

## **Ravensdale School - Eco-School Finds Greenest Hand Dryers**

Environmentally-minded pupils have insisted on the greenest hand dryers for the refurbishment of their Derbyshire junior school, reducing its carbon footprint and probably helping cut absenteeism through illness too.

Schools can easily waste energy and cause pollution, but with a little forethought and effort can just as easily slash their consumption and minimise their landfill. Ravensdale Junior School in Mickleover is a member of the Eco-Schools scheme and its students have their own Eco-Club. So when a refurbishment of the buildings was announced, the children were keen to ensure that green materials, procedures and equipment were to the fore. They were particularly worried that hand drying, though essential, could be harmful to the environment.

Conventional hand dryers waste energy, paper towels create rubbish and roller towel servicing necessitates many vehicle movements. The youngsters felt certain there had to be a more environmentally friendly solution and set about finding it.

With some adult help they soon identified the Jet Towel as the potential answer to their worries and organised a visit from John Rowley of the manufacturer, Mitsubishi Electric. He recalls: "I went into the school to demonstrate Jet Towel. The children were very impressive. They had a good grasp of our daily impact on the environment, ways it could be reduced and a commitment to do their bit. Some of their questions were very searching; for instance they wanted to know about the energy requirements for making the units – very few adults have ever asked about that!"

John talked about Jet Towel's green credentials then had the children help him with a site-wide usage calculation and together they worked out the energy saving potential over conventional dryers.

A normal hand dryer blows warmed air over the hands to evaporate the water. A Jet towel is completely different: you slip your hands into a generous sized slot, which triggers a high

speed air blast that blow the water off and isolates it in a receptor tank at the base of the hand dryer.

“A normal dryer frees bacteria on the hands into the atmosphere, and the warmth can encourage them to multiple,” comments John. “They can then easily transfer from pupil to pupil, with the resultant ‘mini-epidemics’ many schools suffer from in winter.”

Significantly, hand drying takes about 10 seconds with a Jet Towel, less than a quarter of the time it takes with a warm air dryer. This prevents bottlenecks at break time and reduces the incidence of kids running off with still wet hands – a real hygiene no-no.

Headteacher, Mrs Paula Martin is delighted with the Jet Towels. “We have 12 around the school. I like them, the staff like them and the kids love them. Visitors usually comment favourably, and when we had the next year’s intake from infants up to visit in the summer they were completely bowled over – I even had one little lad ask if Dr Who had one in the Tardis.”

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