

## DMU academics share hand hygiene message in India

A children's book designed by two De Montfort University Leicester (DMU) lecturers is helping to share messages of hand hygiene in India.



### *The DMU team are taking children on A Germ's Journey*

Dr Katie Laird and Dr Sarah Younie designed A Germ's Journey book and website to raise awareness of the importance of hand washing. After a successful launch in Leicester they have travelled to Ahmedabad in India to run workshops for youngsters in partnership with charity Manav Sadhna.

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Accompanying them are a team of student volunteers and staff from DMU Square Mile India, who travel to the region throughout the year to support a variety of community projects.

During their visit they are running a series of workshops involving hundreds of children at schools in the ashram and at village schools.



***Some of the children from the Ashram learning about germs and clean hands***

Dr Laird, [head of the Infectious Disease Group at DMU](#), and [Dr Sarah Younie](#), Reader in Education, Innovation and Technology, came up with A Germ's Journey to show the importance of hand washing in preventing disease and communicating it at a young age.

A Germ's Journey includes illustrations which feature special thermochromic black paint. Once the child's hand is placed upon the paint, the microbes present appear on the hands in the book and the black paint vanishes.

Dr Laird said: "Our health hygiene resources are making an impact. We have had a very rewarding time."



***Children using UV light to detect germs after hand washing***

Among the activities have been colouring, fun workshops, using UV lights to show children how many germs were on their hands, and led sessions with the youngsters from the Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad, Gujarat's biggest city.

Some of the sessions involved up to 150 children at a time. The team also worked with staff at the ashram and schools to continue their health hygiene work after they have returned to DMU.

During the visit, the team also visited the huge Hindu complex in Gujarat called Swaminarayan Akshardham in Gandhinagar.

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