Winter Well Schools - Powys



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Powys Teaching Health Board

Practical actions to reduce winter illnesses, support wellbeing and *PROTECT* attendance

What's inside?

Click the page numbers below

This resource pack is split into sections for school staff, for display use, and parent/carer communications.

The parent and Carer communications are a separate one-page PDF for sharing with your school community. Further monthly communications will be sent directly.

For school staff

Guidance and tools to support

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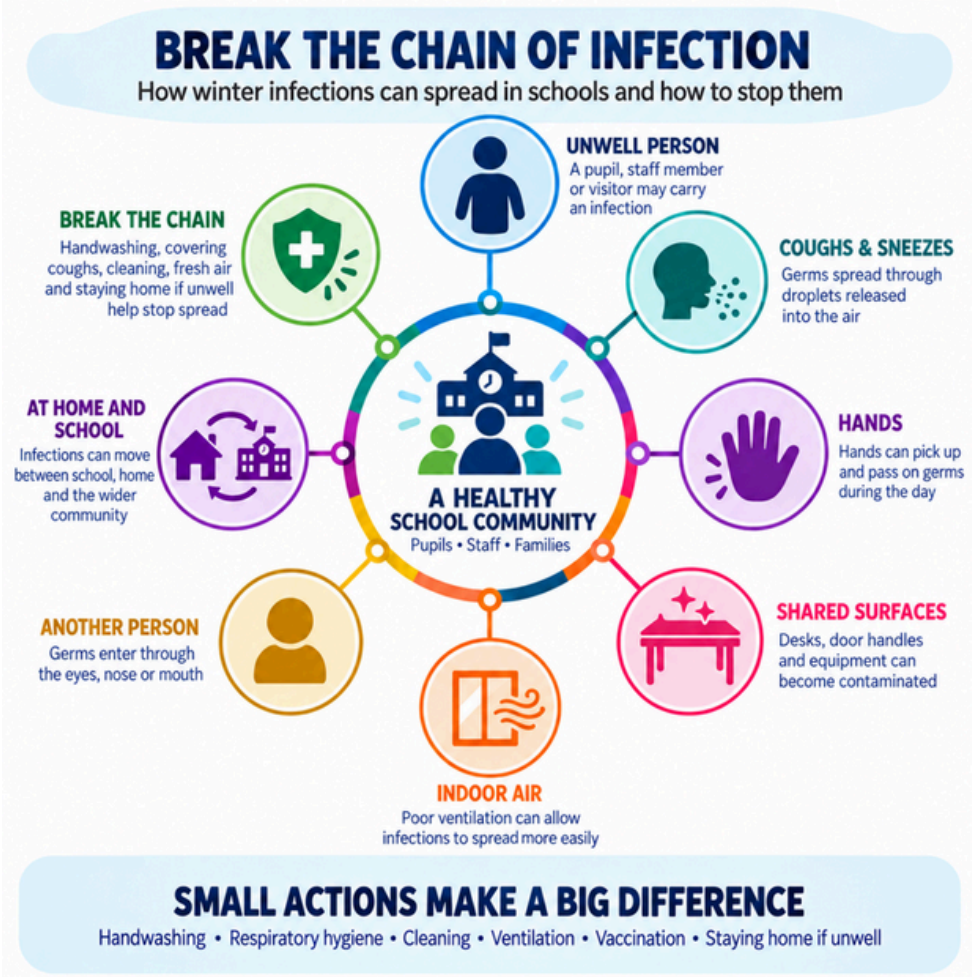
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Winter Well Schools - Information Pack

Practical actions to reduce winter illnesses, support wellbeing and protect attendance

Why Winter Well matters

Winter brings an increase in respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. Layering simple actions together can reduce spread, support a healthier school environment and minimise avoidable absence. Use the resources together: this Information Pack explains the key messages; the Winter Well School Checklist reviews local arrangements and records actions; the Parent and Carer Communications Pack provides ready-to-share family messages.



Reinforce hand and respiratory hygiene

Hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to control infection, particularly diarrhoea, vomiting and respiratory infections.

- Provide liquid soap, warm water and paper towels, and check facilities are accessible, stocked and working.
- It may sound obvious but make it a habit at these key moments: When you get home. Before preparing food. Before you eat. After using the toilet.
- Drying matters: hands should be dried thoroughly. Avoid communal fabric hand towels; paper towels provide a simple hygienic option.
- Soap and water matter: alcohol hand rub should not replace effective handwashing and has limited activity against some diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses, including norovirus.
- Reinforce Catch it, Bin it, Kill it: Catch it in a tissue. Bin it. Wash your hands. No tissue? Your elbow will do. It's a small thing, but it can help keep winter bugs from spreading.

Display handwashing and respiratory hygiene posters in key areas.

FLU VACCINATIONS

Support the school flu vaccination programme

Flu vaccination is one of the best ways to protect children against flu. It reduces the risk of serious illness and helps protect the wider school community.

- All children from Reception to Year 11 are offered a free flu vaccination each year.
- In Powys, the annual school flu programme is delivered by the School Nursing Service.
- Nominate a school contact, know the clinic date, share current PTHB information and remind parents and carers to complete e-consent in good time. **Click Here for School Dates**
- Support the School Nursing team with an appropriate space, steady pupil flow and arrangements for pupils who may find vaccination stressful or need extra support.
- Promote catch up arrangements shared by PTHB after the school session.

Flu Schools Stakeholder Toolkit Click here



Click below:

PHW / e-Bug hand and respiratory hygiene resources.

Powys Handwashing Heroes Sessions for KS2 Learners can also be adapted for different ages, abilities and settings. Contact healthprotection@powys.gov.uk

Winter Well Schools - Information Pack

Practical actions to reduce winter illnesses, support wellbeing and protect attendance

Keep indoor air fresh and healthy Good ventilation helps reduce infectious particles in indoor air. During winter, improve fresh air while balancing thermal comfort.

- Keep windows, vents, airbricks and grilles unobstructed.
- Refresh rooms between lessons or at break times where practical, using partial or high-level window opening if possible. ***Even opening a window for a few minutes can make a difference.***
- Pay extra attention to stuffy rooms, spaces with limited opening windows and rooms regularly used by large groups.
- Use CO_2 monitors, where available, to help identify spaces needing attention.

Guidance on Ventilation

HSE Health & Safety Executive

Cleaning and shared environments Regular cleaning using standard cleaning products is an important part of reducing transmission. PHW guidance notes that detergent and water is normally sufficient for routine cleaning because it removes most germs.

- Pay particular attention to high-touch areas such as door handles, light switches, desks, taps, toilets, shared devices and shared or specialist equipment.
- Have clear cleaning schedules and a simple route for staff to report cleaning, hygiene or supply concerns before they escalate.
- If illness levels rise, review whether enhanced or more frequent cleaning is needed and use the Winter Well School Checklist to record action.

Enhanced disinfection: where required, use a chlorine-releasing product active against viruses, e.g. sodium hypochlorite 0.1% (1000 ppm available chlorine), in line with COSHH, manufacturer instructions and PHW/Environmental Health advice.

- For blood, vomit, faeces or other bodily fluid spills, follow the school's specific spill procedure and use an appropriate detergent/disinfectant product effective against bacteria and viruses.

ONE TEAM MESSAGE: Cleaners and premises staff carry out cleaning, but teaching, support, office and leadership staff may be the first to notice increased illness, contamination, depleted supplies or areas needing attention.

RAISE CONCERNS EARLY.

Make the messages visible and easy to share - Click the links

- Consistent, visible messages can help reinforce healthy behaviours, reduce the spread of infection and support attendance throughout winter.
- **Ready-to-use materials - PHW Winter Wellbeing Communications Toolkit** provides ready-to-use resources, including printable handwashing posters and other digital assets

PHW Asset Library

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Simple ways you can use the materials:

- Use the Parent and Carer Communications (page 9) to share consistent winter health, attendance and exclusion messages with families.
- Review posters, resources and communication arrangements using the Winter Well School Checklist.
- Encourage staff to model and reinforce good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Build reminders into everyday routines, including handwashing, break and mealtimes.
- Display posters in toilets, handwashing areas, kitchens, entrances and other shared spaces.
- Reinforce messages through assemblies, tutor time, health and wellbeing activities and classroom learning.

Handwashing Poster



Respiratory Hygiene



Fresh Air



Keep Viruses Away



Sources: Public Health Wales Exclusion Period for Common Infections; Powys Teaching Health Board School-Aged Flu Vaccination Programme; PTHB Healthy Schools Sleep resources.

Information reviewed: September 2026. Please use the linked official guidance for the most up-to-date advice.

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Quick Exclusion Reference

Practical actions to reduce winter illnesses, support wellbeing and protect attendance



Exclusion Required

Stay off school and follow the return period...

Infection	Return to school when...
Diarrhoea & Vomitting	48 hours after the last episode
Colds & Flu Like illness (including COVID-19)	Until they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend
Influenza	5 days after onset of symptoms, or when they have been free of a high temperature for 48 hours and are well enough to attend
Chicken pox	5 days from onset of rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Impetigo	When sores are crusted and healed or 48-hours after startin antibiotics
Measles	5 days after rash presents (1st day being day 0)
Mumps	5 days after onset of swelling
Scabies	After first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after starting antibioitcs
Strep Throat	24 hours after starting antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after starting antibiotics or 14 days after cough onset if untreated

No Routine Exclusion Usually Required

These can be managed in school if the learner feels well enough

- Common cold
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Sore throat (unless scarlet fever is suspected)
- Slapped cheek (fifth disease)
- Hand, foot and mouth
- Threadworms
- Head lice
- Eye & ear infections (including conjuctivitis)

This is not an exhaustive list. Always refer to the PHW A-Z guide for other infections and the most up to date advice - see below

Notice patterns & know when to seek advice

Use disease-specific PHW exclusion guidance to identify when AWARe should be contacted. More generally, contact AWARe if you are concerned and/or see:

- a higher than usual or rapidly increasing number of absences due to the same infection
- evidence of severe disease, for example an overnight hospital admission
- more than one infection circulating in the same group
- a case or outbreak of a serious or unusual infection identified in PHW guidance

PHW AWARe 0300 003 0032 / aware@wales.nhs.uk

Exclusion Periods for common infections in Wales

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Click above or Scan the QR code to view the full PHW A-Z guide

Have you used any part of Winter Well Schools in your school?

Yes, we've used it | Not yet - *Short feedback, around 1 minute.*

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Winter Well Schools - Checklist

Practical actions to reduce winter illnesses, support wellbeing and protect attendance

How to use this checklist: A practical prompt for all schools and education settings, not a compliance exercise. Where an action sits with another person or team, identify it and pass it on. Keep the checklist available throughout winter and revisit it if illness or absence increases.

Supporting the school flu vaccination programme

- Arrangements in place for school nurses attending on the flu clinic dates. ☐
- Clinic dates and **UPDATED** consent information have been shared with parent/carers. ☐
- Campaign posters displayed in prominent parent-facing areas of the school, to support vaccination uptake. ☐
- Age-appropriate information about flu vaccination is available for pupils. ☐
- Relevant staff know the arrangements for pupils who may need support before or during vaccination. ☐

Managing illness, attendance and outbreaks

- Public Health Wales exclusion guidance is available to staff managing pupil illness & absence. ☐
- Clear process for managing pupils or staff who becomes unwell during the school day. ☐
- Sickness absence is monitored, & staff know when to escalate as necessary ☐

Cleaning, shared equipment and premises

- Enhanced cleaning implemented in response to increased levels of winter illness. ☐
- A school contact is identified to raise environmental cleaning concerns or request additional cleaning. ☐

Preventing the spread of infection

- Handwashing facilities are accessible & stocked with soap & suitable hand drying facilities. ☐
- Tissues & bins are available. ☐
- Pupils & staff are reminded about respiratory & hand hygiene etiquette. ☐
- Hand hygiene arrangements are accessible for pupils of all abilities. ☐
- Where personal care is provided, relevant staff are familiar with IP&C & PPE requirements. ☐

Ventilation and indoor air quality

NOTE: Ventilation does not mean keeping windows wide open all day.

- Rooms or areas with limited ventilation have been identified, including frequently occupied smaller spaces. ☐
- Windows & vents are unobstructed & operating as intended. Report problems to the school maintenance contact. ☐
- If CO_2 monitors are available, use appropriately to identify poorly ventilated spaces, action taken where readings indicate any concerns. ☐
- Staff aware of practical ventilation measures, including partial window opening and airing rooms between use, while maintaining thermal comfort and considering pupil needs. ☐

Communication and use of Winter Well resources

- Winter health messages are shared with school community. ☐
- Winter posters & prompts are displayed in prominent locations, such as toilets, classrooms, display boards. ☐
- All staff are briefed on the Winter Well Schools Information Pack & checklist. ☐

Note priority Action Points:

Important: This checklist complements, rather than replaces, your school's existing infection prevention, cleaning, health and safety, emergency and attendance arrangements. This checklist has been developed with reference to current guidance and key public health messages from Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, NHS Wales, the Health and Safety Executive and the UK Health Security Agency. Guidance checked: September 2026 | Review due: September 2027

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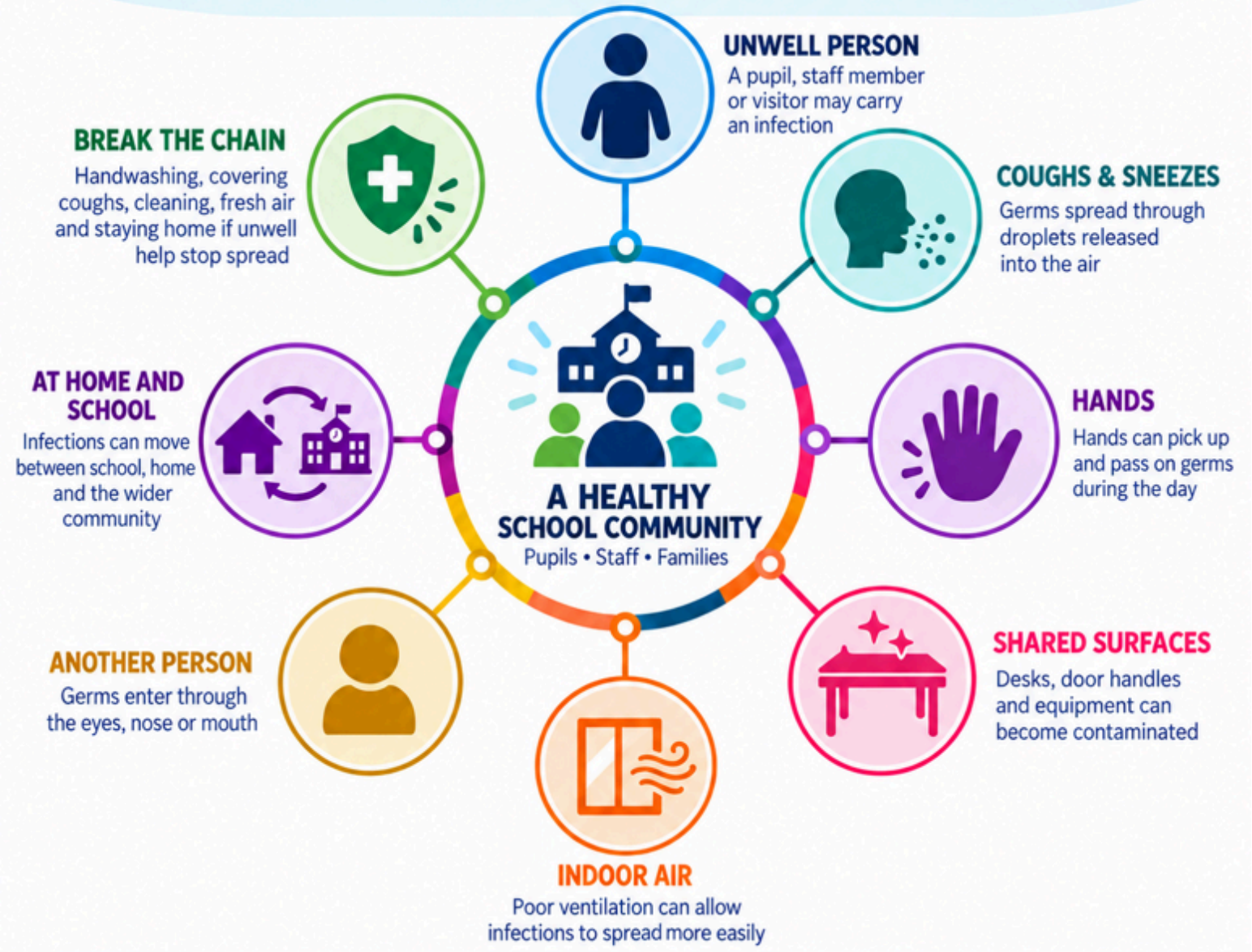
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BREAK THE CHAIN OF INFECTION

How winter infections can spread in schools and how to stop them



SMALL ACTIONS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Handwashing • Respiratory hygiene • Cleaning • Ventilation • Vaccination • Staying home if unwell

Wash your hands regularly

Keeping hands clean can prevent **1 in 5** respiratory illnesses like colds and flu



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Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.

Germs can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours.

Bin your tissue and **wash your hands** as soon as you can.



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Public Health Wales

Let fresh air in. And viruses out.

Opening a window can remove stale air and **prevent the spread** of illnesses like colds and flu, RSV and norovirus.



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5 ffyrdd o aros yn iach y gaeaf hwn

Golchi eich dwylo yn rheolaidd

Gorchuddio eich peswch a'ch tisian

Aros adref pan fyddwch chi'n sâl

Gadael awyr iach i mewn

Cael eich brechu pan gewch wahoddiad

5 ways to stay well this winter

Wash your hands regularly

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Stay home when unwell

Let fresh air in

If eligible, get your flu vaccination

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