



# International E-Waste Day 2024 - Teacher's Pack

[International E-Waste Day](#) (IEWD) is a key moment to raise awareness of electrical waste as the **fastest growing source of waste in the world**, and in the UK. Hundreds of countries across the world will unite on 14 October 2024 to tackle the issue.

This year, **Recycle Your Electricals** is encouraging pupils across the UK to join **The Great Cable Challenge** – a nationwide campaign to recycle the millions of cables sitting idle in our homes.

We have put together this pack for schools, which includes:

- **Teacher's briefing document** (this document)
  - Background on e-waste and how to recycle
  - Introduction to International E-waste Day 2024
  - How to take part in The Great Cable Challenge, including a take-home activity for pupils
  - How to set up a collection point at your school (including what to do with batteries)
- **PowerPoint presentation** (with speaker notes)
  - E-waste and why recycling electricals is important
  - International E-Waste Day
  - Get involved in The Great Cable Challenge
- **The Great Cable Challenge student activity**
  - An at-home activity for pupils - for primary and younger secondary students
- **HypnoCat myth-busting videos**
  - (very) short videos about reusing and recycling electricals
- **Pack of ready-to-use resources**
  - School poster to educate and encourage pupils to get involved
  - Promoting The Great Cable Challenge in your school
  - Signpost your collection point with ready-to-use stickers

## **Who are Recycle Your Electricals?**

[Recycle Your Electricals](#) is a UK-wide campaign motivating and making it easier for everyone to reuse and recycle unwanted electricals, ensuring we make the most of the valuable materials in them.

The campaign is led by [Material Focus](#), an independent not-for-profit organisation on a mission to transform the way we think about our unwanted electricals - from useless waste to valuable resources.

## **Meet HypnoCat**



HypnoCat is our recycled-obsessed mascot on a mission to hypnotise the nation into recycling all their old, wanted electricals.

*Look into his eyes and you wiiiiiilll feel a sudden, overwhelming urge to bag up your old electricals for recycling.*

# Teacher's briefing document

## 1. Background on e-waste and how to recycle

- Electrical waste, also known as e-waste, is any broken or unwanted electrical or tech item with either a plug, battery or cable.

What's the problem?	What's the solution?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electrical waste is one of the fastest growing sources of waste in the world - and in the UK. It's growing faster than fast-fashion.</li> <li><b>Lost resources</b> - Electricals contain precious materials such as copper, iron, gold, platinum and palladium which are lost forever when items are hoarded or thrown in the bin.</li> <li><b>Environmental damage</b> - Producing electrical items creates carbon emissions. Recycling our old electricals instead of binning them could cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by as much as taking millions of cars off the road.</li> <li><b>Financial loss</b> - We lose millions of pounds per year in valuable raw materials in our electricals that are binned instead of recycled. UK households also hold onto thousands of unwanted electricals they don't know what to do with. If we passed these on to charities they could make a big difference to people's lives</li> </ul> <p>Find out more about the problem with e-waste <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anything with a plug, battery or cable can and should be reused and recycled. Even the batteries and cables themselves.</li> <li>→ If an electrical item is still in working condition but you no longer want it - you can <b>donate</b> it.</li> <li>→ If an electrical item is broken - you can <b>repair</b> it.</li> <li>→ If an electrical item is broken and cannot be repaired, you <b>must recycle</b> it. Recycled electricals can be turned into everything from children's playgrounds to lifesaving equipment.</li> <li>The Recycle Your Electricals website has a handy <a href="#">Recycling Locator</a> where you can enter your postcode and find your local donation or recycling points. This includes charities, reuse organisations, shops and recycling centres.</li> </ul> <p>Find out more about the benefits of recycling <a href="#">here</a></p>

### Key messages:

- Everything with a plug, battery or cable can be recycled. Even the batteries and cables themselves.
- There are hidden batteries within electricals which can start fires when crushed or damaged inside bin and recycling lorries.
- Never bin loose or hidden batteries.
- Remove batteries from electricals before recycling. If you're unable to remove the battery safely, recycle it together with your old electricals.
- You may need assistance with the safe removal of batteries from electrical items, please ask a responsible adult to help with this
- Search Recycle Your Electricals to find all your local electrical and battery drop off points: [www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk](http://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk)



## **2. How to take part in The Great Cable Challenge**

Almost all of us have unwanted, broken cables clogging up our drawers, or have considered binning that flimsy cable when it broke. That's millions of unwanted cables and **thousands of kilograms of copper going to waste**.

Cables are made of an average of **20% copper** which is one of the most precious materials on our planet. Copper is essential to our everyday lives - vital for our phones, our transport, clean energy, lifesaving medical equipment and our green future. Like any electricals, cables can be recycled and the copper in them can be reused to create essential hospital equipment or even electric vehicles.

So this International E-Waste Day, we're calling on the UK to join **The Great Cable Challenge** and recycle their old cables!

Together, let's give our old cables a new lease of life. If 1 million of us all recycled one cable, we could save at least **5,000 kg of copper** from going to waste.

### **Key messages:**

#### **BOILERPLATE SUMMARY**

- Got old or broken cables cluttering up your home? They're full of precious copper that could be recycled and reused!

Join Recycle Your Electricals' Great Cable Challenge and help save thousands of kilograms of copper from going to waste!

It's simple – just bag up your unwanted cables, and any other old electricals for recycling. Then search 'recycle your electricals' to find your local donation and recycling points.

#### **WHAT**

- [International E-Waste Day](#) (IEWD) is a key moment to raise awareness of electrical waste as the fastest-growing source of waste in the world, and in the UK. Hundreds of countries across the world will unite on 14 October 2024 to tackle the issue.
- Recycle Your Electricals is calling on everyone across the UK to join the Great Cable Challenge and recycle their old cables for International E-Waste Day / this October.

#### **WHY**

- Copper is essential to our everyday lives and vital for our phones, our transport,



clean energy, lifesaving medical equipment and our green future. Like any electricals, cables can be recycled and the copper in them can be reused to create essential hospital equipment or even electric vehicles.

- Electrical waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the world – and we are throwing away some of the most precious materials on our planet. Cables are the biggest challenges, with millions of cables binned every year and held onto.
- Old or unwanted cables should never be lost in your drawer of doom! The precious copper inside could be used to make lifesaving hospital equipment or even electric vehicles. Copper is key – set it free!

## HOW

- If 1 million of us all recycled one cable, we could save at least 5,000kg of copper from going to waste.
- Be part of The Great Cable Challenge and join the millions across the UK taking one small action to make a difference.
- Join the millions of people across the UK taking part in The Great Cable Challenge. Bag them up, ready to recycle this October.
- Bag up your old cables - and any other old electricals you find in your drawer of doom! - and recycle them this October for International E-Waste Day. Search 'recycle your electricals' to find all your local donation and recycling points.

### **3. The Great Cable Challenge take-home activity**

- A fun activity pack for primary or younger secondary school students.
- With The Great Cable Challenge, students can get in on the action too.
- We're encouraging them to hunt for old electricals buried deep in drawers and cupboards.
- If all 4.56 million primary school pupils across the UK all recycled at least one cable, we could save 22,800 kg of copper from going to waste!
- The task for students will be to:
  1. **Collect** - Ask their parents or a grown-up to help them find any broken or unused cables stashed away in cupboards or drawers.
  2. **Check** -After gathering up all their unused cables, encouraging them to check which ones work and which can be donated or recycled



3. **Recycle them** - Once they've decided which cables they're keeping and which can be recycled, bagging them up and either bringing them into school (if your school is organising its own Great Cable Challenge activity) or finding their local drop-off point on our Recycling Locator (with their parents or grown-up)

Use the [Recycling Locator](#) on the Recycle Your Electricals website to find local donation and recycling points.

#### **4. Setting up your own Great Cable Challenge pop-up collection**

Set up your own pop-up collection to collect cables and other small household electricals in your school. Simply:

1. Follow our simple step-by-step instructions in the guide available in the toolkit – or [download from our website](#)
  - o You will find all the information on setting up a pop-up collection in our - **Small Electricals collection points - How to organise a collection guide**
  - o \*NB: this campaign focuses on household cables and electricals, not business e-waste.
2. Promote your pop-up collection
  - o *Use the communications materials available in this toolkit to signpost your collection point*
  - o *Download ready-to-use or editable leaflets, posters, pull-up banners and other materials from our website (available in HypnoCat or generic branding, Welsh or English)*
3. Share how you get on with us at [hello@materialfocus.org.uk](mailto:hello@materialfocus.org.uk)!

#### **Battery recycling tips**

- If the batteries can be safely removed then recycle these separately with other batteries and the item with other small electricals
- You may need assistance with the safe removal of batteries from electrical items, please ask a responsible adult to help with this
- If the battery cannot be removed safely or is imbedded in the electrical device then recycle the whole thing with your old electricals
- Batteries can cause serious injury if swallowed, please keep batteries out of



reach of small children and pets.

- When a battery has been removed, store it securely and recycle it properly and promptly
- Never put a battery, an electrical item containing a battery or an electrical item in your household waste or recycling bin
- Batteries should be recycled at battery drop off points
- Electricals should be recycled at an electrical drop off point
- You can find these using our **Recycling Locator** at [www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk](http://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk)

### Safety tips for teachers

- **IMPORTANT:** batteries can cause serious injury if swallowed, please keep batteries out of reach of small children and pets
- When discussing the safe removal of batteries from electricals, emphasise that students should ask for help from a responsible parent or guardian to do this
- When a battery has been removed, store it securely and recycle it properly and promptly
- If asking pupils to bring in electricals to school, emphasise that students should ask for help from a responsible parent or guardian, or that their parent or guardian should carry them
- All items should be carefully placed in the collection box/bin in schools and stored securely until recycled properly and promptly.

### More information about battery safety can be found below:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/child-safety-button-batteries>
- [https://www.recycle-more.co.uk/files/Valpak\\_Batteries\\_Guidance\\_-\\_Child\\_H\\_S\\_Considerations.pdf](https://www.recycle-more.co.uk/files/Valpak_Batteries_Guidance_-_Child_H_S_Considerations.pdf)