

25 November 2019



HOWDEN SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mr G Cannon

Re: School Closure due to Virus

Dear Parent/Carer

At Howden School, we have experienced an increase in the number of pupils suffering from vomiting and diarrhoea, consistent with the symptoms of the Norovirus, over the last few days.

I have been advised by the Health Protection Unit that this is a mild illness caused by a virus, but that it is very infectious. **As a consequence of the large number of students affected, we have made the difficult decision to close the school for the next 2 days (Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 November 2019) and will re-open at 08:40am on Thursday 28 November.**

The symptoms typically begin 12 to 48 hours after exposure, lasting typically from one to three days. The symptoms of the virus can be a combination of the following:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea

It is sometimes associated with flu-like illness, e.g. aching joints and limbs.

To treat the symptoms of Norovirus, the NHS recommends the following for children and young people:

- Ensure they drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration
- Give them paracetamol for any fever, aches and pains
- Ensure they get plenty of rest
- If they feel like eating, give them easy to digest foods such as bread or brown rice
- Stay at home – there is nothing the GP can prescribe for sickness and diarrhoea, although your local chemist may be able to provide rehydration solutions

- Contact your GP or call NHS 111 to seek advice if the symptoms last longer than a few days, or visit www.nhs.uk/norovirus for more information

If your child is affected, please ensure they are kept off school and do not return until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped to prevent further spread of the virus.

Norovirus is extremely contagious and easily spread – to help prevent the spread of the virus, parents should:

- Wash hands frequently, and encourage their children to do the same – especially after going to the toilet, before eating and before handling food
- Ensure an infected child is not sharing things such as toys, food, blankets, etc.
- Keep an infected child home from school and away from other children where possible – children with the virus should also avoid contact with vulnerable adults, such as elderly relatives
- Encourage all children and adults to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissues and wash their hands after using or disposing of tissues
- Ensure all spillages of faeces and vomit are cleaned up immediately

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please don't hesitate to get in touch with **Jo Harding** on 01430 430448 or email jharding@howdenschool.net.

Yours sincerely,



Mr G Cannon
Headteacher