

Recycle to Read Toys Toy Rehoming Event Guide for Schools

The Benefits of Promoting Toy Reuse in Schools

R Schools play a vital role in promoting sustainability, and rehoming toys is a fantastic way to encourage reuse while fostering a sense of community.

This guide provides practical advice on how to organise a successful toy rehoming event in your school, whether as a fundraiser, a swap, or a free distribution event.

Why Organise a Toy Rehoming Event?

Educational Benefits:

- Teach's students about responsible consumption and the environmental impact of waste.
- Provides an opportunity to develop skills in event planning, teamwork, and financial literacy.

Community Benefits:

- Strengthens ties between families and the school community.
- Offers affordable options for families who may benefit from pre-loved toys.

Environmental Benefits:

- Reduces waste by keeping toys in circulation rather than sending them to landfill.
- Encourages sustainable habits by promoting the reuse of toys in good condition.
- Raises environmental awareness of excessive consumption and the importance of reducing waste.

TOP TIP

Schools taking part in Recycle to Read Toys can get [50 Planet Care Points](#) for holding a toy rehoming event. See our [FAQs](#) and [T&Cs](#) for details.



Organising Your Event

1. Decide on the Format

There are several ways to rehome toys:

- **Toy Sale:** Price toys affordably and use proceeds for school projects.
- **Toy Swap:** Families exchange toys they no longer use.
- **Free Distribution:** Encourage families to donate toys for others to take home at no cost.
- **Toy Repair Station:** Include a repair station where families can learn simple toy repair techniques or have toys fixed before rehoming.

2. Toy Collection & Sorting

- Request that families donate clean, safe toys in good condition.
- Set up collection points around the school (e.g., reception, playground, classrooms).
- Sort toys by type, age suitability, and condition for easy browsing.
- Identify toys that may need minor repairs and set them aside for a repair station if included.

3. Pricing & Distribution

- For a toy sale, establish fair pricing tiers (e.g., low-cost for common toys, slightly higher for premium items).
- For a swap, consider a token system where families receive a token for each toy they donate and can use it to choose a different toy.
- For free events, set limits on the number of toys each child can take to ensure fair distribution.
- Offer a repair option where families can bring in toys for minor fixes, encouraging reuse instead of disposal.

4. Promote Your Event

- Share event details in newsletters, on social media, and via school announcements.
- Use posters and emails to remind parents of donation deadlines and event times.
- Highlight the availability of a toy repair station to encourage participation.

5. Logistics on the Day

- Arrange tables or display areas so toys are easy to browse.
- Assign volunteers to help with sorting, assisting families, and handling transactions if applicable.
- Set up a repair station with basic tools, materials, and possibly a skilled volunteer to fix minor toy issues.

How to Deliver a Successful Event

Collecting the Toys

Designate toy collection points in easily accessible locations for both parents and students, such as the school reception or near the main entrance. Ensure these areas are clearly marked and supervised to keep the collection process organised.

Pricing Strategy

Set fair and attractive prices based on the condition, age, and uniqueness of each toy to encourage sales.

Pricing Models:

- **Flat Rate:** Apply a fixed price to all toys, regardless of type, condition, or age, for simplicity.
- **Tiered Pricing:** Categorise toys into different price levels based on factors such as condition, popularity, or market value. Assign clear pricing to each tier to help buyers understand the value of their purchase.

Display

Arrange toys neatly on tables or designated display areas, grouping them into categories to enhance browsing. Ensure prices are clearly marked to make the purchasing process straightforward. Adding tablecloths, signage, or decorations can improve presentation and attract more buyers.

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.

Volunteer Assistance

Recruit volunteers to support the event by assisting with pricing, overseeing the sale area, answering buyer enquiries, and managing transactions efficiently.

Cash Handling

Implement secure cash-handling procedures. Use a locked cash box and consider maintaining a record of transactions. If available, explore the use of mobile payment options to provide buyers with more flexible payment methods.

Top Tips

- **Clear Entry and Exit Points:** Designate separate entry and exit areas to manage crowd flow and ensure smooth operations.
- **Schedule and Timings:** Keep events concise (no more than three hours) to maintain engagement and encourage attendance
- **Inclusive Participation:** Allow children to take part even if they don't bring a toy, fostering inclusivity and ensuring all children benefit.
- **Categorise Toys Thoughtfully:** Group toys by age suitability, type, or theme to make browsing easier and more enjoyable.
- **Attractive Presentation:** Use tablecloths, signage, and well-organised displays to make the event inviting.
- **Encourage Parent Involvement:** Consider a 'Parents Only' event to allow thoughtful selection without impulse additions.
- **Flexible Pricing Strategies:** Offer tiered pricing, bundle deals, or a token system to suit different budgets and needs.
- **Volunteer Assistance:** Have a team ready to help with sorting, guiding families, and answering questions.
- **Cash and Digital Payments:** Offer multiple payment options to accommodate everyone.
- **Promotion and Awareness:** Use school newsletters, social media, and posters to spread the word and attract participation.
- **Consider Long-Term Options:** Set up a permanent toy swap area or toy library within the school for ongoing reuse.
- **Ensure Safe Toy Rehoming:** For additional guidance on how to safely rehome toys, see the [Top Tips When Passing On Toys Guide](#) by the British Toy & Hobby Association (BTHA).

FAQs

What should be the duration of the toy sale or 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!

What types of toys should we accept?

Accept only clean, safe, and complete toys. Refuse at the point of donation where possible any broken toys, toys with missing pieces, and baby equipment such as car seats. If including a repair station, minor fixes such as reattaching wheels or replacing batteries may be considered.

What should we do with the broken toys?

Encourage everybody to take their broken hard plastic toys to Recycle to Read collection units in participating Tesco stores to earn Planet Care Points to help your school get books. For more details see the [Recycle to Read website](#). Please note that the Recycle to Read collection units are for use by individual families, depositing toys from reuse events may impact their use by families.

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.

What happens to toys that don't get taken?

Any leftover toys can be stored for future events, donated to charities, or added to a school toy library.

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.

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.

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 the [Recycle Your Electricals website](#). You could also ask them to visit their nearest Repair Café to see if it can be fixed.

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.

How do I manage on-the-spot toy donations?

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Is there a limit to the number of toys attendees can take?

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

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

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

