

Delivery reduction and consolidation

Sustainable purchasing decisions can help to maximise the positive benefits of the products while minimising the negative impact on the environment and air quality.

Low pollution procurement decisions, which change the way deliveries are managed, the frequency of deliveries and collections, and the types of products that are being purchased, can improve air quality directly in and around the school. Sustainable procurement choices can also trigger wider change through engaging with suppliers and creating improvement in your supply chain that can affect other customers.

Follow the steps below to assess your current situation and make changes to address the impact it has on air pollution.

A. Audit your current procurement and delivery policy

Consider the following:

1. Who are we buying from?

Contact your current suppliers to see how you can work together to reduce and consolidate deliveries to your school. Ask them to provide information on how they can support your ambitions to improve air quality. You can also encourage your suppliers to sign up to the [Clean Van Commitment](#).

Examples of questions that you can ask your suppliers include the following:

- What steps have you taken to reduce the impact of your services on air quality?
- Do you have a zero-emissions fleet, or are you looking to move towards using electric vehicles?
- Are you able to source products more locally to our school?
- Are you able to follow a more direct route when delivering products to our school?
- Are you able to combine deliveries so that fewer journeys need to be made?

If your current suppliers are unable to support you, consider alternative suppliers to work with that already make commitments to tackling air pollution. Ensure that your contract with your supplier addresses activities that minimise air pollution during their time on site (such as no idling).

2. How do we buy and how much do we buy?

Consider the process by which staff are able to order goods: using a centralised system or even introducing internal request to monitor purchasing can help you reduce the quantity and frequency of purchases that lead to frequent deliveries to the school. Letting staff know that deliveries for specific products will only be placed at a particular frequency or date each month can help change behaviours within the school community. Some suppliers could also provide discounts for consolidating deliveries in this way.

3. What are we buying?

As part of your audit process, it is important to consider whether your school is purchasing low pollution products. Order cleaning/maintenance and art products that are milder/fragrance-free and select liquid products over spray products where possible. These are sometimes labelled 'low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC).

4. What courier services, if any, do we use?

Prioritise pedal bike couriers, combine pick-ups and drop offs, and use zero tailpipe emissions vehicles by opting for services using electric vehicles, where possible.

B. Considerations

- Does your school have sufficient storage to accommodate bulk orders? These help to reduce delivery frequency.
- If your school has a specific procurement policy, you may want to revise this to include air pollution KPIs and policies.
- If your school has a good relationship with a nearby school, you could consider combining your deliveries to reduce the number of deliveries in your area each week. Some suppliers may even provide a discount for reducing deliveries in this way.
- Audit your waste collection service to consider if waste can be collected less frequently.