



**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01437**

### **Name of petitioner**

Les Wallace

### **Petition title**

Recycling in Schools

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ensure the provision of recycling facilities within school playgrounds is mandatory. In addition to call for a national survey of in school practice and teaching on reduce, reuse and recycle to ensure current best practice becomes the standard practice.

### **Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

I have spoken to various local councillors and MSPs on the issue. MSP Richard Lyle hopes to speak about the proposal at a future RACCE committee meeting. However, although this is welcome I believe wider awareness and debate is essential. I have also spoken to officials who have confirmed my views that the practice and teaching of reduce, reuse, recycle in schools is inconsistent and generally poor.

Groups and individuals with an interest in the subject have also been approached. Again they have been very supportive, but as this is a national issue it needs a wider platform than is provided by discussion between local activists, it needs truly public consideration. Teachers, parents, NGOs and children themselves need to share their experience and views.

I am aware that there are proposed regulations which may require better provision of recycling facilities in schools, but I suspect they may not go far enough and there will be attempts in some quarters to reduce their potency. Given how we are already suffering from the consequences of inadequate education and practice of the 3Rs then we cannot afford anything less than the highest standards. There is also a desperate need for a national survey to enable best practice to become the standard.

### **Petition background information**

At present it is discretionary on part of schools and local authorities to provide playground recycling facilities. If not available it makes hypocritical any teaching that recycling is a necessary activity. Opportunities to increase lifelong conscientiousness about reducing waste are lost. Also if recycling is a more effective way of developing anti litter attitudes than traditional anti litter work then efforts to alleviate Scotland's notorious litter problem are compromised.

Despite considerable public investment in kerbside recycling facilities, the need for industry to reduce its waste production to cut costs and a notorious problem with litter and fly tipping Scotland is STILL not teaching its young about reduce, reuse, recycle and how to dispose of unavoidable waste properly. Efforts to reduce waste are suffering because educational work was not carried out effectively, if at all, in the past. The authorities have still not learned that lesson; the failing has not been resolved. I was involved in setting up educational projects for schools on waste reduction 22 years ago and am EXTREMELY frustrated because although it can be very effective it still isn't being taken seriously.

If this isn't true then why are there no mandatory requirements for how it is taught – obligatory recycling bins in school playgrounds would be a start. A national survey to determine best practice in how waste reduction is promoted and practiced in schools would help ensure that it becomes the standard practice.

If it can be established that children CAN influence their parents to participate in existing kerbside recycling projects then more effective educational work with children could be a significant tool in raising local authority recycling rates. Of course this can't happen without the basic provision of in school recycling and a national survey to see how best practice could yield economic benefits for councils right now. The investment in recycling infrastructure is undermined by poor participation in too many areas.

The proposed massive investment in incineration represents educational failure in the school, home and workplace. It will commit us to producing waste for many years. Education is a much better investment.

The present situation is indicative of national apathy and educational, economic and environmental incompetence.

#### Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/playgroundrecycling>

#### Related information for petition

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

YES

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

28 / 09 / 2012

#### Comments to stimulate online discussion

After more than twenty years since kerbside recycling began in earnest in Scotland we are STILL NOT ensuring that children are being taught about reducing waste and being encouraged to recycle effectively. Investment in domestic recycling schemes and the

success of workplace waste reduction is suffering badly because of this. It also means that anti litter work is compromised as recycling is almost certainly a better method of preventing litter than traditional anti litter work.

There are no basic mandatory requirements for how well waste reduction is taught or practiced. As a basic requirement ALL school children should have recycling facilities in their playgrounds. We also need a national survey on how well reduce, reuse, recycle is taught and practiced in schools to ensure that best practice becomes standard practice.