



Common
Seas



PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS PRIMARY TEACHERS TOOLKIT





HELLO!

WELCOME TO PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS

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A Plastic Clever School not only reduces plastic waste, it equips young people to become active global citizens beyond the classroom walls, providing real-world experiences in which to apply new knowledge, practice skills and build confidence for a future without plastic waste.

[**Click to register here**](#)

We want to support educators in inspiring and equipping young people to be part of solving the marine plastic crisis, starting in their schools and local environment.

Plastic Clever Schools Award guides young people through three simple stages: Inspire, Investigate and Act. Each stage puts your pupils at the heart of the action, equipping them to make a tangible and positive impact on plastic waste.

This Toolkit will provide everything you need to support and encourage your pupils every step of the way, ensuring they are enabled to lead change and make a lasting impact as a Plastic Clever School. Within these pages, you will find all the essential resources to achieve the award, as well as additional materials, ideas and inspiration to embed learning in the curriculum and further engage your wider school community.

We'll explain the stages and how it all works over the next few pages so, for now, thank you and welcome aboard!

HOW TO BECOME A PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOL

Here is your quick, one-stop guide to the Plastic Clever School process and our free resources to support you and your pupils along the way.

BEFORE YOU START

Register your school and download our pupil and teacher toolkits for step by step support.

Rally a team of pupils/students to lead the charge.

RESOURCES

- [Registration link](#)



RALLY THE TROOPS!

Your pupils should be leading the way on this journey. Work with a school group, such as an eco team, club, or specific class to get things going. If you've been recruited by an eager young person for this challenge, help them grow their team.

Make sure they have access to our **interactive pupil workbook** to guide them through the process. It has lots of useful information & links to worksheets to dive deeper on specific subjects, as well as some helpful tips and advice from other young people already taking action.

LEVEL ONE INSPIRE



Learn all about plastic and share that information to get everyone excited for the challenge ahead.

Spread the word with a Plastic Clever Schools assembly

Organise a litter pick

Share why you want to become a Plastic Clever School

RESOURCES

- Pupil workbook guidance
- Introductory assembly (PPT and video versions)
- Guide to planning a litter pick

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Social Skills

EST TIME

3 hours

Upload your evidence to complete the Inspire stage



CONGRATULATIONS
YOU'RE A PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOL!

LEVEL TWO INVESTIGATE



Discover the problem plastic in your school and get ready to do something about it.

Complete a school plastic waste survey using our clever online audit

Create an action plan to reduce waste, starting with two problem plastics.

RESOURCES

- Pupil workbook guidance
- Plastic waste audit tool
- Action plan worksheet

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- Collaboration
- Productivity
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Information literacy

EST TIME

3 hours

Upload your evidence to complete the Investigate stage



LEVEL THREE ACT



Lead an exciting campaign to wave goodbye to single-use plastic.

Turn plans into action with a school wide campaign

Capture photos and videos of your journey and the changes you've made to reduce plastic waste

Showcase your success with a video, poster or display

RESOURCES

- Pupil workbook guidance

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- Leadership
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Communication
- Social

EST TIME

3 hours+

Upload your evidence to complete the Act stage





SINCE IT BECAME POPULAR IN THE 1950S, PLASTIC HAS CHANGED OUR WORLD.

Cheap, durable and adaptable, it clothes us, keeps our food fresh, saves lives through improved hygiene and has even taken us to space! But our relationship with plastic is getting out of hand. The very properties that make it so useful also make it a pervasive environmental and social issue that affects ocean, human and economic health.

[Click to find out more about plastic pollution](#)



LEVEL BREAKDOWNS

THE CORE PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

The next pages provide all the information and resources you need to complete Plastic Clever Schools and earn your award.



In each stage this symbol will identify key activities that need to be evidenced. This can be provided in many different ways, for example, a photograph or video of events in action, completed worksheets, saved audits, examples of pupil work, written reflections and more. Upload your evidence on PlasticCleverSchools.co.uk.



LEVEL ONE

INSPIRE

HOW TO COMPLETE THE INSPIRE STAGE

In this first stage, your pupils will learn about where plastic products come from, different types of plastic, and why it's so important to become Plastic Clever!

They'll organise a litter pick to find out how plastic pollution is impacting your local environment, plus they'll create a space to help your whole school get engaged and up to date on your Plastic Clever journey.

Your pupils will share their mission with the Plastic Clever Schools community and find some creative ways to inspire their classmates along the way!



1 RAISE AWARENESS

Learn about Plastic

Use the pupil workbook to learn about where plastic products come from, different types of plastic and why it's so important to become Plastic Clever!

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Pupil Workbook page 6 & 7](#)

[Recycling guide](#)

[How plastic is made](#)


Host an Assembly

An assembly is a great way to reach out to a wider group or the whole pupil body. It can be delivered by staff or pupils (or delivering together is always fun!) and you can even invite other staff, parents, and carers to join in - reaching the whole community at once.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Assembly Powerpoint & script notes](#)

[Recorded assembly](#)

[UPLOAD EVIDENCE](#)

2 HOST A LITTER PICK

Help pupils prepare for a litter pick and access the equipment they will need (bags, gloves, litter pickers etc).

If they are planning to run a bigger clean up, perhaps inviting parents/carers & community members to join, then you may be able to support by extending invitations, helping with timings and carrying out a risk assessment with them.

Note: If you need some equipment, reach out to your local council- they often have equipment that they will loan for free.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Guide to Litter Picking](#)

[Pupil Workbook page 5](#)

[UPLOAD EVIDENCE](#)


Keen to help pupils learn more?

Check out our Ocean Plastics lesson plans on page 15.

3 SHARE YOUR GOAL

Help your pupils create a poster, video or display* about why they want to make your school Plastic Clever Plan what to include by asking why this issue feels so important to them, what impact they think they can have at school and in their local community.

*If you're making a display, take a look at our guide to making a Plastic Clever School Wall.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Pupil Workbook page 20](#)

[UPLOAD EVIDENCE](#)


LEVEL TWO

INVESTIGATE

HOW TO COMPLETE THE INVESTIGATE STAGE

Investigate will help you and your pupils discover the problem plastics in your school and get ready to do something about it!

Your pupils will learn about how plastic gets into the ocean, and the impact that plastic pollution has on us, our communities and our natural environment. They'll also learn about the 6Rs and start to think of ways to reduce plastic waste.

Together, you and your pupils will investigate problem plastics in your school using our plastic waste audit. You can then pick the top two plastic items to tackle so your pupils can create an action plan! Finally, they'll share what they found out and what they want to do about it.



1 COMPLETE THE PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS AUDIT

We've created a simple audit to help identify single-use plastics in different areas across the school. Some of the required data will be readily available and pupils will be able to complete the questions just by looking around the site. Some may need input from other staff members such as the catering team, school business managers or senior leaders.

Encourage pupils to seek out information from members of staff and collect data from other sources to build their confidence as leaders. There are plenty of tips on how to collect data included in the audit tool too.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Pupil Workbook page 8

Investigate other waste streams
Your pupils could carry out further investigations of waste streams that are currently not well understood, for example, plastic waste generated from packed lunches.



Learn about how plastic waste enters the ocean and the impacts this can cause.

Uncover how plastic pollution in the ocean can cause trouble for marine life by learning about the food chains of some amazing sea creatures.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Pupil Workbook page 10 & 11



Factsheet: How does plastic impact marine life



Fact sheet: Plastic waste facts



Fact sheet: The 5 Gyres

2 CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

The 6 Rs

Help your pupils learn more about the waste hierarchy before planning their campaigns to ensure they focus on waste reduction and prevention.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Pupil Workbook page 9

Results and Action Planning

Support your pupils to understand the results of the audit and consider which plastic items they want to tackle. Which items will have the biggest impact if they are reduced? What other factors do they need to consider... Cost to the school? Time to implement?

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Worksheet: Action Plan



LEVEL THREE

ACT

HOW TO COMPLETE THE ACT STAGE

It's time for your pupils to create a positive impact through exciting campaigns to help your school and community wave goodbye to single-use plastic.

Your pupils will find out how they can make a difference, taking inspiration from some incredible organisations around the world.

They'll use their action plan to build campaigns to tackle at least two of the problem plastics in your school, and share what they've found out and what they've achieved through the journey. They can create a Plastic Clever Schools map of your school and local area to keep everyone informed on their progress!

Our supporting resources coach you and your students every step of the way.



1 RUN A CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE PLASTIC WASTE

Support your pupils' campaigns and capture them in action

Pupil campaigns are the key to becoming a Plastic Clever School. Empowering pupils to think and act on behalf of their community will build their skills and confidence to make decisions and act as leaders.

Our campaigns worksheet will help them understand 4 key things to make their action a success.

Help your pupils show or tell us what they have achieved with photos, videos and written reflections of the campaign in action.



DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



[Worksheet:
Building effective
campaigns](#)



[Worksheet:
How to write an
advocacy letter](#)



[Pupil Workbook
page 14 & 15](#)



2 SHARE PHOTO EVIDENCE

Document your journey and results with photo evidence.

You could assign a team of Plastic Clever photographers to capture all the action as campaigns are in full swing. They'll need access to a school camera and some instruction on how to use it. Your pupils will need to share pictures of the plastic reductions they've made as part of your evidence. For example, if you've swapped single use cups for reusable bottles in the classroom, send us a snap!

[Check out our digital display board for inspiration from other schools](#)



3 SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

Help your pupils create a celebratory presentation

Celebrate the actions that have been taken to reduce single use plastic by sharing a video, photo montage, PPT presentation or poster all about your schools success.

What will you do next?



CONGRATULATIONS!



You've completed all the essential steps to become a Plastic Clever School. Read on for some great ideas to help you and your school keep the great work going!



EXTRA SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND TEACHERS

Common Seas has worked with partners to create a set of **universal Ocean Plastics Learning Objectives**, utilising the frameworks developed by UNESCO, the DfE and those working for Ocean Literacy.

[Click to access
Ocean Plastics
Learning Objectives](#)

We've created an overview of the relevant benefits and policy links to help make a clear case for taking on this challenge at school. [Download the Case for Support PDF if you need help to get senior leadership on board.](#)

[Download the
slideshow here](#)

EXTRA RESOURCES

AND IDEAS TO SUPPORT AND
ENHANCE YOUR SCHOOL JOURNEY

DO MORE

HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

1 SHARE YOUR JOURNEY TO BECOME A PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOL

Social media and school news

If your school has social media, a blog or regular newsletter, help your pupils use these channels to communicate their work. We've created a few tiles you can use to add an image to your message. Make sure you use the hashtag **#PlasticCleverSchools** so we can see your awesome work too!

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Communications pack](#)

Create a Plastic Clever Schools wall

Find a good, central location in the school to create a Plastic Clever Schools display. This will help your pupils share their great work and keep everyone informed on your journey.

No space? How about a digital display instead, like a regular spot in the school newsletter.

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Pupil Workbook page 20](#)


2 HOST AN EVENT

Movie nights

A fun way to engage the wider community is to host an ocean themed movie night. There are lots of great documentaries about ocean plastics that will help inspire and educate.

Coffee morning

Arrange a coffee morning for parents/carers so they can find out more about the Plastic Clever Schools process, ask questions and share ideas. Consider inviting a local environment group or borough waste officer to share stories and information. You could even organise a plastics themed story session, a trip to local recycling centre or a performance by pupils to really get families engaged.

Invite a special guest

Invite speakers from environmental organisations to present to stakeholders and pupils. Why not get in touch with us to see if we can help? You can email us at hello@commonseas.com Alternatively, is there a parent or local organisation who might be interested in coming into school to share more about their work? Having someone speak at school might be the first step in building a collaborative project.

3 ENRICHMENT LEARNING RESOURCES

Share our free Enrichment resources with families as part of your engagement activity. We have a 12-part series of activities to help everyone explore the plastics issue and take action at home. From turning a plastic bottle into a bird feeder to making slime, the activities are fun and easy-to-use.

4 CARRY OUT A SOCIAL SURVEY

The social survey is a great way to understand current perceptions and attitudes towards plastic waste and amplify pupil and community voice. It can be shared via the school website, social media channels, newsletter or even on your Plastic Clever Schools wall. **Make sure you complete it too!**

DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES


[Worksheet: Social survey questionnaire](#)


DO MORE

LESSON PLANS FOR CLASSROOM LEARNING

Want to do more? We have some ready-to-go lesson plans and activities to help embed learning in the curriculum too:

Common Seas resources teach young people about plastic -where it comes from, what it does, where it goes, and what they can do about it - to create a generation dedicated to solving the plastic pollution crisis.

All of our learning resources are aligned to the national curriculum, are easy to access and free to use. The full suite of primary resource can be found on the [Common Seas Education webpage](#).

[Access resources here](#)


OCEAN LITERACY

Set the scene for learning about ocean plastics and introduce pupils to the awe and wonder of the ocean with Common Seas Oceans for Beginners lessons.

RESOURCES

- **Lesson 1:** Our wonderful ocean
- **Lesson 2:** Our ocean and us
- **Lesson 3:** Our ocean in crisis

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

EST TIME

3 hours



What are plastics?

Where can we find them?

Investigate properties of materials to discover what makes plastic so popular. But is plastic really fantastic?

Note: Lesson 4 provides additional guidance to help plan a field trip to carry out a litter pick.

RESOURCES

- **Lesson 1:** What are Plastics Pt 1
- **Lesson 2:** What are Plastics Pt 2
- **Lesson 3:** Where are plastics Pt 1
- **Lesson 4:** Where are Plastics Pt 2

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

EST TIME

4 hours

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE OCEAN AND THE IMPACT OF PLASTIC POLLUTION.

What impacts can plastics have?

Uncover how plastic pollution in the ocean can cause trouble for marine life by learning about the food chains of some amazing sea creatures.

Step into the shoes of people around the world to find out how plastics can also impact humans and the planet.

Learn more about the waste hierarchy and ensure your action plans are equipped to reduce waste before planning your campaigns.

RESOURCES

- **Lesson 5:** What impacts can plastic have? Pt1
- **Lesson 6:** What impacts can plastic have? Pt2
- **Lesson 7:** What can I do? Pt1

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

EST TIME

3 hours

LEARN HOW TO CREATE POSITIVE IMPACT IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

What can I do?

In the final lesson, review the success of your campaigns and celebrate what you have achieved together.

RESOURCES

- **Lesson 8:** What can I do? Pt2

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

EST TIME

2 hours

OUR PARTNERS



ABOUT US

Common Seas and Kids Against Plastic have teamed up to create Plastic Clever Schools, this school-wide challenge to reduce plastic waste with young people at the heart of the action.



Common Seas is a social enterprise tackling the plastic pollution crisis by driving new policy, investing in the circular economy and catalysing a cultural shift in how we make, use and dispose of plastic.

Our mission is to quickly and significantly reduce the amount of plastic produced and stop it polluting our rivers and seas.

We want every child to experience the wonders of our ocean, while learning about the complex problem of plastic pollution, so they can be part of a future free from plastic waste.



Kids Against Plastic was founded by teenagers Amy and Ella Meek. When they found out about the harm caused by plastic pollution they needed to do something about it. They created KAP - a charity by kids, for kids - to inspire and motivate others to take action too.

Since 2018, they've picked up over 90,000 pieces of single-use plastic litter (and developed an app to log it!), and gathered a team of incredible kids around the UK who are tackling plastic pollution.





Common
Seas

