UK Health Security Agency

Children & Young People settings

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease Action card

To be used in conjunction with Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK

Signs and symptoms	Usually starts with a sore throat, high temperature, and reduced appetite. A few days later, painful mouth ulcers develop, followed by a rash of spots on the hands and feet (and sometimes the bottom or groin), which can turn into small blisters. Symptoms are usually mild and clear within 7 to 10 days.
Transmission Route	Spread through respiratory droplets (coughs and sneezes), direct contact with saliva or fluid from blisters, contaminated surfaces, and the faecal-oral route (for example during toileting or nappy changing).
Exclusion	No exclusion required if the child is well enough to take part in normal activities. Children should stay at home if they have a fever or are otherwise unwell and can return when they are feeling better. Keeping them away for longer is unlikely to stop the illness spreading.
Closures	It is **not** necessary to close the setting. Infection is usually managed within the setting.
Recommended actions for limiting transmission	
Hand and respiratory hygiene	• Children should be supervised and/or encouraged to wash their hands regularly. • Hand washing with liquid soap and warm water preferred over alcohol gel. • Paper towels or hand dryers should be used for drying hands (and a wastepaper bin provided for disposal of towels if applicable). • Do not share towels • Encourage good respiratory hygiene (using and disposing of tissues) • e-Bug | England Home has a range of educational resources for ages 3-16 to learn about microbes, infection prevention and control, antibiotics and vaccination.
Cleaning and disinfection	• Regular cleaning using standard cleaning products such as detergents are an important part of reducing transmission. • Clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, light switches, and work surfaces, and shared items, including toys • Dispose of nappies and tissues safely and clean contaminated areas promptly. • Wash contaminated clothing/bedding at 60°C.
Ventilation and use of outdoor space	Ensure indoor spaces are well ventilated and increase use of outdoor space where possible.
Activities	Avoid activities that involve close contact or sharing items (e.g. utensils, cups, sensory play materials) while symptoms are present. Clean items regularly.
Communications	Send an information letter and factsheet to parents/carers of cases and reinforce hygiene messages and keeping unwell children at home. Display handwashing posters

Reporting to UKHSA / HPT	
When to contact UKHSA - West Midlands Health Protection Team (WMHPT) **What WMHPT will ask for**	Please contact West Midlands Heath Protection Team 0344 225 3560 option 2, Monday –Friday 9am –5pm or email westmidlands.arc@ukhsa.gov.uk if: • large numbers of children are affected • severe or unusual illness occurs • advice is required Setting details, number of cases, affected groups, onset dates and any vulnerable individuals.