



St. Edmund's Church of England Primary School
Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 6JP
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Dear Parents / Carers,

26th November 2024

As you may know, we have had some confirmed cases of hand, foot and mouth in school and at local other schools. The following information has been taken from the NHS website :

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common childhood illness that can also affect adults. It usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. You cannot take antibiotics or other medicines to cure it.

The first symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease can be :

- a sore throat
- a high temperature
- not wanting to eat

The second stage usually starts a few days later and symptoms can include :

- mouth ulcers which can be painful
- a raised rash of spots on the hands and feet and sometimes the groin area and bottom

The rash of spots can look pink, red or darker than the surrounding skin, depending on your skin tone. The spots can turn into blisters, which might be grey or lighter than surrounding skin and can be painful. Symptoms are usually mild and are the same in adults and children.

To help the symptoms :

- drink cool fluids to soothe the mouth and prevent dehydration (but avoid acidic drinks, such as fruit juice)
- eat soft foods like yoghurt and avoid hot, salty and spicy foods
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to help ease a sore mouth or throat

Ask a pharmacist for advice about treatments, such as mouth ulcer gels, sprays and mouthwashes to relieve pain.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is easily passed on to other people. Its spread in coughs, sneezes, poo and the fluid in the blisters. You can get it more than once. You can start spreading it from a few days before you have any symptoms but you're most likely to spread it to others in the first five days after symptoms start.

To reduce the risk of spreading hand, foot and mouth disease :

- wash your hands often with soap and water and children's hands too
- use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- do not share towels or household items like cups or cutlery
- wash soiled bedding and clothing on a hot wash

NHS guidance states that you should keep your child off school or nursery whilst they're feeling too unwell to go but as soon as they're feeling better, they can return to school or nursery. There is no need to wait until all the blisters have healed. Keeping your child away from other children for longer is unlikely to stop the illness spreading.

Yours faithfully,

Ben Hulme
Executive Headteacher

St. Edmund's is a welcoming and nurturing environment, where each individual is supported to develop morally, spiritually, socially, culturally and academically. Our extended community, through our Christian values of Love, Courage, Trust and Respect encourage each other in faith to 'Let your light shine.' (Matthew 5).



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