



**IVYBRIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
HARFORD ROAD, IVYBRIDGE, DEVON, PL21 0JA

**Principal : Rob Haring**

E-mail : [icc@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk](mailto:icc@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk)  
Internet : [www.ivybridge.devon.sch.uk](http://www.ivybridge.devon.sch.uk)

Telephone : 01752 691000  
Fax : 01752 691247

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Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to let you know that a number of students and staff at the College have had gastro-enteritis over the last few days.

The Health Protection Unit and Environmental Health Departments have advised me that this is a mild illness probably caused by a virus, but that it is very infectious. The most usual symptom is vomiting. Some people may have diarrhoea and/or abdominal pain. Symptoms rarely last for more than 24 – 48 hours. The incubation period (time it takes for the illness to develop) is between 24 and 48 hours.

If your child is affected, please keep him or her off College. He or she should not return until 48 hours after the diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped. The virus is easily spread from person to person. Good hygiene by everyone in the family reduces the risk. This means washing hands with soap and warm water after going to the toilet and before preparing or eating food.

It is important to clean up carefully when someone has been sick, as vomit is very infectious. It is important to clear up spills of vomit or faeces immediately, by thorough washing of the contaminated environment with soap and hot water. For hard surfaces, (floors, work tops etc, an additional disinfection with a dilute solution of Milton or household bleach (according to manufacturer's instructions) will reduce the contamination. DO NOT MIX these substances with soap and water. Be sure that each family member uses separate towels and flannels, which are changed and washed frequently.

**Hand washing after visiting the toilet, cleaning up spillages and before handling food is the most important element of reducing the risk of infection.**

We are ensuring the College is thoroughly cleaned to reduce any further risk.

If you need any further advice you can phone NHS Direct on 0845 4647.

Yours faithfully

Rob Haring  
**Principal**

Anne Whiteley : Director of Children and Young People's Services, Devon County Council