

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 30 August 2022

Update on Recycling and Waste Collection in Schools

Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	25

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee notes:
 - 1.1.1 The improvements which have been made to the infrastructure and communications to enhance the recycling provision in schools; and
 - 1.1.2 That a Waste Compositional Analysis has been undertaken to monitor current recycling rates and will be repeated in the Autumn to measure the impact of the changes introduced in May 2022.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Karen Reeves, Head of Operational Support, Performance and Improvement

E-mail: karen.reeves@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 5196

Report

Update on Recycling and Waste Collection in Schools

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the improvements to infrastructure and communications which have been made to enhance the recycling provision in schools in Edinburgh.

3. Background

- 3.1 In [October 2020](#) the Policy and Sustainability Committee approved an approach to be taken to enhance the recycling and waste collections in schools in Edinburgh by creating a simple and consistent system across all Council school sites.
- 3.2 Progress was initially delayed significantly due to the impact of COVID-19 as the priority was given to the safe reopening of schools as restrictions eased. However, work commenced in 2021 with the establishment of a cross-service working group and was fully rolled out in May 2022.
- 3.3 All changes are in line with Waste (Scotland) Regulations (2012) and the internal Resource Use Policy.
- 3.4 This project also follows on from a primary school Youth Climate Summit held in the run up to COP26 in 2021, which found that pupils overwhelmingly wanted more recycling facilities in their schools, to help tackle waste and support climate action.
- 3.5 The project will assist schools to work towards the Council's target to be carbon neutral by 2030.

4. Main report

- 4.1 In [May 2021](#), the Council allocated additional funding of £100,000 for the improvement of recycling in schools. This funding has been used to purchase recycling bins for all classrooms, canteens and corridors in schools and to develop a clear and consistent communications plan.
- 4.2 A short-life Working Group was established, with officers from across a number of teams including Waste and Cleansing, Education and Children's Services, Facilities Management and Corporate Services attending. This cross-departmental working

proved vital in pushing forward the project and getting a wide range of input and expertise from across the Council.

- 4.3 Research was undertaken to identify the system which will be implemented across all schools. This included a review of current practices, comparing available bin types and suppliers and assessing the most effective communication tools.
- 4.4 School visits took place in November and December 2021 to assess current waste practices. These took place at a sample of six schools, which included nursery, primary and secondary schools. Bins were chosen based on suitability for each area, which was informed by these visits. Size, shape, colours and lid types were different throughout schools, so models were chosen which will be fitting to the majority of settings.
- 4.5 A summary of the new approach is outlined below:
 - 4.5.1 Each school has been provided with classroom and hallway recycling bins, along with food waste bins, to supplement their existing bins;
 - 4.5.2 Each classroom has been provided with a recycling bin, so that there is one dry mixed recycling bin and one non-recyclable bin in each classroom;
 - 4.5.3 Schools have arranged a collection point where full recycling bags from classrooms can be placed before being collected by cleaning staff;
 - 4.5.4 As part of their curriculum for excellence, pupils will take on the responsibility (with support from teachers) for taking full recycling bags to collection points;
 - 4.5.5 The three main streams in each school will be: non-recyclables, dry mixed recyclables and food waste. These will all follow the same colour coding system as used for communal and kerbside bins in Edinburgh. The specific bins are listed in the guidance document at Appendix 2; and
 - 4.5.6 A guidance document has been developed for school and facilities management staff to refer to. It includes guidance on how the new system works, how to order additional items and the relevant contacts. The guidance document is available to schools through SharePoint.
- 4.6 The new bins and communication materials (posters, bin stickers) were distributed to all schools in May 2022.
- 4.7 £20,000 was also made available from a one-off revenue allocation for sustainability engagement to further support communications for the project, including films for assemblies and classrooms to promote recycling.
- 4.8 A poster competition was held in December 2021 for pupils to design posters encouraging recycling. There were many entries, and six winners were chosen. The winning entries will be printed and sent out to all schools as part of the standard pack including professionally designed posters and stickers and the bins (Appendix 1 provides examples of the winning entries).
- 4.9 A Waste Compositional Analysis (WCA) by Albion Environmental took place at the end of March 2022 to understand the recycling levels prior to the implementation of the project. These WCA's involved taking a waste sample from a number of schools

of around 100kg from the school's non-recyclable waste (NRW) bins and sorting it into its constituent components.

- 4.10 The results indicated that only 28% of the waste in the NRW bins was NRW, the other 72% was recyclable material such as food, plastic bottles, tin cans, paper and cardboard. Food accounted for around half of the recyclable material in the NRW bin. Dry-Mixed Recycling (plastic, metal, paper and card) accounted for around a quarter.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The second WCA analysis will be taken in Autumn 2022 to assess the impact of the new approach.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 All the additional bins distributed to schools were funded from the £100,000. Funding for the communications, including all media, stickers, posters etc. was taken from the £20,000 budget for a one-off revenue allocation for sustainability engagement.
- 6.2 Going forward schools will be responsible for funding additional bins, bin liners, stickers and posters to what will be provided initially.
- 6.3 The additional recycling facilities provided by this project should decrease the overall spend for schools on their waste disposal due to increased recycling and reduction in non-recyclable waste which is more costly to dispose of.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The delivery of this improvement to recycling in schools will support the delivery of the Council's waste and recycling strategy.
- 7.2 Visits to a sample of schools in Edinburgh were arranged to review current internal waste practices. Input was sought from facilities management staff to identify problem areas and common themes throughout the schools.
- 7.3 Throughout the project, important updates have been communicated to business management staff and headteachers, such as a general announcement about the upcoming changes, and additionally when the first WCA took place.

8. Background reading/external references

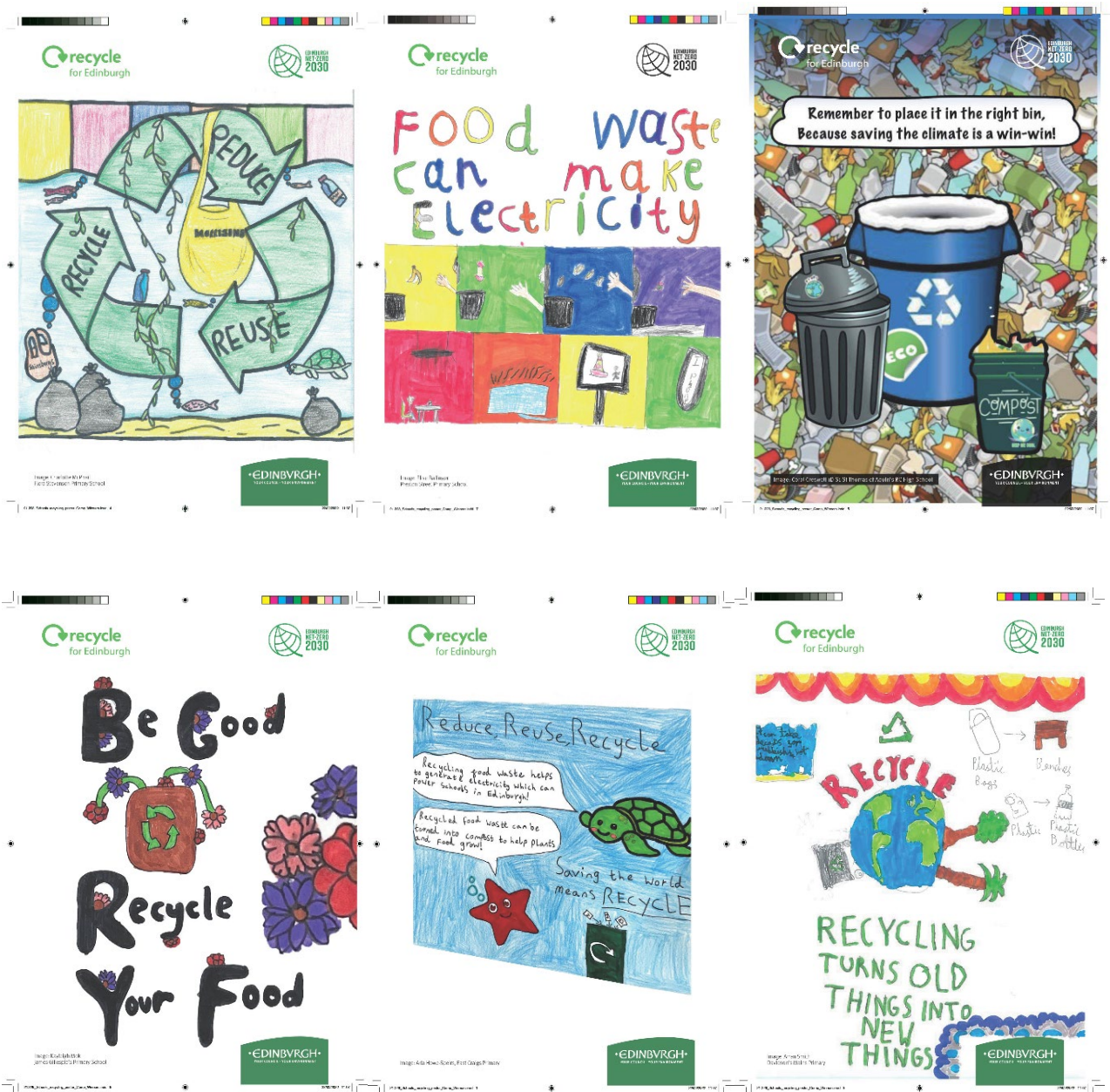
- 8.1 None.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Images of winning posters.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – Guidance for Schools and Facilities Teams.

Appendix 1

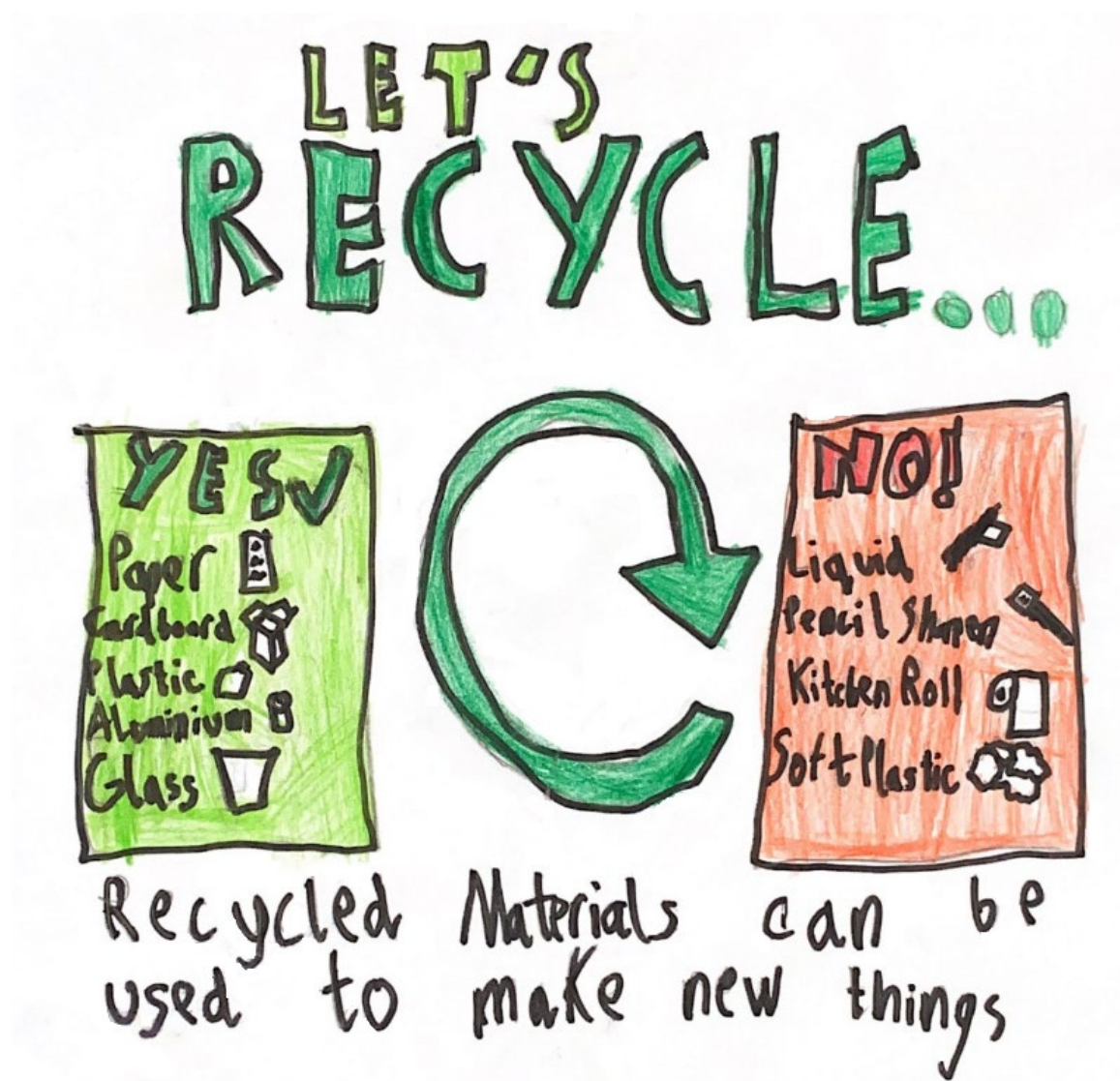
Images of winning posters



Edinburgh schools recycling

Guidance for schools and facilities teams

May 2022



Contents

Policy and Sustainability Committee.....	1
6 June 2022	1
Recycling in Schools – Committee Report.....	1
Report.....	2
Recycling in Schools – Update Report.....	2
Introduction	9
Overview of recycling best practice for schools.....	9
Classrooms	9
Corridors	10
Canteens and eating areas.....	10
Kitchens and home economics classrooms.....	10
Bin bags and liners	11
Bin stickers and posters	11
How to order	11
Other/special wastes.....	12
Glass.....	12
Confidential Paper	12
Responsibilities.....	12
Main Bins and other items: Summary Table.....	14
Appendix 1: FAQs.....	17
Appendix 2: What goes in each bin?	19
Dry mixed recycling	19
Food waste.....	19
Non-recyclable	20
Appendix 3: Examples of existing bin set-ups and recommendations	21

Introduction

This guidance document is part of a wider project by the City of Edinburgh Council to help increase recycling in schools by creating a simple and convenient system across all sites.

It aims to help schools improve recycling systems in their internal areas. This document sets out best-practice recommendations. These may be tailored to meet the individual needs of each school.

Please note

It is a legal requirement that schools recycle their waste tins, cans, plastic, glass, paper, card and food. The responsibility to comply with the law lies with individual schools.

Overview of recycling best practice for schools

To help support your school meet best-practice standards for recycling and waste management

- each classroom will be provided with a recycling bin. This should be positioned next to a non-recyclable bin
- schools should arrange one or more suitable collection point(s) where full recycling bags can be placed and collected by cleaners
- pupils are responsible for taking full recycling bags from classrooms to the central collection point(s)
- schools can order extra bins for corridors, kitchens, canteens etc as needed.

We have seen first-hand that many schools have existing recycling bins in place.

We want to add to these bins, rather than replace them. This means you will be able to adapt your current bins to follow the updated system, by adding stickers to the bins and placing posters on the walls above them.

This will make sure all schools have a clear and consistent messaging and colour schemes for their waste and recycling. The new colour schemes are based on Edinburgh's residential bin system.

Classrooms

- 1 x non-recyclable bin
- 1 x dry mixed recycling bin

Each classroom should contain at least one general waste bin and one dry mixed recycling bin. Sit the bins together as a hub, instead of separately. Put up a poster detailing what items can be placed in each bin, above or beside the bin hub.

Bins of up to 60 litres capacity are recommended for classrooms.

Dry mixed recycling should only be emptied from classrooms when full. This is to avoid wasting clear plastic bin liners.

At the end of the school day, pupils and/or teachers should take the full bag and place them at their nearest collection point. Janitorial staff will collect the bags and take to the external bins.

You may want to have loose dry mixed recycling instead of in bags if you already have a system in place that works for you (e.g. large wheeled communal hallway containers).

Corridors

- non-recyclable bins
- dry mixed recycling bins

There should be designated waste points on corridors. These should contain at least one non-recyclable waste bin and one dry mixed recycling bin. Ideally bins should sit together as a hub. Put up a poster detailing what items can be placed where above or beside the bins.

Bins of approximately 80-100 litres capacity are recommended for corridors.

As well as the standard bins, there should be corridor 'collection points' around the school. These are for the classroom bagged dry mixed recycling bags.

Collection points can be larger bins or containers. They can also be a marked area to temporarily place bags.

Canteens and eating areas

- 1 x non-recyclable bin
- 1 x dry mixed recycling bin
- 1 x food waste bin

Canteens and eating areas should have designated waste points with at least one non-recyclable waste bin, one dry mixed recycling bin and a food waste bin.

The three bins should sit together as a hub. Put up a poster showing what items can go in each bin, above or beside the bins.

Bins of approximately 80-100 litres of capacity are recommended for canteens and eating areas.

Kitchens and home economics classrooms

- 1 x non-recyclable bin
- 1 x dry mixed recycling bin
- 1 x food waste bin

Kitchens should have at least one non-recyclable waste bin, one dry mixed recycling bin/area and a food waste bin. It may be suitable to have a bin or area for storage of

recyclable waste away from the main food preparation areas, within cages or larger containers.

Sit food waste bins nearest the food preparation areas and non-recyclable waste bins where required.

Home economics classrooms should have at least one non-recyclable waste bin, one dry mixed recycling bin and a food waste bin. These bins should sit together as a hub. Exceptions may include the food waste bin being placed nearer the food preparation areas. Small, 5 litre caddies can be used for workstations.

Put up posters showing what items can be placed in the bins, above or beside bins in kitchens and home economics classrooms.

Non-recyclable and food waste bins of approximately 60 litre capacity are recommended for both settings. Dry-mixed recycling bins should be at least 100 litres or larger and/or use a designated area/cage, depending on the needs of your school.

Bin bags and liners

If you use the right bin bags for each type of bin, it will make it easier for colleagues and waste collection crews to identify waste and recycling. It will also make it easier to handle waste.

Use:

- black bags for non-recyclable waste
- clear or see-through bags for dry mixed recycling
- clear or compostable liners for food waste

Put up information posters showing which bin bags to use for each bin in school staff and facilities areas.

Bin stickers and posters

You will be given new bins and a pack containing stickers for the bins and posters for the walls. You can order extra stickers and posters if needs be.

Apply stickers to a visible part of each bin. Put posters up on the nearest wall or appropriate surface to the bins, in a place where they can be easily read.

How to order

To order additional bins, stickers, posters or liners, please follow the below steps using Oracle:

1. Requisitioner to login to Oracle
2. Under (1a) Main Catalogue search, enter (Schools Recycling Project) (Incl. brackets)
3. Click 'Go', to see all products relating to the Schools Recycling Project

4. Add and order items as needed

Other/special wastes

Glass

Lots of schools have banned glass.

However, you might need internal glass bins or collection boxes in areas such as kitchens, staff rooms. Decide what is best, based on your needs.

Confidential Paper

We recommend that each reception office and staff room have a confidential waste bin. The bins should be only accessed by staff and be enclosed and secure. You can arrange special collections of confidential waste through the City of Edinburgh Council, using either a regular or ad-hoc collection.

Email **waste@edinburgh.gov.uk** or phone **0131 608 1100** to organise. All requests for confidential waste bags should also go through this email or phone number.

Responsibilities

This section outlines the waste management and recycling responsibilities for school staff.

Please note:

Schools are responsible for carrying out thorough a risk assessment prior to setting up their communal collection point(s) for dry mixed recycling (e.g. in hallways).

If you need help with this, please email Grant Colligan

grant.colligan@edinburgh.gov.uk or Ken Wong ken.wong@edinburgh.gov.uk

Cleaners and janitorial staff

If there is a system in place already for cleaning staff to empty recycling and food bins, this should continue, otherwise the following points below apply:

- take dry mixed recycling from hallway collection points to external bins
- empty non-recyclable bins when full as usual
- make sure to use the right bin liner for each bin type
- provide extra liners in classroom bins for ease of use with dry mixed recycling
- remove food waste from any home economics classrooms

Teachers and support staff

Dry mixed recycling bins in offices should be emptied when full. Place bags at the nearest collection point for cleaners and janitors.

Teach and guide pupils to take full responsibility for the movement of recycling to communal points. Place bags at the nearest collection point for cleaners and janitors.

Get familiar with what can go in each bin and help remind pupils. A short video explaining what items can be put in each bin and the benefits of recycling is [available on YouTube](#) and can be downloaded from Sharepoint. This can be used for assemblies or during class.

Lesson plans on the benefits of recycling are available for P4-S2 pupils. These have been created by Changeworks and can be downloaded from Sharepoint.

Pupils

Help teachers and other staff by taking dry-mixed recycling bags from classrooms to nearest collection point when full.

Kitchen staff¹

Remove all non-recyclable, food and dry mixed recycling waste from eating areas after lunch times (and breaks where appropriate).

Take food waste and dry mixed recycling from kitchen to external bins, unless there is an existing arrangement for cleaning staff to move this waste.

Headteachers








Promote recycling throughout school. Make sure pupils and other staff are aware of their recycling responsibilities.

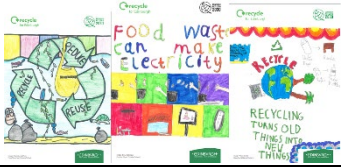
¹ Due to COVID-19 it is understood that some schools have pupils eating in classrooms or another arrangement from usual. In this situation the catering staff remove the segregated waste from outside the classrooms after lunch is over. These arrangements should continue until the schools deems it is safe to change.

Main Bins and other items: Summary Table

Below is a summary of the three bins provided to schools, to supplement existing internal waste set ups. Schools are free to order any types of bins which suit their needs through other sources, with the recommendation to use the stickers and posters provided by the Council to keep waste separation consistent. Additionally, the recommended bin bags and their codes are included.

Item image	Stream	Capacity	Suitable areas	Product code
	Dry mixed recycling	39 litres	Classrooms	XJW4588
	Dry mixed recycling	87 litres	Hallways, canteen and kitchens	XJW4589
	Food waste	60 litres	Canteens, dining areas, kitchens, and home economics classrooms	XJW4590
Clear bin bags- large 	Dry mixed recycling/food waste	16X25X39"	Any dry mixed recycling or food waste bin	RSA006
Clear bin bags- small/medium 	Dry mixed recycling/food waste	15X24X24"	Any dry mixed recycling or food waste bin	RSA266

<p>Dry mixed recycling sticker</p> 	Dry mixed recycling	A5	All dry mixed recycling bins	SRPST01
<p>Non-recyclable waste sticker</p> 	Non-recyclable waste	A5	All non-recyclable waste bins	SRPST02
<p>Food waste sticker</p> 	Food waste	Sized for food bin	All food bins	SRPST03
<p>Dry mixed recycling Poster</p> 	Dry mixed recycling	A4	All dry mixed recycling locations	SRPPS01
<p>Non-recyclable waste poster</p> 	Non-recyclable waste	A4	All non-recyclable bin locations	SRPPS02
<p>Food waste poster</p> 	Food waste	A4	All food bin locations	SRPPS03
<p>Posters for primary schools</p> 	n/a	A4	Walls in corridors, stairwells etc.	SRPPS04

Posters for secondary schools	n/a	A4	Walls in corridors, stairwells etc.	SPRPS05
 Three posters are shown side-by-side. The left poster features a recycling symbol with the words 'REUSE', 'REDUCE', and 'RECYCLE' inside its loops. The middle poster has the title 'Food waste can make electricity' and shows various food items like apples, bananas, and vegetables. The right poster has the title 'RECYCLING TURNS OLD THINGS INTO NEW THINGS' and shows a globe with arrows indicating the recycling process.				

Appendix 1: FAQs

If we already have the required dry mixed recycling and food waste bins in each area, do we need to order any extra?

No. In this example, you do not need to order any more bins. However, the current bins should be upgraded with new stickers and posters to match the city-wide system.

Where should we place posters?

Put up posters on a wall or surface directly above or next to the bin. This will make it clear to users what items should be placed in each bin.

Where should we place stickers?

Apply stickers to the bins in the most visible place possible. Make sure the sticker will not be damaged in use.

Can we still use our bins, if they are a different size/capacity to the best practice examples?

Yes, you can reuse any bin. Just make sure to add stickers and/or posters so that users are clear as to what items should be placed inside. Make sure to also use the right colour bin liner.

How do we order bins?

To order additional bins, stickers, posters or liners, please follow the below steps using Oracle:

1. Requisitioner to login to Oracle
2. Under (1a) Main Catalogue search, enter (Schools Recycling Project) (Incl. brackets)
3. Click 'Go', to see all products relating to the Schools Recycling Project
4. Add and order items as needed

Who is responsible for taking the dry mixed recycling from classrooms?

Pupils and/or teachers should empty their dry mixed recycling bins when full. Full, bagged waste should be placed at the nearest designated collection point for cleaners to take to the main external bins.

Who is responsible for taking out food waste from kitchens, home economics classrooms and canteen areas?

Home economics classrooms: cleaning staff are responsible for removing food waste and taking to external bins.

Kitchens: In kitchens, catering staff are responsible for taking the food waste bin out to the main external bins. The food waste should be bagged in either clear or compostable liners.

Canteen areas: Cleaners should remove food waste from the public canteen areas.

What goes in each bin?

Please refer to Appendix 2

Do we have to use specific bin bags for each bin?

Yes. Non-recyclable waste bins should use black bags, dry mixed recycling bins should use clear bags and food waste bins should either use clear bags or compostable bags.

Appendix 2: What goes in each bin?

Two styles of posters will be provided to be clearly displayed above or beside the bins. They will include a list of the most common items which can go in each bin.

Dry mixed recycling

YES

- cardboard
- paper
- clean plastic bottles with tops, pots, tubs and trays
- clean cans and tins
- drink cartons, for example juice and milk cartons
- empty aerosols and foil
- card from sandwich cartons (but not plastic film)

NO

- material contaminated with food or food itself
- plastic bags
- glass
- wrappers, crisp bags or photographs
- polystyrene
- plastic toys or plant pots

Food waste

YES

- all cooked and uncooked food
- bread, pasta and rice
- fruit and vegetables including peelings
- meat, bones and cheese
- eggs including shells
- tea bags and coffee grounds

NO

- food packaging (including compostable Vegware etc.)
- liquids including milk and cooking oil
- tissues and napkins
- animal waste or bedding (where applicable)

Non-recyclable

This bin is for all non-recyclable waste only. E.g., Tissues, wipes, cling film and crisp packets.

Appendix 3: Examples of existing bin set-ups and recommendations



Repurpose these existing bins in a hallway by adding signage and stickers.

Apply a dry mixed recycling sticker on the left bin, and a non-recyclable waste on the right bin.



These bins pictured are in a hallway outside several classrooms. At the end of a day or week, teachers and pupils place dry mixed recycling into the large blue container.

Upgrade the blue container by removing the paper only sticker and replacing it with a green dry mixed recycling sticker, with a poster above. The same applies to the non-recyclable waste bin.

Teachers and cleaners can continue to use this area as a communal collection/drop off point if the system works for them.



Upgrade this existing non-recyclable waste bin in a hallway by adding a sticker for non-recyclable waste, and a poster above or next to the bin.

Apply a dry mixed recycling sticker to the mixed recycling bin. Put up a poster, highlighting what can be placed in the bins above or next to the bins.



Adapt this existing non-recyclable waste bin in a hallway by adding a sticker for non-recyclable waste, and a poster above/next to the bin.

Place a dry mixed recycling bin next to this bin.



Upgrade this classroom mixed recycling bin by applying a green 'dry mixed recycling' sticker and putting up a poster.



Upgrade these bins in a home economics classroom by sticking either non-recyclable waste or dry mixed recycling stickers on them.



Upgrade this food waste bin within a home economics classroom with a grey 'food waste' sticker and put up a poster above or next to the bin.