



28th March 2024.

Dear Families,

As you are aware we have a number of children and staff at school who have had diarrhoea and vomiting over the last few days.

The South-West Health Protection Team (UKHSA) have assessed this situation again today and the school are taking all necessary precautions. This is generally a self-limiting illness probably caused by a virus, but that it is very infectious. The most usual symptom is vomiting. Some people may have diarrhoea and/or abdominal pain. Symptoms rarely last for more than 24 – 48 hours. The incubation period (time it takes for the illness to develop) is between 12 and 48 hours.

Viral gastroenteric disease is circulating at this time of year and can be more prevalent when children and staff are vulnerable post infections such as chicken pox etc.

If your child is affected, please keep them off school. They should not return until 48 hours after the diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped.

The virus is easily spread from person to person. Good hygiene by everyone in the family reduces the risk. This means **washing hands with soap and warm water after going to the toilet, and before preparing or eating food as a minimum.**

It is important to clean up carefully when someone has been sick as vomit is very infectious. It is important to clear up spills of vomit or faeces immediately, by thorough washing of the contaminated environment with detergent and hot water. For hard surfaces, (floor, work tops etc. an additional disinfection with a dilute solution of Milton or household bleach (according to manufacturer's instructions) will reduce the risk of contamination. DO NOT MIX these substances with soap and water. Be sure that each family member uses separate towels and flannels which are changed and washed frequently.

Staying off school until fully recovered for 48 hours and hand washing are the most important elements of reducing the risk of infection spreading.

UKHSA have advised that enhanced cleaning is performed over the school holidays as well as current cleaning regimes which are in place to reduce any further risk.

If you need any further advice, or if you are worried about your child, please contact NHS 111, your GP or, in an emergency, 999. If your child is unwell enough to need medical review, please do provide a stool sample to help identify the bug causing the illness. You can share this letter with your healthcare provider, so they are aware of the current outbreak.

For more information on symptoms and management of viral gastro-enteritis please see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>

Yours faithfully
Mrs Constanza
Head Teacher
& UKHSA South West Health Protection Team