



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-management-and-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-guidance-for-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.

