



Monday 10th February 2020

Re: Hand, Foot and Mouth

Dear Parents

This morning we were advised that one of our senior students has had a confirmed case of Hand, Foot and Mouth. As it can be a 3-5 day incubation period and the child started showing symptoms mid-last week we are unsure if this started at school or somewhere else.

At present no other students appear to have any symptoms however we feel that it is important to notify you to keep all children safe.

At school, we have taken additional steps to try our best to eliminate to avoid spreading this further eg: following Ministry of Health Guidelines, additional hand sanitizer and furniture sprays in classes for children/staff to use frequently, making children aware regularly of the importance of washing hands and reminding them before each break, showing signs of being unwell they come straight to the office etc

Attached is information from our Health Nurse Judi Harding. If your child at any time exhibits symptoms, please

- follow the advice in the handout
- keep them at home until the blisters have dried up completely,
- make an appointment with your GP and if they have a confirmed case please notify us so we can ensure we are fully up to date and can keep our community aware of any further action.

Yours sincerely

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# Hand, foot and mouth disease

Hand, foot and mouth disease can be a mild or a very serious illness. It is caused by a virus.

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## How hand, foot and mouth disease is spread

Hand, foot and mouth disease is spread by coughing or sneezing, or by contact with mucus, saliva, blisters or the bowel movements of an infected person.

Children are contagious ('catching') for around 7–10 days.

Keep your child home from childcare or school until blisters have dried. If blisters are able to be covered and the child is feeling well, they will not need to be excluded.

- Frequent hand washing helps decrease the chance of becoming infected.
- Staying away from others who have the disease and not sharing toys during the infection also helps prevent the disease.

Mild fever is usually the first sign of hand, foot and mouth disease. This starts 3–5 days after your child has been exposed to the disease.

After the fever starts, your child may develop other symptoms, including:

- painful red blisters on their tongue, mouth, palms of their hands, or soles of their feet
- loss of appetite
- a sore throat and mouth
- a general feeling of weakness or tiredness.

The disease is usually mild and lasts 3–7 days.

It can be confused with:

- chickenpox (but the chickenpox rash is all over the body)
- cold sores in a child's mouth.
  - The only medicine recommended for hand, foot and mouth disease is paracetamol.
  - Most blisters disappear without causing problems. In the mouth, however, some may form shallow, painful sores that look similar to cold sores. If your child's mouth is sore, don't give them sour, salty or spicy foods.
  - Make sure they drink plenty of liquids to avoid getting dehydrated.
  - **Call Healthline [0800 611 116](tel:0800 611 116) if you are unsure what you should do.**