

If employees or self employed persons working on premises suffer injury, accidents must be reported to the HSE if they: prevent the injured person from continuing at his/her normal work for more than three consecutive days, (excluding the day of the accident), or result in death or major injury.

Accidents to employees are work-related if they are attributable to:

- work organisation (e.g. the supervision of a school trip)
- the condition of the premises
- plant or substances (e.g. machinery, experiments, etc)
- acts of physical violence to employees (not pupils).

As far as pupils and other people who are not at work (e.g. parents) are concerned, an accident must be reported if the person involved is killed or taken to hospital and the accident arises in connection with work.

In practice, schools tend to nominate a ‘responsible person’ (usually the headteacher or principal) to report accidents to the HSE. Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences must be reported without delay (e.g. by telephone). Within the next ten days this should be followed up by a report in writing. Records must be kept for three years on form F2508.

7. The signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses

The following chart shows details of the main childhood illnesses. Please note that in particular the teaching assistants should make sure that they know the symptoms of meningitis and what to do if meningitis is suspected.

Disease	Incubation period	How to recognise it	comments
Measles	7-12 days	Like a bad cold, Rash appears after three or four days on neck, forehead and cheeks, spreads to body. Spots are red and slightly raised but not itchy. Child is unwell with high temperature and cough.	Very infectious. Can have complications affecting ears, lungs and brain.
Whooping cough	7-14 days	Begins like a bad cold. Cough gradually gets worse. Exhausting and frightening coughing spells. Difficult to breathe. Sometimes whooping noise as child draws in breath.	Very infectious. Can cause convulsions, collapsed lung and even death.
Meningitis	Develops rapidly	High fever headache and vomiting. Pain and stiffness in the back of neck, joint pains, dislike of light and a rash of red/purple spots. If child becomes floppy, drowsy, confused or unconscious – treat as emergency. Contact parents and get to hospital immediately.	
Mumps	14-21 days	At first child may be unwell and have slight fever. Pain around ear. Swelling starts under jaw up by ear.	It is the most common cause of viral meningitis and can cause deafness.
Rubella	14-21 days	Rash appears first on face then spreading. Spots flat. Glands in back of neck may be swollen.	Must be kept away from pregnant women.
Chicken pox	14-16 days	Feeling unwell, rash and maybe a temperature. Spots are red and become yellow fluid filled blisters. First on chest and back and then spread. Spots eventually become dry scabs.	One attack usually gives protection for life. Pregnant women who think they have been in contact with chicken pox should see a doctor.

Assist pupils in meeting their health and hygiene needs.

Healthy children learn better and have fewer days absent from schools. Schools and classrooms can harbour many germs which can spread quickly and cause pupil illnesses and absenteeism. Proper hygiene is the key to reducing the spread of these infections and illnesses.

Pupils should be taught the precautions and procedures needed to maintain health and hygiene e.g. relating to using the toilet, taking refreshments, contact with animals, use of chemicals.

1. Health education

An effective health education programme should:

- address the needs of young people
- consider children's and young people's knowledge and experience
- be supported by the whole school
- be supported by health promotion activities in the community
- be delivered by well-informed staff
- be delivered using pupil-centred methods

Health education is concerned with quality of life and encompasses the promotion of the physical, emotional and social well-being of every member of society. Within health education there are three inter-related strands:

- physical health – exploring physical factors in relation to health and looking after ourselves
- emotional health – exploring emotions, feelings and relationships and how they affect our mental well-being
- social health – exploring the interaction of the individual, the community and the environment in relation to health and safety.

2. Encouraging good hygiene practices

It is important to consult and compare on all issues of the child's personal hygiene with the child's parents. Encouraging good hygiene practice should be a two way process.

1. Children can be helped to learn about hygiene through stories, pictures and books that provide easy to follow factual information
2. Through conversation with adults which tells them everyone carries germs and that infection can be passed from one child to another.

The following classroom procedures can help reduce the spread of infections in the school and classroom? Staff can:

- Encourage students to practice good hand-washing.
- Allow time for hand-washing.
- Keep hygiene items in the classroom.
- Keep first aid supplies readily available for open or bleeding wounds.
- Practice universal precautions from exposure to bodily fluids.
- Maintain a clean classroom daily.
- Inspect toilets daily.
- Utilise the school nurse as a resource for hygiene education.

Whilst supporting pupils in maintaining standards of health and hygiene, the teaching assistant should provide advice and assistance to pupils to help them develop basic hygiene skills, including respect for their own and others' health and hygiene needs.

3. The School policy relating to health, hygiene and medical matters

The aim of the school health and hygiene policy is to make children, parents and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimise the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Example of school Policies and Procedures

Health and Hygiene – Policy and Practice

This school promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene. This is achieved in the following ways:

Health

Food

- All meals and snacks provided will be nutritious and pay due attention to a child's particular dietary requirements.
- When cooking with children as an activity, the adults will provide healthy, wholesome food, promoting and extending the children's understanding of a healthy diet.

Outdoor play

Children will have the opportunity to play in the fresh air throughout the year

Illness

- Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection.
- Parents are asked not to bring into school a child who have been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least twenty-four hours have elapsed since the last attack.
- If a child becomes ill during school they will be made comfortable and the parents notified and asked to collect their child as soon as possible.
- The school will inform OFSTED and RIDDOR of any outbreaks of notifiable diseases.
- Cuts or open sores, whether on an adult or child, will be covered with a dressing.
- The school will ensure that first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary.