

18 September 2017



Dear Parents, Carers and Students

re Diarrhoea and Vomiting (Gastro-enteritis)

We are writing to let you know that a number of children and staff at school have had gastro-enteritis over the last few days.

We have been advised by Public Health England and the local Environmental Health Department that this is a mild 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 24 and 48 hours.

If your child is affected, please keep him or her at home. He or she should not return until 48 hours after the diarrhoea and/or 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.

It is important to clean up carefully when someone has been sick as vomit is very infectious. Spills of vomit or faeces must be cleared up immediately, by thorough washing of the contaminated environment with detergent and hot water. For hard surfaces, (floors, work tops etc.) an additional disinfection with a dilute 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.

Hand washing after visiting the toilet, cleaning up spillages and before handling / eating food is the most important element of reducing the risk of infection.

We are raising the profile of proper hand hygiene within the college and are working with ESS, the facilities management company responsible for cleaning at the college, to ensure that the college continues to be regularly thoroughly cleaned to reduce any further risk.

If you need any further advice you can contact Public Health England on 0300 303 81 62 or NHS England by dialling 111.

Yours sincerely

The Spires College

