



ORGANISER SHEET 1 | EVENT OVERVIEW

School Neighbourhood Clean-up

Action plan and press toolkit | Secondary schools | EU4Blue

Organise a supervised litter collection on school grounds and approved nearby paths or green spaces. Students document local litter, explain their findings to the press and develop a prevention action. This pack combines practical planning with responsible communication; media coverage is an opportunity, not a condition of success.

Start with a clear purpose

A clean-up removes litter from a specific place; it does not solve pollution by itself. Connect the event to ocean literacy by exploring how litter can move through waterways towards the sea. Do not assume that every item collected would otherwise have reached the ocean.

Your event at a glance

School and class or group _____

Lead teacher and school contact _____

School grounds / approved neighbourhood area: _____

Date: _____ Reserve date: _____

Start and finish: _____ Press appointment: _____

Meeting point and visitor entrance: _____

Participant number: _____ Supervising adults: _____ Age range: _____

Collection zones and accessible base: _____

Agreed crossings and no-go areas: _____

Waste partner and collection point: _____



Who takes responsibility

Role	Responsibility	Name
Lead teacher	Approval, local checks, supervision and final go/no-go decision	_____
Safety and first-aid lead	Site assessment, briefing, emergency arrangements	_____
Waste and equipment lead	Supplies, waste categories and confirmed disposal	_____
Student team leads	Buddy groups, tally sheets and reporting concerns to staff	_____
Inclusion and communication lead	Accessible roles, media permissions, visitor reception and approved press information	_____

Student roles support the event; they do not replace adult supervision. Agree staffing with school leadership for the site, ages and support needs. Use the applicable school-visit procedures and a site-specific risk assessment; this guide does not replace them.



ORGANISER SHEET 2 | PREPARATION

Work backwards from the event

Three to four weeks before

- ☐ Agree the learning purpose, date, class groups and event lead with school leadership. Obtain the school's required approval.
- ☐ Walk the proposed school and neighbourhood zones. Identify accessible paths, road crossings, vehicle entrances, toilets, rest points and an assembly area away from collection hazards.
- ☐ Confirm approval with school leadership and the relevant land manager or authority for any public or private areas outside school grounds. Keep building entrances, pavements and emergency routes clear.
- ☐ Appoint one adult press contact and confirm the school's visitor and media procedures. Decide who approves invitations, factual results, images and statements before release.

Two weeks before

- ☐ Agree waste arrangements with the local waste service: accepted categories, bags, safe handling of unusual finds, pickup location, date and contact. Obtain confirmation before the event. [1]
- ☐ Complete the risk assessment and supervision plan, including road crossings, delivery traffic, first aid and the response to a missing participant. Brief all accompanying adults. [2]
- ☐ Ask about access and support needs through the school's usual confidential process. Arrange equivalent roles and any necessary individual support.
- ☐ Inform families and students about the event and planned media presence. Check applicable permissions separately for participation, interviews, images and school publication. Offer equal participation without media exposure. [3]
- ☐ Confirm equipment and prepare participation certificates for all roles. Contact local newspapers, radio or community media with a specific appointment and a school contact; use the invitation on p. 8.

One week before

- ☐ Allocate named adults to zones and buddy groups. Set headcount points, a stop signal and supervised crossing arrangements. Student leaders do not direct public traffic.
- ☐ Introduce litter pathways and choose one audit question. Invite willing students to practise explaining the event in their own words; do not require anyone to speak to journalists.
- ☐ Prepare the zone sketch, tally sheets and an accessible press meeting area. Confirm two willing student speakers, an adult spokesperson and their permissions. Agree photo boundaries with visiting media.

One to two days before and again on arrival

- ☐ Check official weather warnings, site conditions and local restrictions. Apply p. 4 cancellation criteria. Confirm the press appointment and an alternative indoor briefing if outdoor collection is cancelled.
- ☐ Reconfirm waste pickup, equipment and the visitor list. Send meeting time, clothing guidance and changes through the school's agreed channel. Do not send student contact lists to journalists.
- ☐ Recheck the route and brief all adults. Record the final decision; if the site is unsuitable, use the pre-approved alternative.

Alternative: an indoor litter-data workshop, prevention poster session and press briefing. Explain clearly that outdoor collection was cancelled; do not report planned activity as completed.



ORGANISER SHEET 3 | SAFETY AND INCLUSION

Set boundaries before collecting

Site decision and adult checks

- ☐ Define safe zones on school grounds or approved paths and green spaces. Exclude roads, cycle lanes, active car parks, construction sites, water edges, rail areas and inaccessible or unstable ground.
- ☐ Keep groups on their assigned side of roads. Use only pre-agreed crossings under adult supervision. Avoid delivery times and vehicle entrances. Never collect from the carriageway or ask students to stop traffic.
- ☐ Confirm accessible tasks, first aid, handwashing, toilets and a rest area. Adults must be able to supervise every group and communicate. The press contact must not leave a collection group unsupervised to receive visitors.
- ☐ Cancel, postpone or move to the approved indoor activity for unsafe weather, traffic, ground or insufficient supervision. Reassess before any relocation; stop immediately if conditions deteriorate.

Decision: GO / CHANGE / POSTPONE Time: _____

Lead teacher: _____ Reason or changes: _____

Rules to read aloud to students

- 1 Stay with your buddy and assigned adult. Do not leave the zone or cross a road independently.
- 2 Wear gloves and sturdy closed shoes. Use a picker where possible; gloves do not make sharp objects safe.
- 3 Leave needles, glass, chemicals, batteries, dead animals, suspicious containers and possible ammunition untouched. Tell an adult and keep others away.
- 4 Do not open containers, reach into drains or bins, compress bags or lift heavy objects. Ask for help before a bag becomes heavy.
- 5 Respect plants, wildlife, private property and people's belongings. Do not confront anyone about littering.
- 6 Remove gloves and wash hands with soap and water before eating and after collecting. Report injuries promptly. Tell your teacher if you do not want to be photographed or interviewed.

Emergency response

Stop work, alert the lead adult and take the group to the agreed safe assembly point. In an emergency, call the local emergency number, give the exact location and follow instructions. Keep access clear for responders. For suspected ammunition, stay well away and alert emergency services. Confirm the number before the event; 112 applies in the EU.

Local emergency number: _____ Assembly point: _____

First-aid lead and mobile: _____

Emergency location and vehicle access: _____

School backup contact: _____

All students can contribute through safe collection, accessible tallying, equipment records, mapping or a school-based communication task. No one should need to disclose health information publicly or enter a difficult area to participate.



ORGANISER SHEET 4 | EVENT DAY

Run the clean-up together

Example: 09:00–11:30, including a ten-minute press appointment at the safe base. Adjust to the timetable and group. Maintain supervision throughout; journalists join only the agreed part of the event.

Time	Activity	Lead action
09:00–09:15	Arrival and equipment	Headcount; check clothing, group lists and site conditions.
09:15–09:30	Safety and mission briefing	Show boundaries, base, stop signal and reporting procedure.
09:30–10:15	First collection round	Adults supervise zones; teams tally safe items as collected.
10:15–10:25	Clean break and headcount	Return to base; remove gloves, wash hands, drink and rest.
10:25–10:55	Second collection round	Continue only if conditions remain suitable; respect boundaries.
10:55–11:15	Close collection and record	Adults secure bags at the agreed point; consolidate team logs.
11:15–11:30	Review, press visit and departure	11:15–11:25: agreed press slot at base; supervised reflection for others. Certificates and final headcount.

Equipment checklist

- ☐ Correctly fitting work gloves, litter pickers, suitable bags and spare bags; keep clean supplies separate from filled bags.
- ☐ Sturdy footwear and weather-appropriate clothing; high-visibility clothing where the assessment requires it.
- ☐ First-aid kit, charged phones, group lists, emergency contacts and the site sketch. Keep personal details with responsible staff.
- ☐ Drinking water, handwashing provision, soap, towels and access to toilets; sun or rain protection as needed.
- ☐ Clipboards, pencils, tally sheets and bag labels. Optional: a suitable scale operated by adults without lifting unsafe loads.

Waste handover

Follow the waste partner's instructions. Students must not reopen filled bags to sort or photograph the contents. Keep hazardous finds in place and report them through the agreed route. Leave bags only at the confirmed collection point, clear of public paths and the water; verify collection afterwards.

Waste partner contact: _____ Pickup time: _____

Bag type / sorting instructions: _____

If pickup fails, responsible adult and backup: _____



STUDENT SHEET | COPY ONE PER TEAM

Collect evidence as well as litter

Team code: _____ Adult lead: _____ Date: _____

School / neighbourhood zone: _____ Start: _____ Finish: _____

Your mission

Record the ordinary litter your team safely collects. Tally each item once, before it goes into the bag; never reopen bags to count. Use the same categories across teams. If something cannot be counted safely, leave it and tell an adult. The goal is careful evidence, not the largest haul.

Category	Tally marks	Total
Plastic packaging and fragments	_____	_____
Paper and cardboard	_____	_____
Metal cans and safe metal packaging	_____	_____
Cigarette ends collected with a picker	_____	_____
Other safe litter	_____	_____
TOTAL ITEMS	Do not count bags as items	_____

Count a separate fragment as one item. Use "other safe litter" for safe items that do not fit; note examples below. Sharp metal, glass and any hazardous item are excluded. This is a simple school audit, not a standardised scientific survey.

Other category examples: _____

Number of collection bags: _____ Approximate fullness: _____

Optional adult-measured net mass: _____ kg / NOT MEASURED

If measured: bag tare removed? YES / NO Wet material noted? _____



Make sense of the result

1 Which category was most common?

2 Calculate its share: category total $\div$ all counted items $\times$ 100 = _____ %

If no items were counted, write "not applicable".

3 Suggest one possible source. What evidence would you need to check it?

4 Why can we not use this result to describe the whole neighbourhood or ocean?

5 Propose one prevention action at school. Name who could lead it and how you would check progress.

Safe reporting only: note an unusual find's location without approaching, touching or publishing sensitive location details. Give the information to your adult lead. No dangerous-find photographs are required.



ORGANISER SHEET 5 | PRESS TOOLKIT

Give the story a clear local focus

Before sending anything

Agree a relevant local angle: students investigating litter around their school and choosing a prevention measure. Send the invitation about one week ahead; follow up briefly one or two days before. Use one adult school contact. Attendance is optional and coverage cannot be promised.

Press invitation to adapt

Subject: Media invitation — [School] neighbourhood clean-up on [date]

Dear [name / editorial team],

Students at [school] will collect litter in approved areas around the school on [date] and investigate which types they find most often. They will use the results to plan a practical prevention action.

We invite you to a short press appointment at [time] at [exact entrance / meeting point]. [Adult spokesperson] and willing student representatives will be available to discuss the project. Photography and interviews will take place only within arrangements agreed with the school.

Please confirm attendance by [date] to [adult contact / school email / telephone]. We will notify you of any changes.

Kind regards,

[Name, role and school]

Prepare and host the visit

Reconfirm which students may be interviewed or photographed and which uses were explained. Participation in the event does not require appearing in the media. Give non-media participants an equally valued activity outside the agreed photo area. Welcome visitors at the entrance and accompany them. Avoid identifiable bystanders, name lists and sensitive details in images. Never arrange dangerous finds or unsafe collection for a photograph. [3]

Student speaking prompts

"Our team investigated ..." "In our zone, we counted ..."

"This does not tell us ..." "Our next step is ..."

Practise answers to "Why here?", "What surprised you?" and "What will change?" Students may decline a question; let the adult contact handle sensitive matters.

Post-event press release to adapt

[School] students turn local litter findings into action

[Place, date] — [Number] students and [number] adults took part in a supervised clean-up around [school] on [date]. Teams counted [number] safely collected items in [defined areas] and handed over [number] bags to [waste partner]. [Category] was the most frequent counted category. These figures describe the selected areas and collection period, not the whole neighbourhood.

The school will now [specific prevention measure], led by [group], and review progress on [date]. Participants received certificates recognising their contribution.

[Optional: insert a genuine, approved student or teacher quotation.]

Press contact: [adult name, role, school email and telephone].



ORGANISER SHEET 6 | FOLLOW-UP AND SOURCES

Turn one action day into lasting change

Within two working days

- ☐ Confirm waste collection and return borrowed equipment. Record any incidents through the school's procedures.
- ☐ Combine team totals without double-counting bags or items. Keep item counts, bag numbers and measured mass as separate measures; mark estimates clearly.
- ☐ Gather feedback on learning, access, supervision and media participation. Give certificates to all participants, including non-collection and non-media roles. Record actual participation.
- ☐ Verify results, obtain approval for school statements and confirm intended use of images before sharing. Offer media only approved material. Keep a record of publication links and correct factual errors through the press contact.

Choose one follow-up commitment

Possible actions: improve bin placement, trial reusable lunch packaging or create an evidence-based litter campaign. Link the choice to your observations without claiming to have proved the origin of the waste.

Chosen action:

Responsible person or group:

Completion date: _____ Review date: _____

Measure and starting point:

Compare conditions fairly: repeat a school-ground audit over a similar area and duration, and note changes in weather or use. Do not convert litter totals into claims about wildlife saved, health benefits or plastic prevented from reaching the ocean without evidence.

Review learning and media participation

Ask: What did the evidence show? Which explanation remains uncertain? Did everyone have a suitable role? Did students feel comfortable with the media arrangements? Keep a brief, factual summary of feedback and one improvement for the next event.



Record the communication outcome

Press invited:

Attended:

School report approved by: _____

Publication date: _____

Confirmed results and article links:

Correction or follow-up needed:

Do not equate publicity with environmental impact. The clean-up and prevention work remain valuable if no journalist attends.

Sources and local planning checks

[1] RhineCleanUp. General litter-collection planning guidance. <https://www.rhinecleanup.org/en/news/in-10-schritten-zum-cleanup>

[2] DGUV. Organisation von Sicherheit und Gesundheit in der Schule. <https://www.dguv.de/fb-bildungseinrichtungen/sachgebiete/schulen/orga/index.jsp>

[3] Medienberatung NRW. Fragen zu Foto- und Videoaufnahmen. https://www.medienberatung.schulministerium.nrw.de/de/themen/datenschutz_1/fotos_und_videos/fragen_zu_foto-_und_videoaufnahmen.html

Adapt to current local school, visitor, privacy and waste-service procedures. Check permissions for the specific media activity and publication; school permission does not determine a newspaper's editorial decisions. This plan does not guarantee press attendance or coverage.

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