



THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Wednesday 9th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Important Update – Handwashing and use of Hand Sanitiser

Following my email with reminders on a few of our protocols yesterday, I felt it would be helpful to expand on and clarify **hand hygiene** in school currently and our revised position regarding use of **personal hand sanitisers** in school by children.

In line with DfE guidance we ensure children wash/sanitise their hands regularly throughout the day:

- On arrival at school
- After using the toilet
- After breaks
- After sporting activities
- Before and after food preparation
- Before and after eating any food, including snacks
- Before leaving school

This is in addition to handwashing associated with activities such as Art, DT etc.

We continue to actively promote PHE/NHS messages such as 'catch, bin it, kill it' and we have tissues in each class (as usual) if needed to catch sneezes and for the children to blow their noses on. They have also been taught to use the inside of their elbow if needs be, in line with guidance. Following using a tissue/sneezing, children are then required to wash hands/sanitise. It is recommended that children wash hands before leaving for school and on arrival home.

The children have been trained to wash their hands for 20 seconds in a very thorough fashion in line with current guidance and will receive regular reminders about this throughout the week. Generally, there is a greater emphasis on using hand sanitiser more with KS2 children and handwashing with KS1 children, but there are situations at points during the day when we will use hand sanitiser with KS1 children also to support logistics. However, whatever the age of the child, if their hands are visibly dirty and contain debris we will always have them wash their hands.

From this point we will now only be using our school supply of hand sanitiser to ensure we have greater control over a number of key health and safety factors. Consequently, we ask that you do not send your child to school with their own hand sanitiser. The reasons for this are as follows:

- School adults administering sanitiser to children ensures effective supervision and use. This also avoids the risk of children ingesting the substance which could be harmful and avoids children





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playing with it and squirting it in another's eye (accidentally or on purpose). It also ensures that children have the maximum benefit from the sanitiser for it to be effective. Left to apply their own personal sanitiser and unmonitored (especially for young children) could result in them missing vital areas of the hand that they have been trained to access with soap and water.

- Every product in school must be recorded on our COSHH register to be compliant with health and safety regulations. School bought hand sanitiser has been included on our COSHH register and as such, we have quick access to the stored risk assessments for this product (and all other products in school). This ensures that should an issue occur, we can respond safely, promptly and accurately drawing on these risk assessments. If children are bringing in their own products we have a significant monitoring issue that would become unmanageable from a COSHH perspective.
- We purchase our own hand sanitiser from trusted, reputable sources thus ensuring the quality and safety of the product. Attempting to identify and monitor the quality/strength of 30 different potential products in the class would not be a sensible use of staff time, especially as parents would be likely to use different products over time.
- When children are close to any heat source the high alcohol content in the sanitiser could be a potential hazard and so we will not use this when in such areas. If children have their own personal hand sanitiser on them (for example in a pocket) this could be a concern if we are not aware.
- We also have the issue of children losing their hand sanitiser and the ability of staff to follow up on this. Children being the caring souls they are, like to share things and this could be an issue with multiple types of sanitiser in school, which may cause an issue with allergies.

We hope that you agree that we have rigorous hand hygiene protocols in place and trust that we are enforcing these alongside all our over Covid-19 safety measures to reduce the risk for all. We ask for your co-operation in managing our protocols by not sending your child in with their own personal hand sanitiser moving forwards.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sam Norton
Headteacher

