



21<sup>st</sup> February 2018.

Ref No: 193220

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We have been informed that a number of children at Bousfield are unwell this week, with symptoms of a viral illness, which are consistent with viral gastroenteritis. Although not confirmed, this is usually caused by Norovirus, a frequent cause of vomiting and diarrhoea in the community during the winter. This letter is to advise you on common symptoms of Norovirus, and what you can do to reduce the spread of the infection.

### What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhoea and vomiting, usually lasting 1 -2 days.

### What should you do if your child is unwell?

- Make sure they get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- If your child is unusually sleepy, won't take fluids or has other symptoms, e.g. blood in their stool, an unusual rash, headache, neck stiffness or difficulty breathing, call NHS 111, contact your GP or take your child to hospital.
- Inform the school/nursery that your child is ill and what symptoms they have had.
- **Keep your child at home until they are well enough to return to school AND they have been clear of diarrhoea and vomiting symptoms for 48 hours.**
- Keep your child away from other children and people that are particularly vulnerable, e.g. the elderly and those with chronic illnesses.

### How can you prevent the spread of these infections?

Hand washing is the most important way of preventing the spread of gastro-intestinal infections – this applies to the child who is ill AND the person(s) looking after them.

Hands should always be washed, using liquid soap if possible:

- Before and after caring for your child.
- After using the toilet.
- Before eating or handling food.
- After cleaning up a mess (e.g. vomit, faeces or urine).

Other ways of preventing the spread of infection are to:

- Keep a separate towel for family members who have symptoms.
- Machine wash soiled clothing, bed linen and towels on hottest wash for that fabric.
- Clean baths and washbasins thoroughly and disinfect after use.
- If cleaning up diarrhoea /vomit, wash the surface with hot soapy water and disinfect.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Wynne-Evans,  
Consultant in Communicable Disease Control  
North West London Health Protection Team