

Protecting and improving the nation's health

## Ebola: Advice and Risk Assessment for Educational, Childcare and Young Persons' Settings

Since March 2014 there has been a large outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa, with widespread and intense transmission in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Cases have also occurred in Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Spain, the UK and the US.

Ebola is a rare but serious viral infection. There remains an expectation that a handful of further cases may occur in the UK in the coming months. Thus, although the risk of imported cases remains low, it is possible that further persons infected in Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone could arrive in the UK while incubating the disease (the incubation period is 2-21 days) and develop symptoms after their return.

The affected countries have introduced exit screening at airports to ensure that individuals who are unwell do not board flights. This is in line with World Health Organization (WHO) guidance and is one of many measures to reduce the risk of international spread of disease.

However, as the time between contact with an infected person and symptoms first appearing can range from 2 - 21 days, it is possible that children and students returning from affected countries could develop symptoms up to three weeks after arrival.

## In summary:

the risk of Ebola arriving in the UK is very low

- transmission of Ebola from person to person is by direct contact with the blood and body fluids of an ill person with the disease. The virus is **not** spread by the airborne route
- the time between contact with the infected person and the time that first symptoms appear (incubation period) of Ebola ranges from two to 21 days
- any persons arriving back in the UK having travelled from any of the affected countries, and who are free of symptoms, are **not infectious** and there should be **no restrictions** on their school attendance or normal activities

The attached algorithm has been developed specifically to assist educational, childcare and young persons' settings who may have children/students returning or visiting from affected countries.

All staff or those with contact with children should already be aware of what to do if a child/student falls ill and there is general guidance (referenced below) on infection control in school and childcare settings.

Further information about the Ebola outbreak can be obtained from your local health protection team, and on the following websites:

Public Health England (including the outbreak and maps of affected area): https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ebola-virus-disease-clinical-managementand-guidance

WHO: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/index.html

Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-control-in-schools-poster

Foreign travel advice https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Ebola: environmental cleaning guidance for potential contamination (excluding healthcare settings)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ebola-environmental-cleaning-guidancefor-potential-contamination-excluding-healthcare-settings

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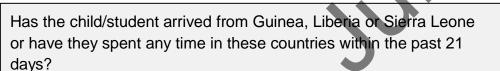
## Ebola risk assessment in educational, childcare and young persons' settings

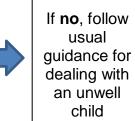
This algorithm is to inform the assessment of unwell children in educational, childcare and young persons' settings, and will assist the public health response and ensure the appropriate organisations are informed. If the child is unable to answer questions, please seek information from the responsible adult.

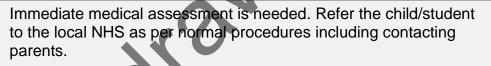
If yes, ask these questions

Does the child/student appear unwell? Symptoms to look out for include fever (eg pale skin, sweating or shivering), diarrhoea and vomiting, and weakness (eg unable to stand unsupported as appropriate for age)

If **no**, continue as normal







f yes

When referring them to the local ambulance service/initial responders, specify it is for a child/student who has recently returned from a country involved in the current Ebola outbreak and they are suspected to have Ebola. This ensures healthcare professionals use the appropriate personal protective equipment.

While waiting for the ambulance service/initial responders to arrive, the unwell person should be separated from other children/students in a separate room.

Contact your local PHE centre, which will assist with any subsequent public health action required, for example following up contacts of the child. Thorough cleaning and decontamination is advised and this should be discussed with the PHE centre. Read here for guidance on how to deal with any items that are contaminated. Search for your local PHE centre contact details.