

### THE SCHOOL'S RECYCLING CHALLENGE

At The Appliance Recycling Group (ARG), we're committed to supporting education-led sustainability efforts that make a real difference at a local level. One recent initiative involved a group of primary schools across the West Midlands who came together to launch a region-wide Recycle Challenge, designed to raise environmental awareness and promote responsible habits among young learners. The schools wanted to create an engaging and memorable way to introduce recycling in a real-world context. With that in mind, ARG worked closely with teachers and school staff to deliver a challenge that would be both educational and enjoyable for pupils, while encouraging participation from families at home. The result was a collaborative project that brought together environmental messaging, practical recycling activity and a sense of fun.



To kick off the campaign, ARG delivered a lively school assembly presentation featuring two original characters: Freddy Fridge and Pete the Pirate. Freddy, a wise old household hero, spoke about the value of looking after our planet by reusing and recycling what we can. Pete, the adventurous pirate, added humour and energy, encouraging pupils to become "Recycling Explorers" and go on the hunt for hidden treasure – unwanted items that could be reused or recycled instead of thrown away. The characters helped bring the message to life and made the concept of recycling more accessible for younger pupils.

Following the launch, pupils were invited to bring in items from home that were no longer needed, all of which were collected and stored safely at each school. ARG provided collection containers and clear guidance to staff, ensuring the process was smooth and easy to manage. Throughout the challenge period, our team coordinated regular collections from each site and ensured that everything brought in was sorted, reused where possible, or responsibly recycled. Suitable items were passed on to our network of charitable and community reuse partners, and all remaining materials were processed through our licensed recycling facilities.

To help schools track the outcomes of the challenge, ARG provided simple summary reports at the end of the project. These outlined the total volume of items collected and the proportion successfully reused or recycled. For pupils, this provided a sense of achievement and a clearer understanding of how their actions contributed to something bigger. The results were also shared in classroom discussions and end-of-term assemblies, helping to reinforce key messages and encourage continued engagement.

The response to the challenge was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers reported strong enthusiasm from pupils and families alike, with many children taking the lead in conversations about recycling at home. Parents commented on the way the challenge had sparked new habits, while school staff praised the mix of education, action and storytelling. Freddy Fridge and Pete the Pirate even made a final appearance via video to thank the children for taking part and remind them to keep looking after the planet.

ARG is proud to have supported this initiative and continues to welcome opportunities to work with schools who want to build environmental awareness in creative, practical ways. The success of this challenge showed that even simple activities can have a lasting impact when they connect education with real-world action.