

Communicable Disease – Guidance for Schools

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	transmittable PERIOD	RESTRICTIONS EXCLUSIONS	SCHOOL CONTACTS	NOTES
Athletes Foot	Unknown	Infectious while lesions are present. Fungal spores are spread by direct contact or via contaminated floors, showers etc.	None	No Action	Dry between toes after bathing. Apply fungicidal dusting powder to feet.
Chicken Pox	2-3 Weeks	Infectious up to 5 days before and not more than 5 days after appearance of spots.	Exclusion for at least 5 days after spots first appear or until spots become dry.	Pregnant women should be made aware so that they can consult their doctor for advice if they are not immune.	Infection confers long immunity. Second attacks are rare. For Shingles consult CCDC**
Cold Sores	2-12 Days	Virus can be present up to 7 weeks after recovery from lip lesion, usually spread by direct contact or saliva.	None	No Action	Good personal hygiene can minimise transfer of infectious material.
Conjunctivitis “Pink Eye”	Varies according to cause	Can be infectious while eye is inflamed. Spread by contact, sharing flannels etc.	Exclusion not usually necessary after medical treatment and/or advice.	No Action	Good personal hygiene can minimise transfer of infectious material.
Gastroenteritis Diarrhoea &/or vomiting.	Varies according to cause.	Multiple linked cases should be reported at the earliest opportunity to the local environmental health.* Under usual circumstances, individual cases aged 5 years or over should be excluded until well and free from symptoms. Children under 5 years or those not able to implement good standards of personal hygiene should be excluded until 48 hours after they are symptom free.			
Glandular Fever	4-6 Weeks	The virus may be carried by the affected person for a year or more after the illness. Transmission is via saliva, usually kissing.	Exclusion until clinically well.	No Action	
Hand Foot & Mouth	3-5 Days	Particularly infectious during period of acute illness but sometimes longer.	Exclusion until clinically well.	No Action	Good lavatory hygiene important for 2 months after illness.
Headlice	Headlice can only move from one head to another during prolonged head to head contact (at least 1 minute)		Refer to local policy and leaflet		It is advisable that all affected members of a child’s family are treated.
Hepatitis A “Yellow Jaundice”	15-20 Days	The virus is spread from the faeces of an affected person to the mouth of another. The infectious period is during the last half of the incubation period and for up to a week after jaundice appears.	Exclusion until 1 week after jaundice appears plus clinically well.	Advice should be sought from CCDC** at an early stage	The best control measure is scrupulous hand washing after lavatory and regular cleaning of WC’s etc.
Influenza	1-5 Days	Infectious up to one week after onset	Exclusion until well	No Action	Immunisation available for certain vulnerable groups e.g. Asthma, diabetes, heart or kidney disease.

Impetigo	4-10 Days	Infectious usually until lesions healed. The bacteria are usually spread by pus on fingers.	Exclusion for 48 hours after treatment commenced unless lesions can be covered	No Action	Medical treatment, covering lesion and personal hygiene are important.
Measles	7-18 Days	Infectious from just before illness starts until 4 days after appearance of rash.	Exclusion until well	No Action (Most children immunised)	Unimmunised persons can usually be vaccinated successfully if within 3 days of contact
Meningitis & Meningococcal Disease	Varies according to cause	Advice should be sought at an early stage from the CCDC**			
Mumps	12-25 Days	Infectious from 2 days before to 4 days after onset of facial swelling	Exclusion until swelling has subsided	No Action	
Ringworm	10-14 Days	Infectious until lesions healed. Spread by direct contact skin to skin or indirect contact via combs, clothing etc.	Exclusion not necessary after treatment has started.	No Action	Pets and farm animals may be a source of infection.
Rubella "German Measles"	14-23 Days	Infectious for about 1 week before and at least 4 days after onset of rash.	Exclusion for 7 days after onset of rash.	Pregnant woman should be made aware so that they can consult their doctor for advice if they are not immune.	
Scabies	2-6 weeks (1-4 days if previously infected)	Infectious until treated. Mites are transferred during skin to skin contact and via recently infected under clothes or bed linen.	Exclusion until the day after treatment.	Household members and those who have had prolonged skin to skin contact should have simultaneous treatment.	The mites make tiny burrows in the skin which itch intensely especially at night. Sites include between fingers, wrists elbows etc.
Scarlet fever Scarlatina	1-3 Days	Usually spread by direct contact. Infectious until treated with appropriate antibiotic for 48 hours.	Exclusion until 48 hours after treatment.	No Action	
Slapped face disease "Fifth disease"	4-20 Days	Infectious before onset of rash but probably not after rash appears.	Exclusion until clinically well.	This virus may unusually cause damage to the foetus in pregnancy. Advice should be sought from G.P.	Rash has a "slapped face" appearance on cheeks followed a day or so later by a lace like rash on body.
Threadworms	Few Days	Infectious until treatment. Eggs can be transferred to mouth on fingers if the anus is scratched.	None	Contacts and family members should be treated simultaneously.	Good hygiene and adequate treatment are essential.
Verrucae and Warts	2-3 Months	Infectious while visible lesions persist.	None, Verrucae socks may be worn for swimming.	No Action	Usually disappear spontaneously. If pain on walking medical advice can be sought.
Whooping Cough	7-10 Days	Infectious from onset until about 3 weeks later. (Or 5 days if treated with appropriate antibiotic).	Exclusion for 3 weeks from onset. If treated with antibiotic can return when clinically well.	Unimmunised household contacts under 7 years should be excluded until on antibiotic treatment.	During an outbreak children under 5years should not be admitted to school unless known to be immunised.

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