



BY

Common  
Seas

# PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS SECONDARY TEACHERS TOOLKIT





## CONTENTS

- 3 Introduction
- 4-5 How to become a Plastic Clever School
- 5-7 Level breakdowns

8-9



### LEVEL 1 - INSPIRE



10-11



### LEVEL 2 - INVESTIGATE

12-13



### LEVEL 3 - ACT

- 14 Extra resources
- 15 **Do More:** How to engage your whole school community
- 16 **Do More:** Lesson Plans for Classroom Learning
- 17 About us
- 18 Links

# HELLO!

## WELCOME TO PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS



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 challenge, 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 students at the heart of the action, equipping them to make a tangible and positive impact on plastic waste by providing real-world experiences in which to apply new knowledge, practice skills and build confidence, so they can become active global citizens for a future free from plastic waste.

This Toolkit will provide everything you need to support and encourage your students 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 PCS process and our free resources to support you and your students along the way.

## BEFORE YOU START

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

Rally a team of students to lead the charge



## YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION

Your students 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 student for this challenge, help them grow their team. Make sure they have access to our interactive student 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 becoming Plastic Clever is important to your school**

#### RESOURCES

- Student workbook
- Introductory assembly

#### SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Social Skills

#### EST TIME

3 hours

**Upload your evidence to complete the Inspire stage**



### LEVEL TWO INVESTIGATE



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

**Complete a school plastic waste audit**

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

#### RESOURCES

- Student workbook
- Plastic waste audit tool

#### SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

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

#### EST TIME

3 hours

**Upload your evidence to complete the Investigate stage**



**CONGRATULATIONS  
YOU'RE A PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOL!**



### 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**

#### RESOURCES

- Student workbook

#### 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 student work, written reflections and more. Upload your evidence on [PlasticCleverSchools.co.uk](http://PlasticCleverSchools.co.uk).

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



We regularly host live online training sessions for teachers. We will share these events via our newsletter and social media.

Follow us on Instagram and Twitter @CommonSeas @KidsAgainstPlastic and join our community of teachers on Facebook: Plastic Clever Schools

[You can view recorded sessions here.](#)



LEVEL ONE

# INSPIRE

## HOW TO COMPLETE THE INSPIRE STAGE

Inspire is a deep dive to learn all about plastic and share that information with classmates, teachers, parents and the school community.

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



## 1 RAISE AWARENESS

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

**Helpful hint:**  
Learning about plastic is a great platform from which to explore wider topics of sustainability such as climate change, biodiversity loss and a range of social and economic topics too. We've created a student resource to introduce the connection between plastics and Climate. [Take a look here.](#)

### DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Student workbook pages x-x

Assembly  
Powerpoint  
& script notesRecorded  
assemblyUPLOAD  
EVIDENCE

## 2 HOST A LITTER PICK

**Help students 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



Student Workbook page 5

Worksheet: Guide  
to Litter PickingUPLOAD  
EVIDENCE

## 3 SHARE YOUR MISSION

**Help your students share their progress and tell us why they want to make their school plastic clever.**

Make a video, write an article, produce a presentation or find another creative way to share.

Plan what to include by asking why this issue feels so important to them and what impact they think they can have at school and in the local community.

### DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



Student Workbook page 5

UPLOAD  
EVIDENCE

## LEVEL TWO

# INVESTIGATE

### HOW TO COMPLETE THE INVESTIGATE STAGE

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

Your students 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 be introduced to the circular economy as a hopeful model to eliminate plastic waste for the long term.

## 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 students 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 students 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.

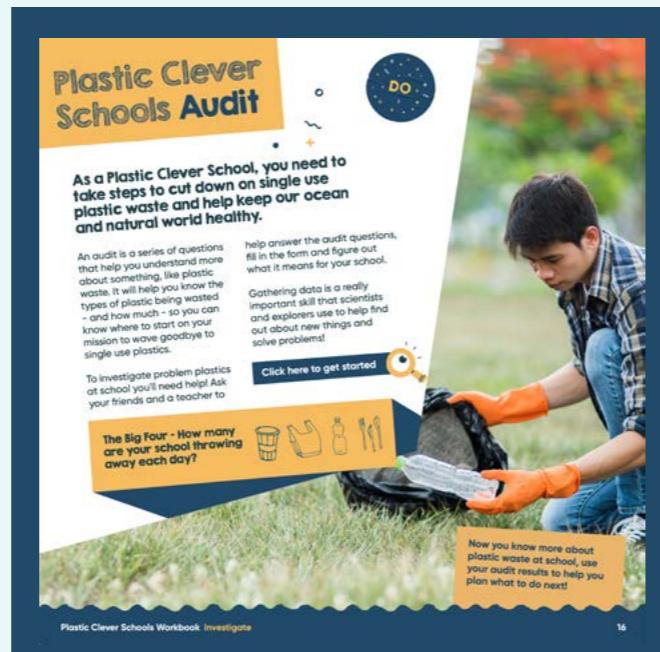
[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)



PCS waste audit



UPLOAD EVIDENCE



## 2 CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

### The 6 Rs

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

[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)



Student Workbook page 11

### Results and Action Planning

Support your students 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?

The student toolkit contains information about the 6Rs and the principles of a circular economy to help them think of the best solutions for your school.

[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)

### Investigate other waste streams

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

### Learn more:

Find out how plastic waste enters the ocean and the impacts this can cause. Learn how a new circular economy can help combat the plastic problem.

[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)



Student Workbook page 10



Student Workbook page 11



Worksheet: Action Plan

## LEVEL THREE

# ACT

## HOW TO COMPLETE THE ACT STAGE

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

Your students will find out how they can make a difference and put new advocacy skills into practice, taking inspiration from young people and organisations around the world.

## 1 RUN A CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE PLASTIC WASTE

### Support your students' campaigns and capture them in action

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

Support and encourage them as they develop and deliver on their campaign ideas to influence their community.

Help to identify any barriers to their progress and ways in which they can overcome these.

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



### DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



[Student Workbook page 16 & 18](#)



## 2 SHARE PHOTO EVIDENCE

### Document your journey and results with photo evidence.

Your students 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, take a picture!

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.



## 3 SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

**Help your students 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.

### Reflect!

Reflection is an important part of the journey as it will help students to celebrate the wins, recognise the challenges and consider their next moves. Which solution or campaign was the most successful? How can they

tell? What challenges did they face? Were they able to overcome them? If so, how? If not, what help, if any, would

have made a difference? Importantly, what has been their proudest moment?

This last question is key. Recognising their own achievements will help develop a sense of purpose and build confidence as advocates and active citizens.

### DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES



[Student Workbook page 17](#)



## 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 RESOURCES AND IDEAS TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE YOUR SCHOOL JOURNEY

## 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

**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 students 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](#)

[Student workbook page 25](#)


### 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 students 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](#)

[Student workbook page 24](#)


## 2 HOST AN EVENT

### Movie nights

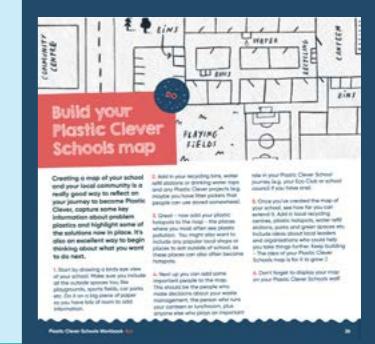
A fun way to engage the wider community is to host an ocean themed movie night. There are lots of great documentaries about ocean plastics that will help inspire and educate.

### 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 students to really get families engaged.

### Invite a special guest

Invite a special guest. Invite speakers from environmental organisations to present to stakeholders and students. Why not get in touch with us to see if we can help? You can email us at [hello@commonseas.com](mailto: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.



## 4 CREATE A PLASTIC CLEVER SCHOOLS MAP

**Work with students to make a map** of your local area and add key information about all things Plastic Clever. Engage with local businesses to add them too. More guidance on how to create this and what to include can be found in the student workbook.

[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)

[Student workbook page 27](#)

## 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.

[DOWNLOADS / SUPPORTING RESOURCES](#)

[Enrichment with Common Seas](#)

## 5 CARRY OUT A SOCIAL SURVEY

The **social survey** is a great way to understand current perceptions and attitudes towards plastic waste and amplify student 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 Education 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 FOR BEGINNERS

**Set the scene** for learning about plastics and introduce students 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



## OCEAN PLASTICS: GEOGRAPHY

**Created in partnership with the Geographical Association, this unit of work aligns to the Geography Key Stage 3 programme of study.**

The lessons address the issue of marine plastic pollution, the harm caused by plastics to the environment and communities, how we deal with all the waste, ending with a debate on approaches to reducing ocean plastic pollution.

### RESOURCES

- **Lesson 1:** What is the 'Great Pacific Garbage Patch' really like?
- **Lesson 2:** What is plastic and why is it a problem in the ocean?
- **Lesson 3:** Plastic case study – tourism in Kenya
- **Lesson 4:** How can we deal with all the plastic waste?
- **Lesson 5:** The global journey of plastic waste
- **Lesson 6:** Approaches to reducing ocean plastic pollution
- **Lesson 7:** Plastics decision making exercise
- **Lesson 8:** Plastics fieldwork (school grounds)
- **Lesson 9:** Plastics fieldwork (local area)

### EST TIME

9 hours

**Ocean Plastics**  
Design and Technology | 11-14  
Lesson 1  
**What can we do to reduce ocean plastic pollution?**

Common Seas Encounte Pres Edu

**Ocean Plastics**  
science | Ages 11-14  
Lesson 1  
**How are plastics made?**

## OCEAN PLASTICS: DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

**Exploring the 6 Rs students innovate product designs which creatively solve the problem of ocean plastics.**

Students will design a user-centred recycling bin to promote recycling, create a sustainable fashion brand, build a modular phone, and pitch their own unique design solution to the ocean plastic problem.

### RESOURCES

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • <b>Lesson 1:</b> What can we do to reduce ocean plastic pollution?    | EST TIME |
|   | 6+ hours |
| • <b>Lesson 2:</b> Why should we recycle?                               |          |
| • <b>Lesson 3:</b> How do we reduce, reuse and refuse plastic products? |          |
| • <b>Lesson 4:</b> Should we repair?                                    |          |
| • <b>Lesson 5:</b> Can redesigning products help?                       |          |
| • <b>Lesson 6:</b> Design task  |          |

## OCEAN PLASTICS: SCIENCE

**This unit combines biology and chemistry.** Students are taken on the journey of plastic, exploring how plastics are manufactured, used, and disposed of. Students will learn the science behind what makes plastics both brilliant for everyday purposes and devastating to our ocean and marine life.

The topic leads students to conduct authentic research, emulating research conducted by The University of Plymouth.

### RESOURCES

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| • <b>Lesson 1:</b> How are plastics made?                          | EST TIME |
|  | 5 hours  |
| • <b>Lesson 2:</b> Why are plastics useful?                        |          |
| • <b>Lesson 3:</b> What happens to plastic when you throw it away? |          |
| • <b>Lesson 4:</b> How does plastic affect the environment?        |          |
| • <b>Lesson 5:</b> Plastics and bioaccumulation                    |          |

### 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.





The logo features the text "Plastic Clever Schools" in white, sans-serif font. The word "Clever" is set against a blue wavy banner. A small white wave icon is positioned above the letter "P". Below the banner, a white plastic bottle icon is shown with a small trail, suggesting it's being thrown or floating. The entire logo is centered on a dark blue background.

# Plastic Clever Schools



This resource has been assessed by Royal Meteorological Society against their *Quality Control Framework for Climate Education*, developed as part of the National Climate Education Action Plan.

