



ROCKLIFFE MANOR
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We have been informed that in Reception there has been a case of hand, foot and mouth diagnosed. To ensure good communication with parents, we wanted to let you know and also give you some information about this common and non-serious childhood illness.

Below you will find some guidance which details how long children should be kept off school and ways to stop the illness spreading, advice that we are following in school in terms of hand washing and hygiene.

What is hand, foot and mouth disease? This is a disease caused by a group of viruses which usually affects young children. It causes blisters on hands and feet, and mouth ulcers inside the cheeks and on the tongue. They may also have a sore throat and high temperature. These symptoms last for 7–10 days.

Is it dangerous? No. All make a full recovery.

How is it spread? The virus is spread by coughs and sneezes, and is also found in the faeces of infected children. Some children infected with the virus do not have symptoms but can still pass it to others.

Is there any treatment? There is no specific treatment for hand, foot and mouth disease – it is usually a mild and self-limiting illness. If a child feels unwell paracetamol may help. Antibiotics and creams or ointments for the blisters are not effective. Children recover just as quickly without them.

What is the incubation period? Symptoms start 3-5 days after exposure to the virus.

How long are children infectious? Children who are ill are infectious. Also they may carry the virus in their faeces for many weeks after they have recovered and so can continue to pass on infection.

How long should children stay away from school? Children who are unwell should be kept off school until they are feeling better. Keeping children off school for longer than this is unlikely to stop the virus spreading. There may be other children in the school who appear well but are spreading the virus.

How can spread be prevented? Since the virus is found in faeces, scrupulous attention must always be paid to hand washing after using the toilet.

Can you catch it more than once? Yes, but children who are ill during an outbreak at school or nursery are unlikely to get it again during the same outbreak.

If you have any further questions, please do contact us.

Yours faithfully,

Nancy Cook
Associate Headteacher