



# EVINGTON VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Caring and Learning Together*

November 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

We have been informed by Leicester City Council that there has been an on-going outbreak of norovirus across the City. Here at Evington Valley we have had a number of children absent because of this bug, and therefore thought it would be useful to give you some information about how to prevent the illness and what to do if any of your family becomes ill.

### ***What is norovirus?***

Norovirus, which causes diarrhoea and vomiting, is one of the most common stomach bugs in the UK. It's also called the winter vomiting bug because it's more common in winter, although you can catch it at any time of the year. Norovirus can be very unpleasant but it usually clears up by itself in a few days. You can normally look after yourself or your child at home. Try to avoid going to your GP, as norovirus can spread to others very easily. Call your GP or NHS 111 if you're concerned or need any advice.

### ***What are the symptoms?***

You're likely to have norovirus if you experience:

- suddenly feeling sick
- projectile vomiting
- watery diarrhoea

Some people also have a slight fever, headaches, painful stomach cramps and aching limbs.

The symptoms appear one to two days after you become infected and typically last for up to 2 or 3 days.

### ***How do people catch norovirus?***

Norovirus spreads very easily in public places such as hospitals, nursing homes and schools. You can catch it if small particles of vomit or poo from an infected person get into your mouth, such as through:

- close contact with someone with norovirus – they may breathe out small particles containing the virus that you could inhale
- touching contaminated surfaces or objects – the virus can survive outside the body for several days
- eating contaminated food – this can happen if an infected person doesn't wash their hands before handling food

A person with norovirus is most infectious from when their symptoms start until 48 hours after all their symptoms have passed, although they may also be infectious for a short time before and after this.

You can get norovirus more than once because the virus is always changing, so your body is unable to build up long-term resistance to it.

Please turn over.....

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### ***What can I do to stop myself catching norovirus?***

It's not always possible to avoid getting norovirus, but following the advice below can help stop the virus spreading.

- **Stay off work or school until at least 48 hours after the symptoms have passed.** You should also avoid visiting anyone in hospital during this time.
- Wash your hands **frequently and thoroughly with soap and water**, particularly after using the toilet and before preparing food. Don't rely on alcohol hand gels, as they don't kill the virus.
- **Disinfect any surfaces or objects that could be contaminated.** It's best to use a bleach-based household cleaner.
- **Wash any items of clothing or bedding** that could have become contaminated separately on a hot wash to ensure the virus is killed.
- **Don't share towels and flannels.**
- **Flush away any infected poo or vomit in the toilet** and clean the surrounding area.
- **Avoid eating raw, unwashed produce** and only eat oysters from a reliable source, as oysters can carry norovirus.

### ***What should I do if I have norovirus?***

If you experience sudden diarrhoea and vomiting, the best thing to do is to stay at home until you're feeling better. There's no cure for norovirus, so you have to let it run its course. You don't usually need to get medical advice unless there's a risk of a more serious problem.

To help ease your own or your child's symptoms:

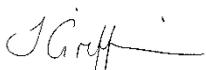
- **Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.** You need to drink more than usual to replace the fluids lost from vomiting and diarrhoea – as well as water, adults could also try fruit juice and soup. Avoid giving fizzy drinks or fruit juice to children as it can make their diarrhoea worse. Babies should continue to feed as usual, either with breast milk or other milk feeds.
- **Take paracetamol for any fever or aches and pains.**
- **Get plenty of rest.**
- **If you feel like eating, eat plain foods** such as soup, rice, pasta and bread.
- **Use special rehydration drinks** made from sachets bought from pharmacies if you have signs of dehydration, such as a dry mouth or dark urine.
- **Adults can take anti-diarrhoeal and anti-emetic (anti-vomiting) medication** – these aren't suitable for everyone though, so you should check the medicine leaflet or ask your pharmacist or GP for advice before trying them.

**Norovirus can spread very easily. To avoid infecting other people, wash your hands regularly. Stay at home for 48 hours after the last sign of symptoms, and do not prepare food for others for three days after the last sign of symptoms.**

Within school we have been revisiting hand hygiene with the children, and would ask that you continue this at home. If your child is sick in school, you will be asked to come and collect him/her and you will be advised to keep them at home for at least 48 hours after they are last sick.

For further advice and information, please visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or speak to your GP.

Yours sincerely



Jill Griffin  
Headteacher