

Dr Matt Butler – youtube clip of advice for schools to Cambridgeshire heads

Summary:

Teacher positioning- make sure you are not at eye level with children and therefore in direct line of transmitting the virus. Position yourselves above a child. Walk around the classroom holding your hands together in front of you to avoid touching backs of chairs, faces etc. Wearing gloves gives people a false sense of protection. It is very difficult to remove gloves without leaving the virus behind on your hands and people think when they have removed their gloves that their hands are clean. It is better to use your hands and then observe hand hygiene.

Cleaning: -Until we get a vaccine and drugs to support treatment this is a long-term issue. In order to manage this, we need to establish a cleaning routine. Warm soapy water is enough. Wipe surfaces, laminated book covers equipment between uses. It is easier if each child has their own equipment so that each class of 15 when finished the equipment can be cleaned before using by another class of 15.

Focus on removing the virus from the surface with a warm soapy cloth and then washing it down the sink. Carpets are unlikely to retain the virus as it lives longer on smooth flat surfaces.

Suggestion: as part of educating children on the way a virus is spread include them in the new routines so children are given specific tasks e.g. wipe the door handles, light switches regularly.

Cleaners need to come in only once at the end of the day but half an hour after children and staff have left the building.

Transmission: If you are in contact with someone with the virus who is asymptomatic it takes a period of about 15mins to pass this on. It is not likely to be passed through moving past in a corridor. Younger children are a third less likely to get the virus as their teacher. The current form of the related symptoms appearing in children is very rare and usually related to children with underlying health issues. This evidence is emerging.

PPE

Changing nappies: Stool transmission is quite high but not a certainty. It is vital that nappies are changed from the side/head direction and not face on. Keep high ventilation in the room where nappies are being changed, wiping away from you. Really good hand hygiene is necessary together with a rigorous decontamination of the changing area before another child is changed. If these conditions are upheld PPE should not be necessary.

Spitting: If a member of staff is working with a child with behaviour which may include spitting then eye protection such as science goggles should be worn.

Cleaners safety: Apply liquid to the virus and remove it rather than buffing as this will disperse it. With hand hygiene gloves would be necessary but not PPE.

Face masks/ coverings: Face masks protect the wearer and are needed by the NHS staff so please do not use much needed reserves.

Face coverings protect others and using them as a society will reduce transmission.