

Waste and Recycling

SCHOOL INFORMATION



A guide to running a 'Paper Free Challenge day'

Why undertake a 'Paper Free Challenge day?'

Daily waste generated from schools can vary a great deal, but common to each is the amount of paper that is discarded. The figure for this is approximately 45% of the waste generated, but add cardboard and it can rise to as high as 60%.

This is not surprising as paper is such a useful, versatile and inexpensive material to use. Typically plain and lined paper are consumed most frequently in schools, but the range includes backing paper, borders, paper for mounting work, paper towels, envelopes and a variety of other items.

A forest the size of Wales is needed each year to meet the UK's ever increasing demands for paper, with approximately each of us requiring 4 trees annually to meet our needs. Add to this the transportation involved, the energy and water needed to turn the raw material into paper and it can add up to a very large carbon footprint.

Whilst schools make every effort to recycle as much paper as possible, there is a clear need to reduce paper consumption.



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Why not then run a 'Paper Free Challenge Day' to help significantly reduce paper use.

The challenge is suitable for any schools who wish to take part, but is particularly suited towards those that have established successful recycling systems and are looking for a more advanced way to meet their Eco/Sustainable schools targets (especially where waste reduction is a focus)

The aims of the challenge day are to highlight the reliance that we currently have on paper and the variety of types that are used during a typical school day.

It will look at:

- The volume of paper used in school
- The reliance we have on paper
- The problems associated with paper disposal
- Where paper comes from and the surrounding issues

By eliminating paper for a day we can really start to see how much is used, what impact it is having and more importantly, explore ways in which we can significantly reduce its use in the future.

To run the 'Paper Free Challenge day' successfully, school will need to ensure that:

- All members of staff participate at some level in the running of the day
- All pupils are clear about why they are undertaking the challenge and what the day will entail
- Staff and pupils follow the guidelines for the whole day
- Adaptations to the teaching and learning for the whole day are made
- The challenge generates a creative and enjoyable learning environment

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Getting started

Choose the level at which you would like to participate using the table below.

Pre-plan with pupils so they are involved with the aims of the day and understand the reasons for the challenge. Let them come up with their own suggestions as to how they can learn without paper. Follow this up with the pre-planning notes in the table.

Choose a day where there are no trips planned and ideally where no other external visits are due to take place. Where possible, avoid days prior to trips/events, as they are likely to generate paper correspondence to and from parents.

Level of participation	Rules for the day	Pre-planning required
Basic Paper Free Challenge Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No photocopying • No printing • No worksheets • No handouts • No letters going home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss practical suggestions with staff and pupils • Decide which day you will run the event • Draw up a timetable for the hall/outdoor area • Undertake a base level paper audit (see below)
Ultimate Paper Free Challenge Day	<p>As above with the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No textbooks/big books • No reading books • No exercise books • No paper towels 	<p>As above with the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to bring in a small hand towel for drying their hands for the day • Have a cloth on hand to wipe up spillages

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How do I undertake a base level paper audit?

Prior to the running of your challenge day, it will be a good idea to do a paper audit.

This will help to give you some idea of how much paper is used in your school during a typical day.

To carry out a paper audit, the paper in each class's recycling bin and paper found in the general bin should be weighed. If any bins are used for paper towels, these could also be weighed. It is important that only the paper items are weighed.

The audit should take place on a typical day without pupils prior knowledge, in order to generate unbiased data. It should take no more than 5 minutes for each class.

The data from the audit will be important for you to assess the impact of the challenge on future paper consumption (and cost) and should be undertaken as accurately as possible.



How will the teaching and learning take place?

This will vary according to the level of participation you choose and the lesson being taught. This is your chance to get creative!

Some ideas to get you started:

- Use practical apparatus as much possible.
- Make full use of the Smartboard.
- Use chants/rhymes/songs to remember information - range from simple well known chants (times tables) or add new ones to words or stories for impact. Add musical instruments for extra impact.
- Recount tales/stories you know well from memory. Discuss how stories change over time as a result of them being 'passed down' over the years. Bring in props to help.
- Encourage pupils to use movement/dance to demonstrate concepts. This can work well in science to illustrate a range of subjects like pushing and pulling solids, liquids and gases. Older pupils can enact concepts like pollination through movement, or even become real life components in a circuit board (who will be the bulb and how will they light up?).
- Depict an event in history, by staging a short scene to be acted out. The wives of Henry VIII can be effective. In geography, demonstrate how the water cycle works using movement. Add music where possible.

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- For phonics, pupils can make letter shapes with their fingers or body movements. Alternatively, practise drawing letters with a paintbrush dipped in water, using the playground as paper. Try sand trays for pupils to write in or make letters out of modelling clay.
- Enhance pupil's skills for turning taking, conversation and interaction as part of PSHE with games in the play box. Use Scrabble or Hangman for spelling practise. Battleships for reinforcing position and direction and Dominoes for number work.
- Use the outdoor area for effective learning. Anything from recounting stories in natural settings to searching for right angles around the playground. Encourage pupils to use their senses to investigate sound, shape and feel of natural objects such as leaves.
- Explore habitats and look for clues of where animals may have been. Discuss where creatures go to hibernate. Make model examples of the animals back in the classroom using modelling clay.
- The ICT suite will provide endless opportunities for teaching without paper, so timetable it into your day if you can.

Many of the suggested activities require increased use of the hall and outdoor areas. If space is limited you could run two challenges on different days, one for KS1 and one for KS2.

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Other points to consider

How will the school office operate?

The 'Paper Free Challenge Day' will work even better if it includes office and non-teaching staff. Whilst it may be more difficult to eliminate the use of paper for the day, there are ways to make adaptations. Choose a day where minimal or no letters are to be sent out and avoid days where a school trip is taking place (or about to). Office staff will need to plan carefully for the day to avoid the use of paper, unless absolutely necessary.

Please note the use of registers, signing in books, First Aid books and other legal record keeping will be exempt from the challenge along with dealing with incoming mail and the collecting/distributing of dinner money in paper envelopes.

How can I communicate messages around the school?

If possible, appoint a 'messenger' or 'town crier' for the day. Change the pupils role as necessary throughout the day.

What about the breakfast club/after school club?

Ideally, all staff and school areas should be involved with the planning and running of the day. As the breakfast club and after school club are usually run externally, outside the school day, it is not necessary for them to participate. However, if they can support the aims of the day it should be encouraged.

Can homework be set 'paper free'?

Set challenges for pupils to undertake practical tasks at home and be prepared to talk about findings. Check that pupils have completed tasks by asking questions rather than assessing results on paper. Tasks can be based on observations, discussion, questioning with family members. Encourage pupils to find ways of remembering key information to report back in class.

What about publicity?

Running a 'Paper Free Challenge Day' is a great opportunity to raise publicity for your school. You could produce a press release or make parents/governors aware through your school electronic newsletter.

