



December 2019

FLU-LIKE ILLNESS IN SCHOOLS
INFORMATION FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS

General hygiene

The spread of most infectious illnesses is reduced through good hand hygiene. Please ensure that you and your child wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap, particularly after using the toilet, after using a tissue to catch a cough or sneeze, and before eating.

Influenza (Flu)

Flu and flu-like viruses spread easily between people from coughs and sneezes. They can live on hands and surfaces for up to 24 hours. Symptoms of flu may develop quickly and can include:

- Sudden fever
- Dry, chesty cough
- Sore throat
- Aching body
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Diarrhoea or tummy pain
- Nausea

For most healthy people flu is an unpleasant but self-limiting illness. However, some people can be more at risk of developing severe illness or complications including the following groups:

- those aged 65 years or over
- pregnant women
- those with a long-term medical condition – for example, diabetes or a heart, lung, kidney or neurological disease
- those with a weakened immune system – for example, because of chemotherapy or HIV

If you or your child are in an at-risk group AND develop symptoms of flu, please seek prompt medical assessment via NHS 111, by a GP or a nurse who will be able to provide further advice.

If you or your child are not in an at-risk group but develop flu like illness and are concerned about your symptoms, please consult NHS 111, your GP or nurse in the normal way.

Flu vaccination

The flu vaccination is the best form of protection against influenza (flu). There are several strains of flu and even if there has been illness at school, the vaccine may offer further protection against other strains of flu.

Parents/Carers are encouraged to have their children vaccinated through the school-based immunisation programme and to attend mop-up clinics if they miss scheduled sessions due to illness.

Toddlers aged two and three, children and adults who are in risk groups for flu (including those aged 65 years and over, pregnant women, people with long term medical conditions or weakened immune systems) should attend their GP or pharmacy for vaccination as soon as possible if they have not already been vaccinated.

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/>