



09 March 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

### **CASES OF DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING**

As many of you may be aware, some of our local schools have been suffering from a high number of cases of gastro-enteritis

We are asking all parents and carers to follow the guidelines below from Public Health England to help minimise the spread of this illness.

Although this is a mild illness, probably caused by a virus, it is *very* infectious. The incubation period (time it takes for the illness to develop) is between 24 and 48 hours. The symptoms of this illness include vomiting, headache, fever, diarrhoea and abdominal pain, and usually last between 24 - 48 hours. However, if symptoms persist (more than 48 hours), phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice on whether or not you need to see a doctor.

To minimise the risk of becoming infected, public health recommend that hands are regularly washed thoroughly with soap and water (alcohol hand gel is not effective in this instance), but particularly after toilet visits and before eating and handling food. It is important to clear up spills of vomit or faeces immediately, by thorough washing of the contaminated area with detergent and hot water. For hard surfaces (floor, work tops etc.), an additional disinfection with diluted solution of Milton or household bleach (according to manufacturer's instructions) will reduce the 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.

If your child develops any of the symptoms mentioned above, and to prevent an escalation of cases in the school, please keep them at home for at least 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting (this is national guidance). Should your child feel sick or be complaining of stomach cramps please do not send them into school as they could be contagious at this point. We would ask that you keep them at home and see if any further symptoms develop.

If your child is unwell, please encourage him/her to drink plenty of water and rest.

Many thanks,

Des Stokes  
Head of School