



 Buckinghamshire
recycles

WASTE FREE LUNCH



**A RESOURCE FOR
PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

recycleforbuckinghamshire.co.uk

Content kindly shared by Norfolk Recycles

WELCOME

WELCOME TO OUR WASTE FREE LUNCH PACK

This resource has been designed to help teachers to raise awareness of over packaging and food waste issues, as well as providing guidance on how to take steps to reduce lunchtime rubbish.

We provide a series of practical activities for pupils to take part in, that prepare them for a planned day when they are all challenged to bring a waste free lunch to school.

Introducing a waste free lunch day on a regular basis is not only a great way to reduce single use plastics and combat food waste, but it can also help to encourage healthier food choices and save money.

Thank you.

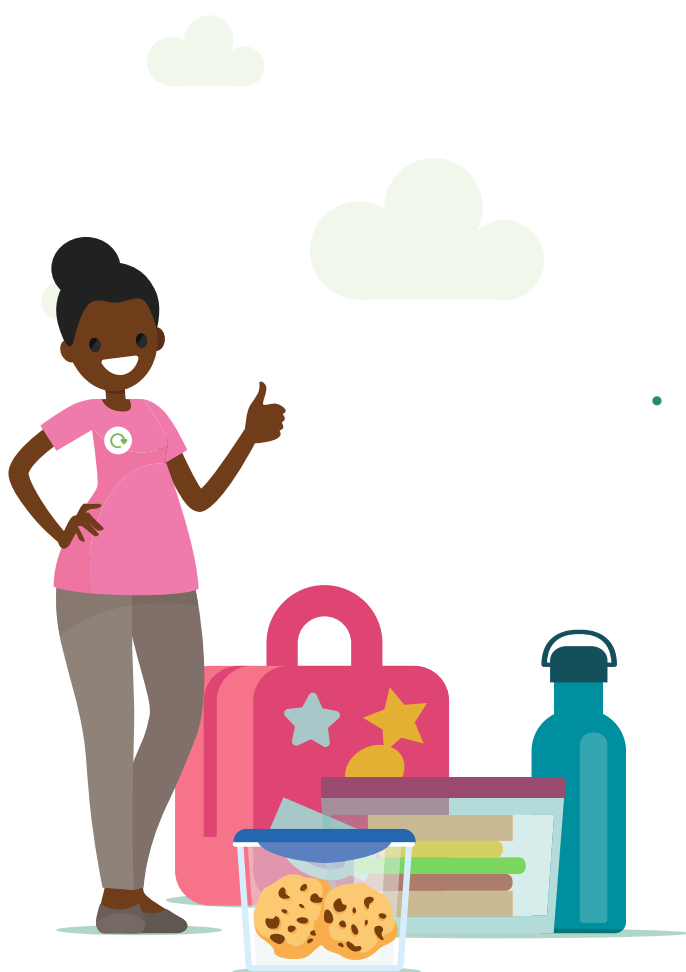
Buckinghamshire Recycles



WHAT IS A WASTE FREE LUNCH?

The aim of the waste free lunch day is for pupils to bring in a lunch that leaves behind no, or minimal, rubbish:

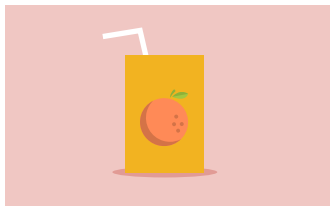
- Compostable materials such as fruit and vegetable leftovers are fine
- Reusable tubs, bottles and food wraps (such as beeswax wraps) are preferable and should be used in priority over recyclable items
- We recommend encouraging pupils to bring homemade cakes and snacks in reusable tubs/wraps where possible as this minimises waste, however it is also acceptable, for example, to buy bigger packs of cakes/biscuits (rather than individually wrapped ones) and decant some into a reusable container
- Any items in single use packaging (especially that which can't be recycled), such as plastic biscuit wrappers, foil drink pouches, crisp packets or plastic straws are not allowed



WASTE FREE SWAPS

Try swapping some of these wasteful items for waste free alternatives:

WASTEFUL LUNCH



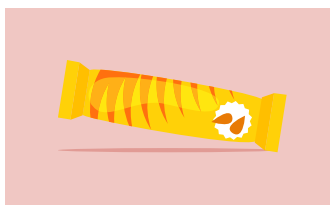
Drink cartons
& pouches



Sandwich bags, foil
& plastic wrap



Packaged
fruit snacks

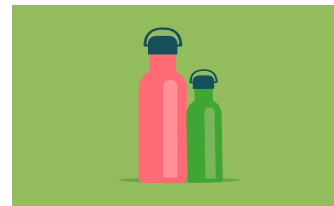


Individually
wrapped snacks



Yoghurt in single use
packaging &
disposable spoon

SWAP FOR



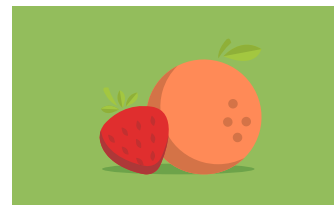
Reusable bottle

SWAP FOR



Reusable tubs &
beeswax food wraps

SWAP FOR



Fresh fruit

SWAP FOR



Homemade snacks in
reusable tubs/food wraps

SWAP FOR



Yoghurt decanted from
a big pot into a reusable tub
with a reusable spoon

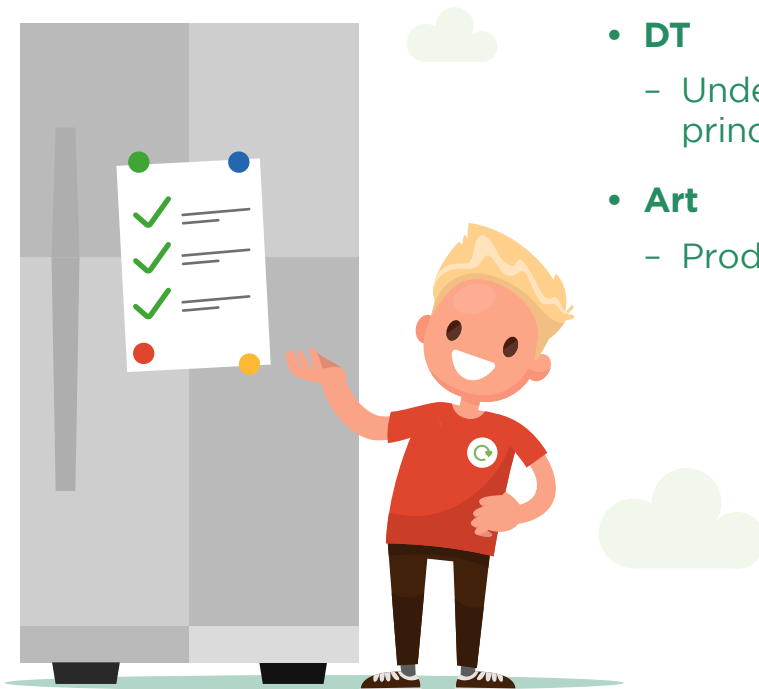
PREPARING FOR A WASTE FREE LUNCH

AIMS

- Recognise that many snack foods have a lot of packaging, much of which is not easy to recycle
- Suggest suitable waste free alternatives to packaged food
- Work co-operatively in groups and share ideas to plan a waste free lunch
- Communicate ideas effectively to a variety of audiences using a range of different materials/ techniques

CURRICULUM LINKS

- **English**
 - Write clearly, accurately & coherently, adapting language and style for a range of contexts, purposes & audiences
 - Be competent in the arts of speaking & listening
 - Use discussion in order to learn
- **Maths**
 - Solve problems by applying mathematics
- **ICT**
 - Data representation
- **DT**
 - Understand & apply the principles of nutrition
- **Art**
 - Produce creative work



PREPARING FOR A WASTE FREE LUNCH

RESOURCES

- **A wasteful lunch** in a plastic/disposable bag (e.g. a disposable drink carton, pre-packed sandwiches (or in plastic bag or plastic wrap), packaged fruity snack, individually wrapped biscuit, crisp packet, small yogurt pot with disposable spoon)
- **A waste free lunch** in a reusable lunchbox (e.g. a drink in a reusable bottle, sandwiches in a reusable tub or food wrap, a piece of fruit, homemade cake in a reusable container, vegetable sticks, yogurt in a reusable tub with a reusable spoon)
- **Extra examples of waste free and wasteful lunch items**
- **Materials** for making posters and leaflets and for writing letters



INTRODUCTION

This could either be done as an assembly presentation to the whole school to introduce the topic, or with a smaller group who will be leading on the project. It will help the pupils to begin to understand the problems with overpackaging and encourage them to think of suitable waste free alternatives.

- **Begin by telling the pupils a little story about how you overslept so didn't have time to prepare your own lunch and had to buy some instead!**
- **Show them what you bought (wasteful lunch)**
 - Go through the items one at a time, each time emphasising what the packaging/waste is made of and highlighting if it is not recyclable
- **How many pieces of rubbish are left at the end of this lunch?**
 - Count the items together
 - Explain that this is a very wasteful lunch
 - You could multiply the number of pieces of waste by how many pupils there are in school to show how much rubbish this would equate to if everyone brought in a similar lunch, and/or multiply it by days in a week, month, year
- **Why is this rubbish a problem? Try to cover:**
 - Can cause pollution/ environmental issues if landfilled or sent to an energy from waste plant, and also during the production process
 - Using up the Earth's resources (plastic, for example, is made from fossil fuels that are a finite resource)
 - Can create litter if not disposed of properly



INTRODUCTION

- **What can we do with our rubbish to help to reduce the negative impact it has on the environment?**
 - The best thing to do is to 'Reduce' – find ways to create less rubbish in the first place (reusable pots/wraps for food instead of disposable plastic wrap/food bags, buying bigger packs rather than individually wrapped items, buy items with no packaging where possible)
 - Next you should try to 'Reuse' – use items again (wash out bottles and plastic tubs and refill)
 - After you've reduced and reused as much as you can 'Recycle' – place waste items into a recycling bin so they can be reprocessed to make new items
- **Now go back through the wasteful items and ask the pupils to come up with waste free alternatives (remember that 'reducing' waste is the best thing to do)**
 - Show them examples from the prepared waste free lunch to help them
 - Count the pieces of rubbish created by the waste free lunch - this should be 0! (please note that fruit/vegetable leftovers that can be composted are fine). Compare to the wasteful lunch.
- **Explain that they are going to be challenged to bring in a waste free lunch soon (give details if already arranged)**



ACTIVITIES

HOW MUCH RUBBISH DOES A WASTEFUL LUNCH PRODUCE COMPARED TO A WASTE FREE ONE?

- After lunch on a typical day, let the children count all the items of rubbish left in their lunchboxes
- Collect it all and weight it (do not include fruit and vegetable waste as this can be composted)
- Children who had hot dinners should put any leftovers from their plates into a separate bucket, which will also be weighed (remember to pre-weigh the bucket)
 - Do not include kitchen leftovers as these have not been wasted by the children
- At lunchtime on the waste free lunch day, collect and weigh the rubbish again in the same way
- Compare the two sets of results and present them to the school
 - You could take photographs of the waste produced on both days to help to compare the volume
 - The children could represent the results graphically
 - You could multiply the results up to show how much waste would be produced by each type of lunch per week, month or year



ACTIVITIES

WHAT'S IN A WASTE FREE LUNCH?

- **Let the children have a lucky dip into a bag containing a mixture of waste free and wasteful lunch items (make sure all items are clean and any sharp edges are taped up or use pictures)**
 - Ask them to decide whether their item is suitable for a waste free lunch or not
 - Extend them by asking for reasons why an item cannot be included, e.g. aluminium – although it can be recycled, it is a finite resource. Plus, it's better to reduce and reuse where possible
 - Challenge them to suggest suitable alternatives for the wasteful items
- **Divide the class into small groups and ask them to think of some ideas about what they could bring for a waste free lunch day**
 - You could give each group an item from a wasteful lunch and ask them to think of as many waste free alternatives as they can
- **Share the ideas with the class and use them to compile a list of 'top tips' for a waste free lunch**



ACTIVITIES

TELLING PARENTS ABOUT THE WASTE FREE LUNCH

- Discuss what information would be useful for parents when thinking about preparing a waste free lunch with their children
 - Use ideas and ‘top tips’ that have been thought of during other activities or that were shared during the initial introductory assembly/presentation
- Ask the children to write a letter or design a leaflet for parents, giving some suggestions about what they can put in a waste free lunch for their children
 - These could be handwritten/designed or created on the computer



SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE SCHOOL

- Ask the children to think about how they could make the rest of the school aware of what they've learnt about what can be included in a waste free lunch
 - Create posters to be displayed around the school
 - Deliver an assembly presentation to the rest of the school

THE WASTE FREE LUNCH DAY

- It is important to plan the day on which you will hold the waste free lunch in advance as you will need to allow time in school to run the activities with the pupils.
- Parents will also need to be informed and be given time to prepare:
 - We recommend sharing some of our 'top tips' with parents so they are clear on what should and shouldn't be included
 - We would encourage parents to use any containers they already have (empty margarine tubs are great for storing sandwiches or snacks) rather than asking them to buy new ones



Why not run the waste free lunch as a regular event – maybe once a term or even once a week – and reduce your waste forever!

TOP TIPS

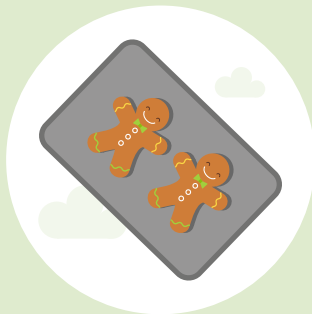
TRY THESE FOR A WASTE FREE LUNCH



Bring drinks in reusable bottles instead of juice cartons



Put sandwiches in a reusable tub or beeswax food wrap instead of using cling film, sandwich bags or foil



Try making homemade cakes, biscuits or flapjacks rather than buying pre-packaged ones



Instead of buying individually packaged foods, buy bigger packs and decant daily portions into reusable tubs



Eat fresh fruit or vegetables for snacks as any leftovers can be composted



Provide reusable utensils rather than plastic/disposable ones



Involve children in planning and making their lunches as this will ensure they like the food and help to encourage them to eat what's included

