a waterproof plaster
- Do not touch your mouth or eyes whilst litter picking
- Wash hands and forearms before eating, drinking or going to the toilet.



Step 4: Litter Lessons



Including litter picking in GCSE and A-Level lessons is really difficult, but we have managed it pass our suggestions to your subject teachers.

- English: Debate titled, 'Large companies should be fined for their consumers litter.'
- English: Write a balanced argument titled, 'It's the council's job to clear up litter.'
- Maths: Gather data to carry out statistical analysis and create graphs and charts for the Eco-Board.
- Geography: Map the litter found on your litter pick to identify 'litter hotspots' before investigating the causes and possible solutions.
- Geography: Investigate the impact of litter in your local area and around the world.
- Geography: Compare and contrast what countries around the world have done to combat litter.
- Chemistry: Examine everyday materials like polymers, their properties, why they are used and their effect on the environment.
- Design and Technology: Design and create a product aimed at reducing litter, for example a more appealing or hygienic bin for younger students.





Step 5: Informing and Involving



By now, you should have gathered Information, decided when and where your litter pick will be and persuaded your teachers to include litter in their lessons. Now, it is time for you to decide how you are going to involve as many others from your school and it's community as possible.

We recommend you keep your school community up to date during the planning process through newsletters, social media, assemblies and (of course) posting on your Eco-Board. Make sure you inform people:

- Why you are bothering to organise a litter pick
- What you found out from your Litter Review
- When and where your litter pick is happening and who is taking part
- Information collected from completed litter picks
- Your school's Litter Code (Step 7).

You may want to consider whole school involvement in the **Great Big School Clean** in 2020, creating a litter picking rota allowing each year group the opportunity to participate throughout the academic year or hosting community clean ups at weekends that you can invite your wider school community to.





Litter Pick



Time to get out there and get #picking! Have a laugh, stay safe and be proud! You have already spread awareness of litter issues, so your event is a success before it even begins!



Step 6: Monitoring and Evaluating your Litter Pick

When you have completed your litter pick, you will need to consider what you have achieved and how you are going to tell everybody about your achievements. First, repeat your Litter Review and collating and compare before and after results. You might also wish to collect more information whilst completing your litter picks such as: type of litter, material of litter, brand of litter or area the items of litter were found. You can then use any, or all, of the data you have collected to create graphs or charts that will help you communicate your findings to the rest of your school and display on your Eco-Board as evidence towards your Eco-Schools Green Flag Award.



Other, simple ways to show off are using luggage scales to weigh the amount of litter you collected (remember some airlines only allow 15kgs of baggage), counting the number of bin bags collected or using a clicker counter to monitor the total number of pieces of litter collected.

At Eco-Schools England, we are also trying to show what we can all do together. To do this we ask that you complete our simple, online survey (it should take no longer than 5 minutes) after each litter pick. You will be asked for:

- Number of bin bags collected
- Total weight of litter collected
- Number of participants involved in the litter pick

We are also collecting data for our yearly theme, crisps:

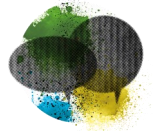
- Total number of crisp packets picked up.
- The number of salt and vinegar, ready salted, cheese & onion and 'other' flavoured crisp packets collected.
- The most littered brand of crisp.

You can complete our online survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/EcoSchoolsLitter>



Step 7: Litter Code



You have organised, completed and evaluated a litter pick(s) - congratulations you're a great person! Now, it is time to update your Eco-Schools Eco-Code with a new litter section. Your school's litter code should be a mission statement that reflects your schools new positive attitude towards reducing litter. Here are some of our (admittedly not great) ideas:

- Get rid of litter to make our school glitter.
- Don't be bitter, do something about it and pick up litter.
- Rubbish rubbish everywhere, completing a litter pick shows we care!

If you can do better let us know @ecoschools #ecoschools.

**Thanks for taking part,
The team at Eco-Schools England.**





Litter Review



Which photo best represents the litter situation in our school?



A



B



C



D



Have you ever littered?

Yes

No

Would you say something to a friend who dropped litter?

Yes

No

Do you think it is important not to drop litter?

Yes

No

Have you ever participated in a litter pick?

Yes

No

Would you be willing to try litter picking?

Yes

No

What would you do with litter if you are walking home or to school and can't find a bin?

Drop it on the ground, someone else will pick it up.

Keep hold of it and put it in the bin when I reach my destination.

Put it somewhere it doesn't look messy like next to a wall or on a bench.

Have you seen any litter in our school today?

Yes

No

If you answered yes how many pieces?

1-2

2-10

10+



Did you see any litter on your way to school today?

Yes

No

If you answered yes, roughly how many pieces? _____

Which of these do you think is the most common item of litter?

- Drink bottles and cans
- Crisp packets
- Plastic bags
- Fast food wrappers
- Sweet and chocolate wrappers
- Coffee cups

Other _____

Which area of our school grounds do you think has the most litter?

Which area near to our school do you think has the most litter?

Why do you think it is important to not drop litter?

- It looks horrible
- It damages the environment
- It harms animals
- It is unhygienic
- It costs lots of money to clean up
- All of the above

Thank you for completing Litter Review