



Key Stage 1

Spread of Infection: Hand Hygiene Teacher Guidance

Teacher Guidance

Schools are a haven for potentially harmful microbes that can spread rapidly from child-to-child via touch. Our skin naturally secretes oil which helps to keep our skin moist and stops it getting too dry. This oil, however, is a perfect place for microbes to grow and multiply and helps microbes 'stick' to our skin. Although our hands are naturally covered in useful bacteria (also known as flora), our hands can easily pick up harmful microbes from our surroundings (e.g., home, school, garden, animals, pets, food), surfaces and even through the air. These harmful microbes can spread quickly and easily from child-to-child via touch and can make us poorly if swallowed. Washing your hands is one of the best ways to stop harmful microbes from spreading and prevent us from becoming sick.

Washing hands in water alone, even cold water, will eliminate visible dirt and grime. However, soap is required to break up the oil on the surface of the hands which trap microbes. Hand sanitisers can be used where soap and water are not available. When possible, liquid soap should be used instead of bars of soap, especially if used by multiple people. Hands should be washed:

- Before, during and after preparing food
- After using the bathroom - After exposure to animals or animal waste
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- If you're ill or have been around ill people
- After outdoor play

Hand sanitisers with ingredients like alcohol work by destroying microbes as they dry, but don't kill all types of harmful microbes and don't remove visible dirt or other substances from our skin. Therefore, hand sanitisers should not be generally used after using the toilet