

Infection Control in Primary School

The thick, sticky mucus that builds up in the lungs of a person with CF provides an environment for germs to thrive and multiply. Viruses such as the flu, colds and gastro can have more serious effects on a child with CF. Good infection control programs within schools can significantly lower infection rates and reduce the spread of germs for everyone.

Good infection control practices

Good infection control practices in primary schools should include the following:

- Encourage good hand hygiene practices, such as hand washing and coughing and sneezing into their elbow or sleeve.
- Students and staff have access to handwashing facilities including liquid soap, air hand dryer and alcohol based hand gel.
- Follow recommended cleaning practices including toilets and common areas e.g. library, art/music room.
- Encourage parents to keep unwell children at home until symptoms have cleared.
- Avoid children sharing water bottles.
- Teach children about germs as part of the curriculum.

Environmental bacteria

Bacteria found naturally in the environment, that don't pose a risk to people without CF, can cause infection in children with CF. These bacteria are commonly found in stagnant water, mould and soil and once contracted, can be difficult to treat. Activities that can pose a risk to a child with CF should be discussed with the child's parents beforehand.



Environmental risks to consider in primary school include:

- Water play- use fresh water and avoid toys with holes in them as they can contain stagnant water and/or mould.
- Gardening- short periods of exposure, consider using a face mask and gloves.
- Excursions/incursions- may need to take precautions with activities involving stagnant dirty water or damp soil/hay.
- In the classroom- cover fish tanks, regularly refresh water in vases and indoor plants to avoid exposure to stagnant water.

More information

For more information about CF, we have free eLearning modules, including one specific to infection prevention, as well as other resources available on our [CFSmart website](https://www.cfsmart.org.au).