

EcoPark House: SEND School Visit Teacher Guide

Meet the Team

Our Education team is here to make sure your students have a fantastic time during their visit at EcoPark House.

Our team is made up of friendly and experienced professionals who are passionate about circular economy education and making every school visit memorable.

All members of the NLWA Education Team have enhanced DBS checks and have completed safeguarding training.

The designated safeguarding officers for the team are Lizzie King and Luke Ellis-Bailey.

We have several officers trained to in Makaton Level 1. They are Joe, Luke, and Lizzie.

Should you have any concerns, please report them using following the link to our online reporting form.

Our Educational Programme

We have worked with the Lightyear Foundation to ensure our visits are inclusive and accessible to all visitors who are neurodivergent or disabled.

Our programme can be tailored to the needs of your group and focuses on three core concepts:

- The journey of waste: learn about what happens to your recycling and rubbish
- Working in waste: experience behind-the-scenes at a waste management site on our tour.
- The circular economy: discover why the Rs are an important way to look after the environment

We can tailor visits to the needs of your students.

We have several learning themes you can select when booking. We recommend selected between two and three themes to explore on your visit.

Over the next few pages, you will find overviews of each of our themes. These provide an outline of the learning outcomes, activities, and accessibility considerations to support planning and decision-making.

If you require any further information or support before booking, please contact the Education team via education@nlwa.gov.uk

How our workshops support learners

All of our workshops are designed to support learners across several key areas:

Communication & interaction

- Use of key vocabulary with support (e.g. symbols, Makaton, visuals)
- Opportunities for both verbal and non-verbal participation
- Structured discussion with appropriate scaffolding

Cognition & learning

- Visual and practical exploration of new concepts
- Sorting, matching, and problem-solving activities
- Hands-on creation to support understanding

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

- Builds confidence through supported group work
- Encourages participation without pressure
- Promotes positive engagement and a sense of responsibility

Independence & preparation for adulthood

- Introduces real-world services (e.g. repair shops, recycling centres)
- Encourages decision-making and problem-solving
- Links learning to everyday life and future skills (e.g. sorting recycling)

Physical & sensory (where relevant)

- Access to adapted tools and tactile materials
- Multi-sensory approaches to learning

Theme 1: What is rubbish?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at EYFS or KS1 level

Length of workshop: 15 minutes

Overview

Learners will explore why people throw things away and what we mean when we talk about 'rubbish'. They will begin to understand that creating too much rubbish can harm the environment.

Linked themes:

Theme 2: What is recycling?

Theme 3: What happens to my recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will be able to identify examples of rubbish using pictures or objects
- Learners will be able to identify what is rubbish and where it should go
- Learners will begin to understand that resources come from our environment
- Learners will begin to understand that too much rubbish is harmful to the environment

Learner activities:

- In groups or independently, learners will use objects or pictures to sort and identify rubbish
- Whole-group interactive activity showing how items are made, used, and thrown away

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects
- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)
- Differentiated choices (object and picture) and adult support
- Modelling by adults to aid understanding
- Makaton symbols used for: rubbish

Theme 2: What is recycling?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at EYFS or KS1 level

Length of workshop: 20 minutes

Overview

Learners will explore what the term 'recycling' means and how it can help look after our environment. We will begin to explore the different types of materials we can recycle and describe simple properties (e.g. hard, soft, shiny, bendy)

Linked themes:

Theme 1: What is rubbish?

Theme 3: What happens to my recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will be able to recognise common recyclable materials (e.g. paper, plastic, metal)
- Learners will be able to sort items into recycling and rubbish
- Learners will begin to understand that recycling means turning old items into new ones

Learner activities:

- Whole-group visual activity exploring the different recyclable materials
- Independent activity with three stations:
 - Station one: learners explore and handle different recyclable materials
 - Station two: learners sort objects or pictures into recycling and rubbish
 - Station three: learners match describing words (e.g. hard, soft, shiny) to materials

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects
- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)
- Differentiated choices (object and picture) and adult support
- Repetition and modelling by session lead to support understanding
- Makaton symbols used for: recycling, paper, cardboard, metal, plastic

Theme 3: What happens to my recycling?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at KS1 and KS2 level

Length of workshop: 20 minutes

With optional paper making activity total time is 1 hour (with a short break)

Overview

Learners will explore what happens to recycling once it has been put in the recycling bin. They will learn how materials are sorted in a recycling factory using magnets, light, and air.

There is an optional additional activity where students can create their own recycled paper.

Linked themes:

Theme 2: What is recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will
 - be able to recognise common recyclable materials (e.g. paper, plastic, metal)
 - be able to sort materials using simple methods (magnets, air, and light)
 - begin to understand how recycling helps the environment
 - be able to create recycled paper from used materials (*optional*)

Learner activities:

- Warm-up activity (independent or group): learners sort objects or pictures into recycling and rubbish
- Main activity (independent or group): learners use magnets, lights, and balloon pumps to recreate how recycling is sorted
- *Optional activity* (small group): learners make seed or plain recycled paper from scraps, including cutting paper, creating pulp, using a paper screen, and decorating

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects

- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)
- Differentiated choices (object and picture) and adult support
- Repetition and modelling by session lead to support understanding
- Use of simple instructions and chunked steps
- Makaton symbols used for: recycling, paper, cardboard, metal, plastic

Theme 4: What happens at a waste site?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working across a range of attainment levels

Length of tour: 30 - 45 minutes

Overview

Learners will take part in a tour of the Resource Recovery Facility. They will observe vehicles delivering waste to the tipping hall and see staff working on site. During the tour, learners will also view the recycling and reuse centre (RRC) and discover which materials can be recycled there.

Linked themes:

All themes can be linked to the tour

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will
 - be able to describe how waste is sorted at the EcoPark
 - be able to identify different roles/jobs on a waste site
 - develop an understanding of what a recycling and reuse centre (RRC) is and how it is used

Learner activities:

- Short route (30 minutes – whole group with supported observation): learners walk to the footbridge to view the RRC and observe vehicles entering the tipping hall
- Long route (45 minutes – whole group with supported observation): learners visit the RRC, view inside the tipping hall, and observe staff working from the Crows Nest viewing area

Accessibility

- Lift access to the 3rd floor viewing area
- Visual prompts, including communication boards, to support understanding
- Opportunities for both supported and independent observation

- Flexible pacing of the tour to meet group needs
- Repetition and simplified language from the tour guide
- Consideration of noise levels and sensory sensitivities (e.g. loud vehicles)
- Provision of ear defenders and fidget toys
- Use of clear, chunked instructions to support understanding

Theme 5: How do we turn rubbish into electricity?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at KS2 and KS3 level

Length of workshop: 15 minutes (KS2) and 25 minutes (KS3)

Overview

Learners will learn about how waste is burnt to produce electricity at the EcoPark. For learners working at KS2 level, they will learn that steam is created which turns a turbine. For learners working at KS3 level and above, learners will be introduced to the flue gas treatment process. They will explore how the flue gas is scrubbed using magnets, filters, and neutralisation.

Linked themes:

Theme 3: What happens to my recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will
 - be able to sequence the energy from waste process
 - explore how electricity is created from waste
 - develop an understanding of turbine generated electricity

Learner activities:

- Whole group discussion: what is electricity and what does it power
- Whole group activity: facilitator-led explanation of the energy from waste process using props and objects
- Independent or small group activity: learners sequence the steps using objects or visual prompts to complete the energy from waste process

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects
- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)

- Differentiated choices (object and picture) and adult support
- Repetition and modelling by session lead to support understanding
- Use of simple instructions and chunked steps
- Makaton signs used: electricity, rubbish

Theme 6: How can I reuse things to help the environment?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at KS2 level

Length of workshop: 25 minutes

Overview

Learners will explore how reusing items can save natural resources from being waste. They will identify ways different items have been reused (old socks, tin cans, plastic bottles, yoghurt pots). Each student will then reuse an old plastic bottle to make either a musical shaker, bird feeder, or plant pot.

Linked themes:

Theme 1: What is rubbish?

Theme 2: What is recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will understand that reusing items saves natural resources
- Learners will reuse a plastic bottle to make a new item
- Learners will identify ways that items have been reused.

Learner activities:

- Whole-group interactive activity showing how items are made, used, and re-used instead of thrown away.
- Whole-group discussion identifying how items have been reused with opportunities to handle or observe real objects to support understanding.
- Independent or small-group activity (supported by facilitator): students create one of the following items: bird feeder, musical shaker, or plant pot from a plastic bottle.

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects

- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)
- Differentiated choices (object and picture) and adult support
- Repetition and modelling by session lead to support understanding
- Use of simple instructions and chunked steps
- Step by step picture instructions for craft activity
- Pre-made holes and/or pre-marked holes
- Easy grip scissors
- Makaton signs used: electricity, rubbish

Theme 7: What are the Rs and why are they so important?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at KS2 level and KS3 level

Length of workshop: 15 minutes

Overview

Learners will gain an understanding that throwing away too much is harmful for the environment. Learners will explore the 4Rs (reduce, reuse, repair, recycle) and how they can apply them to their everyday life in school and at home. We will also consider who can help us repair or reuse items.

Linked themes:

Theme 3: What happens to my recycling?

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Themes 6: How can I reuse things to help the environment?

Themes 8: What does a circular economy look like?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will
 - identify what the 4Rs stand for
 - consider ways they can follow the 4Rs in their everyday lives
 - develop their understanding of how to look after the environment by following the 4Rs.

Learner activities:

- Whole-group interactive activity demonstrating how following the 4Rs can help the environment.

- Small group discussion: learners identify which of the 4Rs a person has followed using visual prompts.
- Small group activity: learners decide which of the 4Rs should be applied to a given item (broken phone, plastic bottle, tote bag)

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols, and real objects
- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal)
- Differentiated choices and adult support
- Repetition and modelling by session lead to support understanding
- Use of simple instructions and chunked steps
- Makaton signs used: repair, reuse, recycle, environment

Theme 8: What does a circular economy look like?

Attainment level: Suitable for learners working at KS3 level and above

Length of workshop: 60 minutes (with flexibility for short breaks)

Overview

Learners will explore what a circular economy means and how it might look in everyday life. They will think about ways to rethink the rubbish we create through an open-ended activity. Learners will also begin to explore jobs that involve reusing, repairing and rethinking items.

Linked themes:

Theme 4: What happens at a waste and recycling site?

Theme 5: How do we turn rubbish into electricity?

Theme 7: What are the 4Rs and why are so they important?

Learning outcomes:

- Learners will:
 - understand that a circular economy (reusing, repairing and rethinking) is good for the environment
 - identify places where items can be repaired and the people who repair them
 - create an item for home or school that shows how rubbish can be reused to make something new

Learner activities:

- Whole group interactive activity: learners take part in a supported discussion and interactive task introducing the circular economy.
- Small group or paired activity: Learners match items that need repairing with where they can be repaired and how they can be repaired
- Independent activity (modelled first by facilitator): Learners use a range of materials (e.g. playdough, Lego/Duplo, paper, junk modelling) to design and create an item for home or school using “waste” materials.

Accessibility

- Visual supports, Widgit symbols and real objects
- Flexible participation (verbal and non-verbal responses)
- Differentiated choices (e.g. materials) with adult support
- Repetition and modelling to support understanding
- Simple instructions with clear, chunked steps
- Step-by-step picture instructions for the independent activity
- Idea prompt cards to support thinking
- Easy-grip scissors available
- Makaton signs used: environment, reuse, repair, recycle

Access arrangements and adjustments

Some key accessibility factors of the building include:

- Ramp access
- Lift access
- Accessible toilet
- Evac chair and assistance help points.

Before your visit, we can provide:

- A risk assessment
- ‘My visit to EcoPark House’ social story
- Tour route familiarisation video
- Staff pictures and bios

During your visit, we can provide:

- A quiet corner

- Ear defenders and sensory bags
- Communication boards
- Visual timetable

Please let the team know of any adjustments we can make when booking your visit for your students.

Sample itinerary

We understand that it is important to have flexibility when planning your school visit to suit the needs of your learners.

Below is an example of a visit which explores two themes and includes a tour:

Time	Activity
10:00am	Workshop: Theme 1
10:25am	Theme 4: Tour of the Resource Recpver Facility
11:00am	Snack break
11:10am	Workshop: Theme 2
11:40am	Round-up and goodbyes
11:45am	Return to school

If you would like to use our exhibition hall to have lunch before leaving for school, please let us know on the booking form.

We are happy to adapt the visit, including start and finish times, to suit the needs of your group.

Please contact our Education team directly with your enquiry via education@nlwa.gov.uk

Booking FAQs

How do I book?

You enquire following this link to our [booking enquiry form](#) or by emailing education@nlwa.gov.uk. A member of the Education team will get back to you via email within five working days to confirm your visit or offer an alternate date.

How many students can I bring?

For special schools or specialist settings, we can welcome up to 15 pupils per visit.

When can I book for?

Our [booking form](#) shows availability of bookings. We have limited availability so booking early is encouraged!

If a date is not available, you can sign up to [our waitlist](#) to be notified when future dates are released.

How much does a visit cost?

Our educational sessions are **free** of charge to schools in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, and Waltham Forest.

For schools outside of these boroughs, please email education@nlwa.gov.uk to find out more about the cost of a visit.

Can we do a pre-visit risk assessment?

The Education team can provide you with our risk assessment. However, we welcome and encourage teachers, and trip leads, to come for a pre-visit to support risk assessment completion. The booking form has an option to book a risk assessment visit.

How many accompanying adults can I bring?

We recommend the following ratio for your visit:

Ages 5-7 (UK Key Stage 1) 1 leader for every 6 students (1:6).

Ages 7-11 (UK Key Stage 2) 1 leader for every 10 students (1:10)

If you require additional adults to provide 1-to-1 support, please include them in your numbers.

How to get to EcoPark House

We strongly advise trying out your route by public transport before visiting.

Travelling by bus

We recommend taking either the No. 34 bus (Barnet to Walthamstow Bus Station) or the No. 444 bus (Turnpike Lane Bus Station to Chingford Station). Both buses stop at the Harbet Road, Cooks Ferry stop. From there, it is a short walk to EcoPark House.

Please note, it may require crossing the A406 to reach EcoPark House. We recommend using the footbridge on advent way to cross at a later bus stop.

Travelling by train

The nearest station is Greater Anglia's Meridian Water, about an 18-minute walk away, with services from Stratford and Bishops Stortford. Other nearby stations include Edmonton

Green and Silver Street, both served by the TfL London Overground, with connections from London Liverpool Street, Enfield Town, and Cheshunt.

Travelling by coach or minibuss

Due to a **7.5tn weight limit** on the bridge, it is essential to notify the Team if you will be travelling by coach.

For vehicles **under 7.5tns**, the best address to give a driver is:

1 Lee Park Way

Edmonton

London

N18 3BJ

What Three Words: *///than.fast.heavy*

For vehicles **over 7.5tns**, please use the postcode N18 3AG or these three words: *///corns.ruins.effort* to access the South Gate Entrance.

On the day

What do I need to bring?

We ask that you provide us with a register of students attending, in case of emergency.

What do we when we arrive?

If travelling by public transport, please follow signs for the EcoPark House. You will arrive at the security hut where the adults in your group will be required to sign in.

After signing in, the security team will direct you to EcoPark House where a member of the Education team will be waiting to greet you.

If you are travelling by coach or minibuss, a NLWA officer will meet you outside EcoPark House. Please note, you will have to be signed in at the security hut.

What happens if we are running late?

Please try and arrive on time but if you are running late, let us know as soon as possible by contacting us via email or by phoning your session lead.

The session lead contact details will be shared two days prior to your visit.

Please note, we may have to adjust your sessions, and this could result in the tour being cancelled or an activity being cut short.

On the day FAQs

Is there a shop or a cafe at EcoPark House?

Unfortunately, we do not have a cafe or shop on site. There are tea and coffee making facilities at EcoPark House for the adults accompanying the trip.

What do we do with our coats/bags?

When you arrive, the team will direct you to the exhibition hall where you can leave bags and coats. We recommend you keep valuables on your person during the visit.

NLWA is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of personal property whilst on site.

Are there lunch facilities we can use?

You are welcome to have your lunch either on the terrace outside or in our Exhibition Hall. We try and encourage zero-waste lunches, but we know that this sometimes isn't possible. All we ask is that you ensure your waste is placed in the correct bin!

Is photography/filming permitted on site?

Feel free to take pictures during your sessions at EcoPark House. We ask that you avoid taking photographs with members of the operations team in them.

Filming is not permitted at any point.

During the tour, the NLWA officer will let you know when you can take photos.

If you are unsure, please check with an NLWA officer.

After your visit

How can I give feedback?

We welcome feedback to help ensure our programmes meet the needs of north London schools. Following your trip, you will receive a feedback form within one week.

If you wish to make a complaint, please use our [enquiry form](#).

What are the 'Be More Ned & Nancy' challenges and how do we submit updates?

After your visit, we would encourage you to select at least one class challenge to complete with your students. This is aimed to continue the conversation about waste prevention once your visit is complete. You'll be asked to submit which challenges you have selected in the feedback form.

We run termly competitions for schools who have completed their class challenges with fantastic prizes up for grabs!

For a chance to win, please submit your challenges via our [submission form](#)

When will I receive the follow up materials?

Within three working days of completing the feedback form, the Education team will email the follow-up resources.

How should I use the follow-up materials?

The follow-up materials are designed to be used in class or set as learning from home. It is up to you how best to use them; they are there to support a continued discussion around the issues and solutions we discuss during your visit.

If you have any questions, please reach out to a member of our Education team.