



Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Outbreak of Norovirus in your primary school

In the last week, there have been a number of children at the school unwell with symptoms of a viral illness. The symptoms the children have are consistent with viral gastroenteritis. Although not confirmed, this is usually caused by Norovirus, a frequent cause of vomiting and diarrhoea in the community during the winter.

The most common symptom is vomiting. Diarrhoea tends to be short-lived and less severe than with other causes of gastroenteritis. Other symptoms include nausea, abdominal cramps, headache, muscle aches, chills and fever. The illness is usually mild in nature and gets better without antibiotics, which are not appropriate for viral illnesses. Symptoms usually last between one and three days.

Norovirus is infectious and is easily spread from person to person by the faecal-oral route and by vomiting, environmental contamination and subsequent indirect person to person spread.

Exclusion: an affected child or member of staff is advised to stay away from school until 48 hours after the vomiting and/or diarrhoea have stopped. This is an important measure that we have asked the school/nursery to adopt in order to limit the spread of this infection to others.

We would like to emphasise the need for good hand hygiene and the supervision of this in younger children. Hands should be washed with soap and water after contact with an affected person or environment.

If you have any queries, please contact the South London Health Protection Team on 0344 326 2052 quoting reference number 199274

Yours faithfully,

Dr Taavi Tillmann
Specialty Registrar in Public Health Medicine
SLHPT.OnCall@phe.gov.uk