



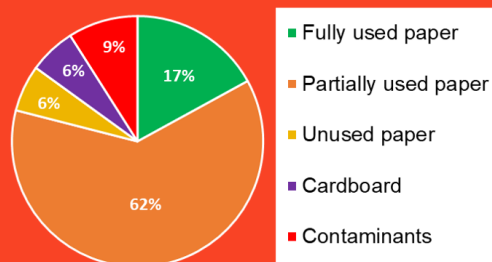
How to reuse at school

REUSE is the second of the 3Rs, after REDUCE and before RECYCLE. Before putting an object in a recycling container, teachers and pupils should get the habit of thinking “Can it be reused first?”

Paper

In most schools, the majority of the paper in classroom and office recycling containers has been used on only one side. The pie chart on the right shows typical results from an audit of recycling containers in a primary school. While it may not be realistic to expect 100% of the paper to be used on both sides, increasing the proportion that is ‘fully used’ will result in financial savings as the school needs to purchase less paper.

Results of recycling audit



To ensure as much paper as possible is reused:

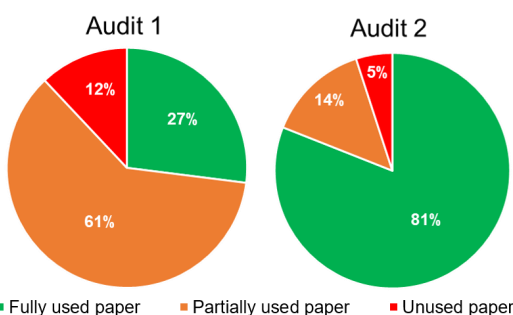
Set up ‘scrap’ or ‘rough’ paper drawers in classrooms and offices, making sure they are clearly labelled and easily accessible. Establish the expectation that adults and pupils will ask “Does it need to be new?” when they are about to use a piece of paper. Often the answer is “no” - a piece of reused paper is perfectly acceptable.

Ensure every photocopier and printer has a clearly labelled tray next to it to store paper suitable for reuse. If busy staff accidentally copy too many worksheets, or pupils click on ‘print’ too soon, these sheets can be stored flat in the tray ready to use again.

Fill one tray of your photocopier / printer with reused paper, or use a designated printer. If the reused paper is put in completely flat, it will work as well as brand new paper and will not jam the printer. Paper collected from printing / photocopying mistakes, as described above, is ideal for this use.

Print pupils’ worksheets on reused paper whenever possible; this provides a powerful message about the school’s approach to reuse. Put a footer on printed sheets saying ‘printed on reused paper’ to make explicit to pupils what has been done.

Conduct a yearly audit of your recycling bin contents, asking pupils to sort a sample of the materials and calculate the percentage of the paper that has been used on both sides. This provides an excellent data handling activity, and can kick start a whole-school campaign focusing on reusing before recycling.



• After your campaign to increase re-use, repeat your audit of the recycling containers and compare the results with those from your initial audit. The pie charts on the right are real results from a primary school, and show what can be achieved. For audit resources see zone.recycledevon.org/waste-audit-activities/

• Alternatively, contact your Devon Waste Education officer who can conduct an audit as part of the Waste Education Programme. See zone.recycledevon.org/workshops/

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Storage Containers

Make **reused plastic tubs** and pots a feature of your school. They can be used to hold pencils, paintbrushes, visitors' badges, fruit cores for composting, dinner money etc.

Or you could use old builders' bags for large shrub planters in your grounds.

Don't be shy about reusing - make a feature of it, labelling your pots to draw attention to your environmentally friendly practices.



Holsworthy Primary School has created a wonderful outdoor learning space, by reusing items that were left lying around the school throughout the year. For example, there's a compost heap, a car made from pallets and milk bottle plant pots.



Food and drink containers

Expect pupils to use a drink bottle which can be refilled time and time again, add this to the uniform or equipment list for parents. You could even get bottles printed with your school logo and sell them to parents.

Encourage pupils to bring their packed lunches and snacks to school in reusable boxes, instead of using throw-away packaging such as sandwich bags and clingfilm.

See zone.recycleddevon.org/zero-waste-lunches/ for resources to help you audit lunch waste and run a pupil-led campaign focusing on reusable containers. This work creates real life examples that can be used in maths and literacy, and is a great project for an Eco Committee.

Starting the new school year

September is the perfect time to **reinforce key messages** about the school's ethos, including respect for the environment.

- Discuss as a staff team what resources can be **reused from the previous year**. Do pupils need brand new pencils?
- To save money and resources consider making it compulsory for children to **finish an exercise book before getting a new one**. This can be done easily by continuing books into the next school year and any paper which can be reused to be placed in the scrap paper draw (**page 1**).
- Make a **positive feature of reusing**, explaining to pupils that it helps the environment and saves the school money.



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Be creative

Think about how creative you could be in developing reuse projects for your school. When introducing these activities, make sure you are explicit to pupils that, by reusing objects that some would regard as 'rubbish', they are helping the environment while making something beautiful and/or useful.

Art and design activities using reused materials can inspire pupils of all ages, whether making musical instruments with 'rubbish' with KS1 children (see image below), or running a recycled fashion show with secondary school students.

You may have a local **Scrapstore** where the school can source free or cheap 'waste' materials (www.scrapstoresuk.org). Or put out a plea to parents and the local community, explaining that your school encourages both creativity and caring for the environment.



School gardens can be transformed with reused materials. Planters can be made from reused tyres or builders' bags; raised beds and bug hotels from reused wood or pallets; and greenhouses from reused plastic bottles.

For compost and school gardening resources visit our website: zone.recycledevon.org/composting/#practical-guide

Loose Parts Play

Loose parts play is playing with anything that moves around, for example, building a bridge with pallets. Research has shown that it improves problem solving skills and teamwork.

Loose parts have been gathered by the school community, so everything has been recycled and reused. Children have access to building materials, pallets, tubes and tools which engages pupils creative thinking and problem solving skills.

Visit zone.recycledevon.org/case-studies-2/#whipton-barton for more information about how loose parts play is Implemented in a **Whipton Barton Primary School**.



Whipton Barton Primary School



Furniture

Have you ever found your school filling a skip with used furniture or equipment that could be reused? Try putting the items out for parents and the local community, saving the skip hire cost and don't let the equipment go to waste!

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Reuse and Eco Schools

Engage staff and pupils, and gain a nationally recognised award for your hard work on waste, by participating in the Eco-Schools programme. Start your 'Waste' project by improving and raising the profile of your recycling, then move up the 'waste hierarchy' by focusing more on reducing and reusing.



Whole school campaigns & Eco Code

The whole-school campaigns to increase the proportion of paper that is used on both sides before it is recycled (**page 1**) also encouraging the use of reusable lunch containers and drinks bottles (**page 2**) are great ways to integrate your Eco-Schools work into the **curriculum**.

They also generate data to show that you are making a measurable impact, **essential** for your Green Flag award. Don't forget to include reuse messages in your Eco Code to give them a high profile in your school. For an example primary school Eco Code, **see right**.

- For more information on Eco-Schools visit: www.eco-schools.org.uk.
- To find out how we can help you achieve your green flag award: zone.recycledevon.org/eco-schools
- Read how Sparkwell Primary School achieved their Green-Flag this year: zone.recycledevon.org/case-studies-2/#sparkwell

Be an Eco Ranger...



...and make the world a better place!

- If your school has been **reusing** waste we would love to hear about it!
- **Email** recycle@devon.gov.uk for guidance or to subscribe to the Devon Schools **Sustainability Bulletin**, with information on free resources, funding and training.
- For further 3Rs 'how to' guides: zone.recycledevon.org/3rs/
- Explore our teaching resources: zone.recycledevon.org/teachers

