



Knowsley Council

May 2016

To: Primary Schools in Knowsley for onward transmission to Parents / Guardians

Dear Parent / Guardian

Support in Managing Outbreaks

Over the past few months there have been a number of infectious illnesses affecting young children in Knowsley. These have included febrile illnesses (those which cause a fever), and norovirus which causes diarrhoea and vomiting. We have also seen an increase in scarlet fever locally and nationally.

Schools and parents play an important role in reducing the spread of these illnesses and I would request that parents / guardians please follow the advice shown below:-

- Thorough hand-washing with liquid soap and water is a vital infection control measure. Make sure that all children, specifically those with learning difficulties, have any help they may need with personal hygiene.
- It is important to let the school know the nature of the illness when reporting sickness absence for your child. Schools need to keep daily records of the numbers of children off so that any outbreak can be identified quickly and appropriate actions taken.
- **Children displaying the symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting should always be kept away from school as they may pass on the infection. Children should always be kept at home for 48 hours after their last episode of diarrhoea and vomiting, as they can remain infectious.**
- Early signs of scarlet fever to look out for are sore throat, headache and fever with the characteristic pinkish/red sandpappy rash appearing within a day or two, typically on the chest and stomach but then spreading to other parts of the body. Individuals who think they or their child may have scarlet fever should seek advice from their GP without delay as prompt antibiotic treatment is needed to reduce the risk of complications.
- As scarlet fever is highly contagious, children or adults diagnosed with scarlet fever are advised to stay off school or work until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid passing on the infection.
- Most infections are spread by close contact. Infected children should be kept away from school staff and other children.

Many thanks for your help in this regard.

If you would like further information, this can be accessed via the NHS Choices website at: www.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

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