



# KEEP BRITAIN TIDY.

## Early Years





## 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 this costs our country £885 million to clean up annually. It affects streets, parks, beaches and our wildlife: each year the RSPCA receives over 7,000 calls about litter related incidents. Completing litter picks gives children the opportunity to tackle litter problems in their local environment by removing litter and influencing their future habits. This booklet is designed to give you ideas, inspiration, advice and confidence to get litter picking. We hope you find our guidance useful and that you are able to participate in many successful, safe and satisfying litter picks.

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





## Why should you complete a litter pick?

Litter picks:

- Are fun and rewarding for children
- Allow children to make a difference to their local area and the world they live in.
- Provide opportunities for contextual learning that links to your Curriculum.
- Helps you work towards an international Eco-Schools Green Flag award.
- Help you create links with your local community.
- Improves environmental awareness amongst young people.



**“The absolute enthusiasm of a group of 6-8 year olds ‘doing their bit’ and loving every second of it — they’d have continued all day, despite the cold!”**





## Crisps

Each year, Eco-Schools likes to focus on one specific item of litter and this year our focus is on crisp packets. During Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean 2018, 49% of participants found crisp packets (or similar) when litter picking.

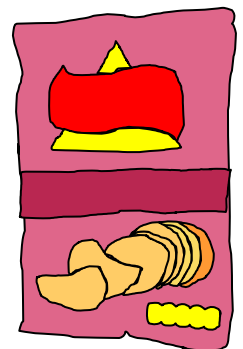
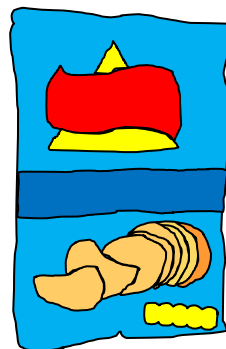
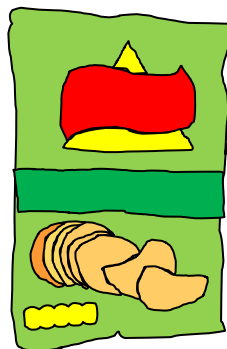
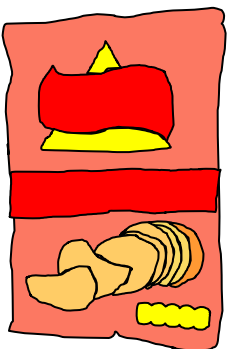
As crisps is our focus, we want to see we can achieve together. To do this we are asking you to collect the following information during each litter pick:

- 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.

In our additional material section (at the back of this pack) we have included resources to help you collect this information and you can submit your results by filling in our simple, online form found here:

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

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





## Step 1



### Who will be responsible for organising your litter pick?

As you are reading this guidance, it's probably going to be you who takes responsibility for organising your litter pick, however, you don't have to be solely responsible! When young children are completing litter picks outside their nursery or school grounds we recommend gathering as much adult support as possible, whether it's from colleagues, parents or other members of your local community.



## Step 2



### Understanding what litter is and why it is a problem.

The Eco-Schools team loves seeing young people litter-picking, not only does it remove litter from our environment (where it can harm wildlife), it can also affect behavioural change in young people. As Eco-Schools is an environmental education programme, we encourage children to think about the causes and effects of litter at a very young age. In the back of this pack you will find a simple, tally-style survey you can complete with your children before and after your litter picking event to see if they understand what litter is, where it comes from and why it is bad for our environment.





## Step 3

### Planning your litter pick.



## Where?

As former teachers, the Eco-Schools team understand that organising a litter pick outside of your school or nursery grounds can be a little daunting—a major worry may be finding litter or other items that are potentially hazardous and could cause harm to young children. An easy way around this is to organise litter picks within your grounds, if there isn't enough litter present, you could even carefully plant some items of litter that are 'safe' for little hands to pick up. Whilst this might seem counterintuitive, it is still teaching young minds that litter is a problem and they shouldn't drop it—an important message they can then take home and spread to their families and friends!

If you have practiced litter picking within your grounds and are now ready to litter pick in your local community, remember to stay safe by choosing low risk areas (like your local Green Flag park) and completing a risk assessment before each of your litter picks.

## Who?

This will depend on where you are completing your litter pick. If it is within your grounds with children only gathering 'safe' litter, then the number of adults required to supervise will be minimal.

If you are venturing outside your grounds we recommend gathering as many adults as possible, so you have a high adult to child ratio. As well as school staff, you may want to invite parents, families and other members of your community to join in (this is also great evidence for Step 5: Informing and Involving).

## When?

This is totally up to you: it could be before school, after school, during school or even a community litter pick at the weekend! If you want (and are willing to brave different weather conditions) you could even make litter picks a regular part of school life!





## What?

You should gather 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 you don't have equipment such as litter pickers or litter hoops, it might be worth contacting Waste Services at your local council as they are often able to loan equipment or give advice and support funding or obtaining your own equipment.

If you do want to purchase your own litter-picking equipment you can even get specialist, children-size litter pickers from companies such as Helping Hand Environmental.

## Great Big School Clean

As Eco-Schools in England is part of Keep Britain Tidy, each year we are proud to support their Great Big School Clean and Great British Spring Clean campaigns. The campaign happens throughout March every year, provide various resources to make your litter picks a success and are a great way to see how much can be achieved when we all join forces!

## Safety

The most important thing to consider when planning a litter pick is safety. As children in Early Years settings are so young, as mentioned previously, it might be worth organising a litter pick within your school grounds where children can pick 'safe' litter that has been planted by staff members. This is a great way to affect raise awareness and affect behavioural change in young minds!





If you do decide to litter pick outside your school grounds, it is important to visit the site and carry out a full risk-assessment beforehand. Depending on the site you choose, for example council-owned land, you may need to gain permission in advance of your litter pick.

You should always choose sites that avoid major hazards such as busy roads, train lines, water and derelict buildings. Children should also be told to never reach on to a road or into water to pick up litter.

As mentioned earlier, equipment such as heavy-duty gloves and litter pickers can help keep children safe but even with this equipment young children should be carefully supervised, so they don't go near potentially dangerous litter (broken glass, biohazards etc).

Hygiene is also an important part of keeping safe of litter picks, so please ensure:

- Each child wears gloves
- Any cuts (however minor) are covered
- Children don't touch their nose, eyes or mouths whilst litter picking
- Hands and forearms are washed after any litter pick and before eating, drinking or going to the toilet.

## Step 4

### Linking litter picking to learning.

Litter picking provides plenty of options for contextual learning that links to the EYFS framework. Below are some of our links and ideas, but if you have better ideas—please let us know so we can share them with other Eco-Schools throughout England!

- Litter picking is a great way for young children to develop their coordination, control and movement.
- Litter pick helps with children's social and emotional development by helping children understand appropriate behaviour.







- In Literacy there are plenty of children's books with an environmental message such as Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer by Dan Crisp, a perfect book for talking about the effects of litter.
- For mathematics you could count the number of pieces of litter you find throughout your litter pick.
- Litter picks can also help children look at their surroundings in a different way giving them an opportunity to explore, observe and gain a deeper understanding of their world.



## Step 5

### Involving your wider community



By now you should have planned your litter pick and thought about how it can enhance children's learning in your setting. We now recommend letting everyone know (including us [@EcoSchools](#)) about your litter picks using newsletters and your website or social media accounts (if you have them). You may also want to consider inviting others to your litter picking events—this is a great way to spread the anti-litter message and get some additional help for little hands. If you do want some extra help, it is worth inviting families, local businesses and nearby primary and secondary schools.



## Litter Pick



Time to get out there and get picking! Have fun, stay safe and be proud. Remember: it's an achievement if just one child learns about the consequences of littering!





## Step 6

### Evaluating your litter pick.



An important part of the Eco-Schools Seven Step framework is monitoring whether your actions are a success. There are many simple ways you can monitor your litter pick including:

- Creating a simple tally chart to show the different items of litter picked up.
- Taking before and after photos of the area you have litter picked.
- Counting the number of bags of litter you have collected.



## Step 7

### Creating a litter code.

Our favourite Early Years Eco-Codes usually use the rhythm of well known nursery rhymes to make them easier for young children to learn.

Here is an example we thought of, but we're sure you can do better:

(To the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Litter, litter everywhere  
Put it in the bin to show we care

We won't leave you where you lie  
If people drop you we'll ask them why

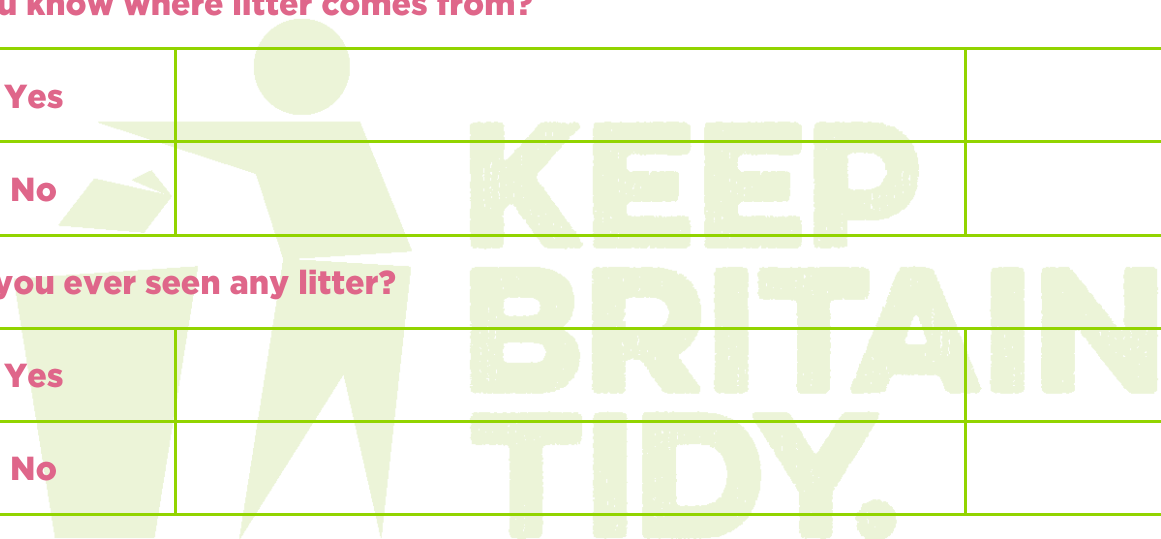
Litter, Litter you're not cool  
Put it in the bin we're an Eco-School

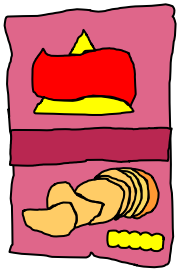




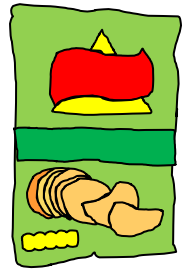
## Early Years Litter Survey

Answer	Tally	Total
<b>Do you know what litter is?</b>		
Yes		
No		
<b>Do you know where litter comes from?</b>		
Yes		
No		
<b>Have you ever seen any litter?</b>		
Yes		
No		
<b>Do you think litter is good or bad for animals?</b>		
Good		
Bad		
<b>Have you ever picked up any litter?</b>		
Yes		
No		





# Crisps



Number of crisp packets collected:	Tally
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Colour Packet	Tally
Red	
Green	
Blue	
Other	

