SCHOOL GUIDE TO ORGANISE YOUR OWN EVENTS

DEAR SCHOOLS,

Let's make a difference together! We invite your school community to take action by finding new homes for your unwanted toys and recycling broken, hard plastic toys. If you are already part of our **Recycle to Read** programme, you can also drop off broken hard plastic toys (excluding those with electronic and textile components) at our recycling bins located in **participating Tesco stores.**

Here's a guide that we have put together for you with different ways to rehome and share preloved toys through different formats at your school. These events offer numerous advantages for your school, including opportunities for fundraising and environmental benefits. In this guide, we provide you with a range of options and ideas for planning and executing a successful toy event, covering tips for success, and addressing frequently asked questions.

WHY HOLD A SCHOOL TOY EVENT?

BENEFITS FOR THE SCHOOL

- **Fundraising:** Toy sales and swaps can generate much-needed funds for your school, helping support various programs, projects, and extracurricular activities.

- **Community Engagement:** These events provide a platform for students, parents, and the local community to come together, fostering a sense of belonging and school spirit.

- **Educational Opportunities:** Organising such events can teach students important life skills such as event planning, budgeting, marketing, teamwork and decision-making.

- **Promotion:** A well-executed toy event can help raise the school's profile and attract positive media coverage, potentially increasing enrollment and support from the community.

BENEFITS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Reduce Waste:** Encourage a more sustainable and eco-friendly lifestyle by reusing and recycling toys rather than discarding them.

- **Promote Responsible Consumption:** Teach students about the value of reusing and sharing toys, clothing, and books, promoting responsible consumption habits.

- **Raise Environmental Awareness:** Create awareness about the impact of excessive consumption on the environment and the importance of reducing waste.

TOP TIPS

Schools in the Recycle to Read toys catchment areas for the programme trial (West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove) can get **50 Planet Care Points** for holding a toy sale or a swap event. See our **FAQs** and **T&Cs** for more details.

Recycle To Read

DIFFERENT EVENT FORMATS

A Toy Sale Event

Organise a traditional toy sale where toys are priced individually or in tiers. Here's how you can organise one successfully:

Collecting the toys

Encourage the school community to clean and donate their unwanted toys in good condition. Be open for spot donations as well.

Assign toy collection areas in locations which would be accessible for both parents and students such as the reception or the school gate.

Sorting and categorising toys

Ensure that all donated toys are clean, safe, and in good working condition. Categorise the toys in an appropriate manner on the basis of type, age group, popularity, size or condition.

Pricing Strategy

Set reasonable prices for toys to attract buyers. Consider the condition, age, and uniqueness of each item when pricing.

Pricing Models:

- **Flat Rate:** Assign a fixed price to all toys, regardless of their type, condition, or age.

- **Tiered Pricing:** You could create different price levels and assign each price level a different value. Categorise toys into tiers or levels based on their condition, popularity, or value. Assign different price ranges to each tier.

Display

Set up tables and display areas with toys neatly arranged into different categories to make browsing easier with the price clearly labelled.

You might consider using tablecloths or other decoratives for an attractive presentation.

Volunteer Assistance

Have volunteers available to assist with pricing, monitoring the event, helping buyers and selling items.

Cash Handling

Ensure you have secure cash-handling procedures. You might also consider keeping a record of the transactions, using a cash box or your school may have other mobile payment options.

TOP TIPS

You can organise these events at different scales from a large-scale event open to the entire community to smaller toy sale events which could be a single class or in an Eco-team.

You might want to consider holding a **"Parents Only"** event too as an alternative.

Including books, clothing or textiles in your event can help raise more funds and get more items shared and reused.

You might also charge an **Entrance Fee** to the event, which grants attendees unlimited shopping access rather than having to pay for individual items.

If you organise regular events, you could have a subscription model for regular attendees.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What should be the duration of the toy sale event?

Aim to run the event for a shorter period – no more than three hours. That way, you avoid the risk of people not showing up until several hours in!

Q. What types of toys could be accepted for donation for the sale?

Accept gently used toys that are clean, safe, and in good working condition. You can encourage families to drop their broken plastic toys at our recycling bins located in **participating Tesco stores** for the **Recycle to Read** programme.

Q. Can buyers negotiate the price of a toy?

For convenience, prices should be generally set, but you could have some flexibility by offering some vouchers for those who need it the most.

Q. What happens to the toys that don't sell?

Any unsold toys could be used for another event such as a **Toy Swap** event. Or you could even keep those toys in the playroom for your school. You might also consider setting up a **School Toy Library**.

Q. How can we recruit volunteers?

Schools can welcome volunteers for various roles, from setup to supervision. You might consider involving interested parents to volunteer for the event to get their perspective as well.

Q. How can we encourage more participation in the toy sale?

Offer incentives like discount coupons for local stores, raffle prizes, or small tokens of appreciation for participants to boost engagement.

Q. What can we do with broken electronic toys?

If parents have broken electronic toys they can find out more information on where they can recycle them on **Recycle Your Electricals**. You could also ask them to visit their nearest **Repair cafe** to see if it can be fixed.

Q. Can we accept cash donations for the sale?

Yes, you can set up a donation station or provide a donation box for attendees who want to contribute financially in addition to selling toys.

Q. How to manage on spot toy donations?

For spot donations, the team can access the value and assign a price to each item and sort it into the relevant category.

Q. How can we involve parents in reviewing and purchasing toys?

Consider inviting parents to review and purchase toys. Decide whether you want to involve the children in the selection process.

Q. Can we include textiles and books in the sale?

Yes, it's a great idea to include textiles and books to maximize material reuse. If you collect textiles that are not sold, you can sign up on **Recycle to Read Textiles** to arrange for collection and receive payment for recycling.

Let's Rehome Toys!

Recycle To Read

A Toy Swap Event

Toy swap events provide an excellent opportunity for schools to promote sustainable toy consumption, build a sense of community, and engage families to reduce waste, and save money by exchanging toys. Below, you'll find guidelines for organising both free and paid toy swap events:

Collecting the toys

Encourage the school community to clean and donate their unwanted toys in good condition. Be open for spot donations as well.

Assign toy collection areas in locations which would be accessible for both parents and students such as the reception or the school gate. Consider specific drop-off times in the days leading up to the event.

TOP TIPS

Consider providing participants with tokens in exchange for their contributed items, which can be used to "purchase" items at the event.

You might want to specify the types of toys accepted for the swap (e.g. no hazardous toys). Ensure that all donated toys are clean and in good condition.

Apart from these events, you could also have a **designated Toy Swap Corner** or room in your school which might be accessible for students during certain hours of the day in a supervised manner.

Here's an example.
The following cannot be accepted:
– Broken toys
– Car seats, baby slings
– Food items, baby clothes
– Toy guns or NERF guns
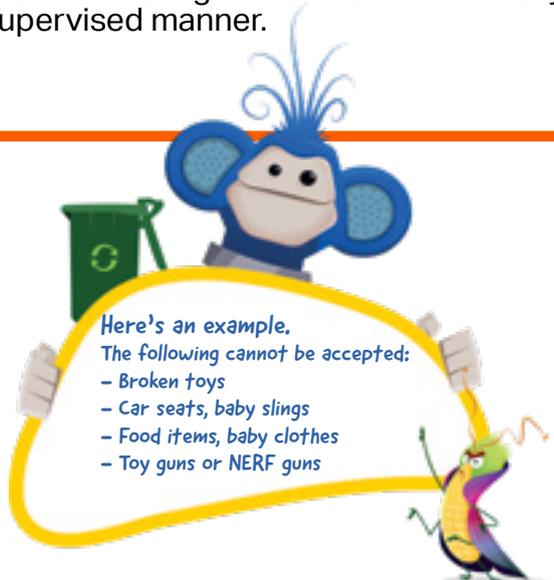
Sorting and categorising toys

Organise items by categories like age group or type (e.g., soft toys, board games, action figures) to streamline the swapping process.

I. Organising a Paid Toy Swap Event

- **Token-Based Model:** Allocate a certain number of tokens to each toy based on factors like age, condition, and popularity. Participants can use the tokens they got in exchange for their donated items to acquire toys while also being able to buy more tokens.

  You could create different price levels and assign each price level a different color tokens or value.

  Example for assigning tokens to toys:

  £1 – £5 – Green

  £6 – £10 – Blue

  £11 – £15 – Yellow

  £16 – £20 – Orange

  £21 – £25 – Red

- **Exchange Rate:** Alternatively, you might also consider keeping an exchange rate of tokens to currency. (e.g. **1 token = £1**)

- **Entrance Fee:** You might also charge an Entry Fee to the event, which grants attendees unlimited swapping access rather than having to buy and exchange tokens for individual items.

II. Organising a Free Toy Swap Event

- **One for one:** You could have a classic swap where the attendees can swap one toy for another one depending on how many toys they get for swapping.

- **Unlimited Swap:** You could also consider allowing participants to get as many toys they want irrespective of the number of toys they brought for swapping.

Display

Arrange the tables and chairs in a way that maximises space and allows for easy movement.

You may also want to set up different areas for different types of toys, such as building blocks, dolls, and sports equipment. Consider grouping similar toys together to make it easier for people to find what they are looking for.

Having the swapping guidelines visible for all the attendees might be a good idea to make sure the event runs smoothly.

Volunteer Assistance

Have volunteers available to assist with welcoming the attendees to the event and explaining the guidelines, monitoring the swapping and making sure the event runs smoothly.

> ### TOP TIPS
>
> You might want to consider holding a **"Parents Only"** event too as an alternative as parents sometimes feel they end up with a lot more toys from a toy swap that might not necessarily be relevant for their child.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is a paid toy swap event, and how does it differ from a free event?

A paid toy swap event includes an entry fee or the purchase of tokens to "buy" toys. Participants pay for toys based on their assessed value, promoting a sense of fairness.

Q. Can people attend the event even if they don't have toys to swap?

You could welcome everyone to a free toy swap event, whereas people can buy tokens or pay the entry fee for a paid toy swap event.

Q. What should be the duration of the toy swap event?

Aim to run the event for a shorter period – no more than three hours. That way, you avoid the risk of people not showing up until several hours in!

Q. How will the toys be distributed at the event?

There are a few different ways to distribute the toys at the event. One option is to allow participants to take any toys that they want. Another option is to give each participant a certain number of tickets or tokens that they can exchange for toys. You may also want to set up a raffle or silent auction to distribute the toys.

Q. What happens to the toys that are left at the end?

Any untaken toys could be used for another event such as a **Toy Sale** event. Or you could even keep those toys in the playroom for your school. You might also consider setting up a **School Toy Library**.

Q. Is there a limit to the number of toys attendees can take from the event?

While you may not have a strict limit, you encourage attendees to be mindful and take only what they need to ensure that all participants can find toys they love.

Q. Do attendees who bring their own toys also have to pay for swapping them?

The toys will be assessed and categorised for the swap and the attendees will be provided with tokens which they can use to choose other toys of equal or lower value.

Q. Can someone attend the event if they don't want to get toys but only want to reshare theirs?

You could accept on spot donations and welcome people to participate in the swap without purchasing additional toys.

Setting up a School Toy Library

Creating a toy library in schools, similar to a library for books, can provide a sustainable revenue stream while promoting toy-sharing and sustainability. Here's a guide to walk you through the steps to set up a toy library in your school.

Planning and Preparation

Determine the available space and resources for the toy library. Consider whether you have a suitable area within the school, such as a library, community room, or multipurpose space.

Calculate the costs associated with setting up the toy library, including shelves, storage, and operational expenses and create a budget.

You might explore options for funding, such as school budgets, parent-teacher association contributions, grants, or community donations.

Toy Selection and Sourcing

Consider the types of toys the library will offer. The toy library could offer toys that encourage creativity, learning, and social interaction.

You might acquire toys through a combination of purchasing, donations from the school community, social enterprises and potential partnerships with local toy stores or manufacturers.

Managing the Inventory

Assign someone as the **Toy Librarian** who will oversee and manage the toy library. Prepare a database that lists all available toys, including details about each item. You could consider creating a system to track the borrowing and return of toys, ensuring accountability.

Rules and Membership

Consider who can become a member of the toy library (e.g., students, parents, teachers) and establish membership guidelines. You will also need to set borrowing rules, such as the number of toys a member can borrow at once and the borrowing duration.

Toy Subscription Models:

- **Subscription Tiers:** Offer different subscription tiers based on the number of toys and borrowing frequency. Example tiers: Basic (1 toy/month), Standard (2 toys/month), Premium (3 toys/month).

- **Membership fee:** Parents or guardians can register their children for the toy library service, paying an annual or monthly membership fee based on the chosen subscription tier.

TOP TIPS

Allow members to browse and select the toys in a certain period only under supervision to maintain discipline.

You might consider keeping a borrowing duration such as two weeks.

Implement a check-in and check-out system to track toy availability and due dates.

Toys should be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before lending them to the next member.

If someone wants to buy the toy then allow them to buy it instead of returning.

Establish a process for repairing and maintaining toys to ensure they are in good condition. Consider connecting with the local **Repair cafe** to carry out minor repairs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How can we fund the establishment of a toy library in our school?

Funding can come from various sources, including school budgets, parent-teacher association contributions, grants, donations, and potential partnerships with local businesses or organisations.

By offering a paid subscription model for a toy library, schools can not only generate a regular revenue.

Q. How do we keep track of borrowed toys and ensure their return?

Keep a database or register to track and manage the inventory and a sign-out process. Keep records of borrowed toys and encourage timely returns.

You might also want to introduce late fees for overdue toys to incentivize timely returns.

Q. How do we handle toy repairs and maintenance?

Identify the local **Repair cafe** to get the minor repairs done. Encourage users to report damaged toys.

You could also consider organising toy upcycling or toy hack workshops as a part of community events involving families.

Broken, hard plastic toys can then be dropped off at our recycling bins located in **participating Tesco stores** for the **Recycle to Read** programme.

Q. What measures should be taken to ensure the security of the toy library?

You might consider implementing security measures, such as controlled access to the library space, tracking borrowed toys, and having volunteers or staff monitor the library during open hours.

Q. How can our school ensure the toy library remains financially sustainable in the long run?

Consider various funding sources, membership fees, late fees, damage fees and more to help the toy library generate revenue to support its operations.

You might also allow borrowers to buy the toy if they want to keep it.

It might be a good idea to include textiles and other children's items in the library to increase material reuse.

Q. Can the toy library operate during school holidays, and how do we handle this?

Consider extending the library's operation during school holidays or creating a schedule for holiday closures based on the school calendar.

Q. How can we promote the toy library and educate the school community about it?

We will provide you with a set of resources to help you organise and promote the toy library.

Encourage word-of-mouth promotion within the school community, utilize social media, school newsletters, community bulletin boards, and local newspapers with our campaign pack.

You can find all the **Recycle to Read Toys** school resources **here**.

General Top Tips for Ensuring a Fantastic Event

Differing Entry and Exit Points

Why: To prevent potential disappointments, consider having separate entry and exit points, ensuring children don't encounter others with desired toys.

How: Strategically plan the event layout, guiding the flow of participants to maintain a joyful and surprise-filled atmosphere.

Strategic Timing

Why: Well-timed transitions between groups contribute to an organised and controlled environment.

How: Schedule each group's participation to allow sufficient time for completion before the next group starts, avoiding overcrowding and confusion.

Inclusive Participation

Why: Recognising that not every child may bring a toy, make provisions for all children to participate actively.

How: Allow children to take a toy even if they didn't contribute one, fostering a sense of inclusivity and preventing feelings of exclusion.

Age-Appropriate Toy Grouping

Why: Enhance the experience by grouping toys according to age appropriateness, ensuring each child finds something enjoyable.

How: Categorise toys based on age groups, creating sections that cater to the diverse interests and developmental stages of the participants.

Clear Communication

Why: Ensure participants and organizers are on the same page by providing clear and concise communication about the event details.

How: Share information through newsletters, announcements, or dedicated event posters, keeping everyone informed about the event's purpose, schedule, and guidelines.

Encourage Positive Messaging

Why: Reinforce the idea that the value of a toy goes beyond its size or cost, emphasizing the joy of continued play and love.

How: Incorporate messaging that underscores the importance of sharing and extending the life of toys, fostering a positive and collaborative atmosphere.

Attractive Presentation

Why: Create an inviting atmosphere by arranging toys neatly and using attractive displays.

How: You might consider having themed sections, colorful signage, and creative arrangements to make the display visually appealing.

Clear Pricing Model

Why: If you are doing a paid toy event, you could eliminate any confusion by adopting a clear pricing model for toys.

How: Whether it's fixed prices, tiered pricing by category, or a token system, ensure that participants understand how the toys are priced.

Payment Options

Why: Facilitate seamless transactions by offering multiple payment options.

How: You could offer multiple payment methods such as accepting cash, card payments, or even digital transactions, making it convenient for parents with different preferences.

Inclusive Pricing Strategies

Why: Make the event accessible to all parents, considering various budget or free ranges.

How: Implement inclusive pricing strategies, such as bundle deals or discounts for multiple purchases, or free for all options to encourage more participation.

Themed Sections

Why: Enhance the event experience by categorising toys into themed sections.

How: You might want to create sections like educational toys, outdoor play, or character-themed areas, making it easier for parents to find what they are looking for.

Engaging Activities

Why: Keep participants engaged beyond just shopping or swapping.

How: Consider including activities like face painting, storytelling, or small games, creating a festive and enjoyable atmosphere for families.

Promotion and Awareness

Why: Ensure the event remains top-of-mind.

How: You could regularly promote the event through newsletters, school events, and other communication channels to boost awareness.

Having a Designated Space

Why: You might want to provide a fixed and easily accessible location for the toys within your school premises such as a swapping corner or a toy library.

How: Allocate a dedicated and permanent space within the school premises for toy swapping or borrowing, ensuring it becomes a familiar and convenient resource for everyone involved.

Comprehensive Cataloguing

Why: If you want to offer toy subscriptions or a toy library, simplify the borrowing process by maintaining a detailed catalogue of available toys.

How: Use a digital or physical catalogue with clear categorisation, allowing users to easily identify and select toys.

User-Friendly Borrowing System

Why: Encourage frequent use by making the borrowing system straightforward.

How: Implement an easy-to-use checkout and return process, possibly using a digital platform for efficiency.

Educational Program Integration

Why: Enhance the educational aspect of recycling or rehoming toys through workshops and learning resources.

How: Visit _the Pod_ for resources to integrate toys into educational programs, aligning with curriculum objectives.

Have Fun & Good Luck!!