

Diarrhoea and Vomiting (D&V) and food poisoning

This information is based on the national guidance: [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education](#).

Diarrhoea and Vomiting (D&V) have a variety of causes which can include infections, toxins, and non-infectious disease. D&V should be treated as potentially infectious in the first instance.

Symptoms of food poisoning or D&V:

- Diarrhoea – 3 or more liquid or semi-liquid poos within 24 hours
- Being sick (vomiting)
- Feeling sick
- Tummy pain
- High temperature
- Feeling generally unwell

When should children with D&V or food poisoning stop coming to school, nursery, or college?

Those with D&V or food poisoning should not attend school until 48 hours after diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped and they feel well enough to return. If they have been prescribed medication, they should take the full course and ensure there is no D&V for 48 hours after finishing the medication.

If the GP or UKHSA health protection team becomes aware of the specific cause of the D&V, they may recommend different exclusion periods. Any extended periods of exclusion will be recommended by the UKHSA health protection team or local authority environmental health.

All outbreaks of food poisoning should be investigated, the UKHSA HPT will work with Environmental Health Officers from the local authority.

What should we do in the education setting?

Ensure children with D&V do not return to school until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped and they are well enough to return. People who have had D&V should not use a swimming pool until 2 weeks after symptoms have stopped.

Encourage children and staff **to wash their hands with soap and water rather than alcohol hand gel**. Alcohol hand gels are not effective against some of the infections that can cause D&V. Everyone should wash their hands regularly, but especially before eating or handling food, and after using the toilet.

Ensure food hygiene standards are kept high and the environment is cleaned regularly. Especially bathrooms, kitchens, frequently touched areas, and areas where children with D&V have been present. Soft furnishings should also be cleaned with the appropriate products.

Equipment such as dishwashers and washing machines should be appropriately maintained to ensure they remain operational.



Ensure any spillages are cleaned up appropriately, staff cleaning up diarrhoea and vomit should have the PPE and equipment needed to clean up any spillages. A video demonstrating the importance of cleaning up spillages properly can be found [here](#).

Inform the UKHSA health protection team (0344 2254 524) if there are a higher than previously experienced or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences; 2 or more cases with similar symptoms linked by time and place, or if there is evidence of more severe disease, such as hospitalisations or deaths. Please also let CCT@derby.gov.uk know.

Teaching resources:

Early years - [hand and respiratory hygiene](#)

KS1 - [hand and respiratory hygiene](#)

KS2 - [hand and respiratory hygiene and vaccinations](#)

KS3 - [hand and respiratory hygiene and vaccinations](#)

KS4 - [hand and respiratory hygiene and vaccinations](#)

