

23rd January 2026



Dear School and Early Years Leaders,

Re: Circulating Winter Illnesses (Flu and Norovirus)

We are writing to advise you of the current situation regarding circulating winter illnesses that may impact on your school or early years setting.

Flu

The latest data has shown that since schools and early years settings have returned following the Christmas break, there has been an upward trend nationally in children (age 0-14) testing positive for Flu.

Key advice remains that children and staff should not come into school or early years settings if they have a temperature. They should remain off until they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Good hygiene practices such as frequent cleaning and hand and respiratory hygiene should be reinforced and making sure indoor spaces are well-ventilated will help reduce the spread.

More information on when you should keep children away from educational and early years settings can be found on the NHS website [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

Vaccinations remain available to any child aged 2-16 years who has not been immunised, via the following routes:

School-aged child Flu vaccinations: Booking via 0300 124 5515 or email sirona.sch-imms@nhs.net

Pre-school child Flu vaccinations: Booking via child's GP surgery or [book a free NHS flu vaccination at a pharmacy online](#) or in the [NHS App](#)

Norovirus (Winter-vomiting bug)

Cases of Norovirus in England have increased by 61% over the last 2 weeks.

Key advice to help reduce the risk in school and early years settings is to maintain high standards of hand hygiene and environmental cleaning. It is important that children and adults wash hands regularly with warm soapy water. **Alcohol gels do not kill norovirus.**

If children or staff have symptoms of norovirus (diarrhoea and/ or vomiting) they should not attend the school or early years setting and should not return until at least 2 days

(48 hours) after diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped.

More information is available on the NHS website here [Diarrhoea and vomiting - NHS.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/)

Further advice can be found using this link [Managing specific infectious diseases: A to Z - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-specific-infectious-diseases-a-to-z)

Should you need any further advice or guidance regarding an infectious disease concern within your education or early years setting, here are the contact details for the UKHSA South West Health Protection Team:

Phone: 0300 303 8162

Email: swhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



Julie Northcott, FFPH, MPH

Deputy Director of Public Health, Bristol City Council



Vik Verma

Director of Education and Skills, Bristol City Council