



Communicable Diseases in Schools

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Guidelines concerning the more common infectious and contagious diseases and the recommended periods of absence from school have recently been issued by NHS Lothian. They are in accordance with Regulations issued earlier by the Scottish Office on communicable disease control in schools and should be applied in all Midlothian schools.

A summary of this guidance for Pre-school Children is attached as Appendix 1a, for Pupils 1b and for Adults 1c and should be brought to the attention of all staff. Head Teachers are also asked to note the additional information provided on tuberculosis (Appendix 2).

A poster for hand-washing is attached as Appendix 3.

2.0 ACTION BY SCHOOLS

The recommended periods of absence for pupils who contact a communicable disease or who become home contacts are indicated in Appendix 1.

These guidelines apply equally to other persons employed in schools, including teachers, support staff and voluntary helpers.

In cases of diseases identified as “notifiable”, Head Teachers should inform the Council’s Senior Health and Safety Adviser (Tel: 0131 270 5793) who will advise on appropriate action and notify the Health Protection Team (Tel: 0131 465 5420/5422).

3.0 TEACHING STAFF

Every qualified and student teacher on first employment with Midlothian Council must complete a confidential medical declaration. This is to satisfy the authority of their health and well-being in relation to their proposed employment and to ensure there are no problems which could affect their own health or the safety of pupils or other staff.

A teacher, or any other person employed in a school, who comes into contact with children and is found to be suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis should be immediately placed on sick leave (see Appendix 2). After consultation with the appropriate specialist physician, the Community Public Health Manager will notify Education, Communities and Economy when the member of staff can return to school.

4.0 SCHOOL MEALS STAFF

When school meals staff contract a communicable disease or develop a septic lesion on exposed skin there may be a risk of food contamination.

Under the terms of their contract, Midlothian Catering Services must not allow a member of their staff who is under treatment for an infectious disease to work in any location.

5.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

In all cases of doubt, further advice may be obtained by contacting the following sources:

**Health Protection Team
Lothian NHS Board
Waverley Gate
2-4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3EG
Tel: 0131 465 5420/5422**

**Chris Lawson
Risk Manager
Midlothian House
Buccleuch Street
Dalkeith
EH22 1DN
Tel: 0131 271 3069**

Education, Communities and Economy
Midlothian Council
Fairfield House
DALKEITH
EH22 3ZG

0131 270 7500