

Winter Illness Guidance for Schools

As we move through the winter months, respiratory infections (such as colds, flu etc) as well as diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses continue to circulate. To help keep the school community healthy, here are a few things to keep in mind.

Common Symptoms

Respiratory infections:

Common symptoms of respiratory infections include fever, tiredness, runny nose, cough and sore throat. These symptoms last up to 3 to 4 days

Diarrhoea and vomiting

Common symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting usually are sudden onset of sickness and/or diarrhoea. These symptoms usually last 1 to 2 days

When Should a Child Stay at Home?

If the child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting: Keep the child at home until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.

If the child has high temperature / fever and unwell: Keep them at home until their temperature is normal and they feel well enough to return.

If a child has mild symptoms: Children with a runny nose, sore throat or mild cough who are otherwise well can continue attending school.

Please seek urgent medical advice if a child is unusually sleepy, unable to drink, develops an unusual rash, or has symptoms such as headache or neck stiffness.

How Infections Spread?

Respiratory infections spread through droplets, aerosols, close contact and contaminated surfaces. Good hygiene and ventilation significantly reduce transmission.

How You Can Help Reduce Spread?

Hand and respiratory hygiene

Encouraging regular handwashing with soap and running water.

Using tissues for coughs and sneezes, binning the tissues and washing hands after that

Cleaning

Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces such as taps, door handles, toilet flushes.

Ventilation

Ensuring rooms have comfortable ventilation where and when possible.

Vaccination

Encouraging staff and parents/guardians to keep up with flu and routine childhood vaccinations.

Useful Resources

Infectious illness posters

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infectious-diseases-schools-and-other-childcare-settings>

Stop Norovirus Spreading

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stop-norovirus-spreading-this-winter-leaflet>

Hand Hygiene (e-Bug)

<https://www.e-bug.eu/>

Best Practice Hand Hygiene Poster

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/nipc-manual-appendix-1-handwashing.pdf>

Health protection in children and young people settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

Parents' Guide to Keeping Kids Healthy

<https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2024/09/04/a-parents-guide-to-keeping-kids-healthy-this-school-year/>



