



How schools can prepare for new waste legislation

29 Jul 2025

Since 31 March 2025, new waste legislation under the Environment Act 2021 requires schools to separate their waste into three distinct ways:

1. General waste
2. Food waste
3. Dry mixed recycling
 - plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays
 - metal food and drinks cans
 - glass bottles and jars
 - paper, and cardboard

By doing this, your school community will help reduce the carbon impacts of waste which is crucial for effective recycling.

What schools need to do

- Review current waste management arrangements to ensure compliance.
- Set up clearly labelled bins for food waste, dry mixed recycling, and general waste across the school site, including in canteens, staff rooms, and outdoor areas.
- Food waste bins should be lined with compostable bags only. If you don't want to use a bag, then:
 - line bin with thin cardboard or newspaper to reduce food sticking to the bottom
 - wash bin regularly.
- Order free external food waste bins by sending an email to recyclingteam@ealing.gov.uk
- Educate staff, students, and catering teams on the new waste separation requirements.
- Ensure waste is collected by a licensed waste carrier.

What's not changing

- There is no change to your collection services.
- Dry recyclables will continue to be collected mixed.
- Ealing Council currently provides food waste recycling collections to schools without charge.

Next steps

- Ensure your school is ready.
- Speak with your site manager or business manager about preparing for the transition.
- Read [Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK Recycling for schools](#).
- Contact recyclingteam@ealing.gov.uk for advice.

Related Services

[Refuse and recycling collection 2025/26](#)

Was this page useful?

- [Yes](#)
- [Neutral](#)
- [No](#)

Contacts

Services for schools

Servicesforschools@ealing.gov.uk

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