

BE PLASTIC FREE

About this session

Find a day (or more) in the school calendar to go plastic free, to learn about the harmful aspects of plastic waste, single use plastics, microplastics, and how children and young people can play their part in reducing plastic waste.

Plastic waste is harmful to the environment and animals when it is not recycled or disposed of correctly. Plastic can break down into microplastics and enter the food chain and pollute our oceans.

We all need to act now to reduce the use of plastic and reduce microplastic pollution in the natural environment around us. What alternatives can we use to plastics in our everyday lives?

This classroom activity encourages children to consider what they can do and possible changes to make at home and in school to reduce plastic use.

- **Fill in the pupil cards with ideas for reducing plastic use at school and home.**
- **Build a class artwork mural using waste plastic.**
- **Share pictures of the children's classroom activities and lesson plans to inspire other schools on our ideas bank.**

Session outcome

- Learn about the impact of plastic waste on the environment.
- Identify quick and easy changes to reduce plastic use and waste.
- Complete a lunchbox plastics survey.
- Encourage children and families to switch to using plastic alternatives.

Lesson plans and sources of information

Complete a lunchbox survey using the classroom worksheet on page 3 and discuss the changes each of us can make to reduce plastic use.

Children can bring in their waste plastic from home to build an artwork mural as a class in the shape of a sea creature or build a bottle greenhouse.

schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Project/Building-a-bottle-greenhouse

There are many additional resources available to help children and young people understand plastic pollution and how they can reduce plastic use.

- Kids Against Plastic
kidsagainstplastic.co.uk/learn/awe-and-wonder
- Plastic is not fantastic
wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/WWF_Plastics_Resource_A_Million_Hands.pdf

- Kids vs Plastic
kids.nationalgeographic.com/nature/kids-vs-plastic
- Crisp Packet Recycling Scheme
terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/crisppacket

Go deeper... check out
letsgozero.org,
greenschoolsproject.org.uk
and **eco-schools.org.uk**

BETHECHANGE

What worked well?

Share your lesson plans and pictures of classroom activities to inspire others.

oxford.anglican.org/environment

Reducing plastic use at home

This term, the children have been learning about climate change and thinking about how they can make a difference to the planet.

- Be Carbon Free looked at our carbon footprint as individuals, as families, and as a school.
- In October, children wrote to world leaders and MPs ahead of the COP26 Climate Conference.
- During December, we planned for a glitter free Christmas to cut out microplastics.
- This month, we are looking at ways we can reduce our plastic use at home and in school.

Talking with children about climate change can feel overwhelming for them and their grown-ups, but even the smallest child can understand that there's something powerful about the actions we can take without them feeling that all the world's problems being all on their shoulders.

The children are learning about the impact of plastic on the natural environment and thinking about the changes they can make to reduce their plastic use and protect the planet. Here are five easy things you can do at home:

- Switch to reusable drinks bottles
- Use plastic free toys
- Buy one large family pack of crisps instead of lots of small packets
- Wrap sandwiches in an empty margarine tub or wax wraps
- Bake your own biscuits and cakes to reduce plastic wrappers



"We have been reusing single-use plastic items as planters, for example, pop bottles and milk containers."

Polehampton CE Juniors

"We have stopped unnecessary laminating of paper and our classroom displays are all plastic free."

St Nicholas CE Primary

Download classroom posters and pupil resources at oxford.anglican.org/environment

BE PLASTIC FREE

Classroom worksheet - Lunchbox Survey

After lunchtime, collect all the plastic wrappers from your class and complete a lunchbox survey

Plastic item	Number of items
Crisp packet	
Cling film	
Plastic sandwich bag	
Plastic straw	
Juice carton	
Biscuit or cake wrapper	
Yoghurt pot	
Total:	

How does our class compare to others?

How can you reduce the amount of plastic in your lunchboxes?

BE THE CHANGE