**Letter template: For school to send to the parents / carers - when to keep a child home with sickness and diarrhoea symptoms (possible Norovirus).**

Dear Parent / Carer

We are seeing a lot of children in the school/early years setting with sickness bug symptoms, including vomiting and diarrhoea. Therefore we are writing to parents and carers with advice to help keep the children and staff in our school well.

**If your child has symptoms of a sickness bug (vomiting and/or diarrhoea):**

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay off school until 48 hours **after** symptoms have stopped and they are well enough to return.

**General advice:**

Good hygiene measures are extremely important to prevent the spread of gastrointestinal (stomach) infections. These include:

* Frequent handwashing with soap and water, especially after using the toilet (or changing nappies), before eating, preparing, or handling food and after touching pets and animals. Note that alcohol hand gels do not kill norovirus.
* Disinfect any surfaces or objects that could be contaminated, using a bleach-based household cleaner
* Regular cleaning of kitchens and toilets. Flush any poo or vomit in the toilet and clean the surrounding area with a bleach-based household cleaner
* Prompt washing any items of clothing, toys or bedding that could have become contaminated separately on a hot wash (60 °C) to ensure the virus is killed
* Do not share towels and flannels
* Of course, wash hands after handling spillages of vomit or diarrhoea.
* Avoid eating raw, unwashed food

**Advice for individuals with diarrhoea and vomiting:**

* Anyone with diarrhoea and vomiting can usually treat themselves at home. The most important thing is for them to rest and have lots of fluids to avoid dehydration. Diarrhoea usually stops within 5-7 days and vomiting usually stops in 1-2 days.
* General advice about how to self-treat the symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting and when to seek further medical support is available from the NHS webpages: [Diarrhoea and vomiting - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/).
* Please contact 111 or your GP if you are concerned about any illness symptoms in your child.

**Other information**

* Is my child too ill for School? <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
* Further information about Norovirus can be found on the NHS website: [Norovirus (vomiting bug) - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus/).
* [Little Orange Book – Expert Advice on helping children and babies when they’re poorly](https://www.northumberlandccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2022/01/The-Little-Orange-Book-2021.pdf) offers expert advice on helping babies and young children when they’re poorly.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Xxxxxxxx