**Recycling Plastics**

**Key Stage 1 and 2**

**NC references**

**KS1 Science**

Working scientifically

* identifying and classifying

Materials

* distinguish between an object and the material from which it is made
* identify and name a variety of everyday materials, including wood, plastic, glass, metal, water, and rock
* compare and group together a variety of everyday materials on the basis of their simple physical properties

**KS2 Science**

Working scientifically

* gathering, recording, classifying and presenting data in a variety of ways to help in answering questions

Materials

* Classify materials according to a variety of properties

**Learning objectives**

Understand and use the term recycle

Identify and describe plastic, understanding that not all plastics look the same.

Identify plastic objects that can be recycled

**Teaching ideas**

**Discuss**

Discuss the term recycle/ recycling. What does it mean?

How do the children recycle waste?

**Explore**

Provide (ask children to bring in) a range of plastic objects and allow children to explore, describe, discuss and sort them.

Ask children to sort the objects into two groups:

Can recycle/ can’t recycle

You could photograph the children’s sorting and then compare with sorting later in the lesson.

See *Plastic Recycling Symbols* resource for descriptions of the symbols and photocopiable symbols for use with children. Share the symbols with children and, through discussion, explain what they mean.

Ask children to re-sort items according to whether they can or can’t be recycled.

**Conclude and discuss**

Are the children surprised by which items can and cannot be recycled?

Are there any items that that use but didn’t know could be recycled?

Ask children to follow the instructions for recycling, e.g. Which items should you rinse? What should we do with this milk bottle before it is recycled?

**Resources**

Range of plastic materials, include the 4 main plastic polluters: carrier bags, plastic drinking bottles, drinking straws and disposable coffee cups. Also try to include black plastic food trays, tetra pak cartons and crisp packets as these are often used by children but can’t always be recycled.

*Kids Against Plastic* Plastic recycling symbols resource

**Next steps**

Ask a representative from the local authority to come to school and talk to children and parents about their recycling scheme.

Link to sorting litter collected in or around the school grounds. What is the most common type of litter? Could it be recycled?

Challenge children to think about how they might reduce the use of plastics that cannot be widely recycled in school. Create persuasive posters or information for the school newsletters.